

Community of Faith Approach

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Billboard Top Hit #2: The Ministry of Jesus

Summary

In this lesson, we explore the story and significance of Jesus' baptism and how it led into His ministry.

An important theme raised in this lesson will be "How to translate words, thoughts, and feelings into actions."

Introduction

As Christians, we might wonder from time to time how to live up to a bar set so highly by Jesus. After all, how can we compete with "walking on water" and "turning water into wine"? In this lesson we will examine "The Ministry of Jesus" with its beginning being marked by His baptism and into how His baptism translated into action (i.e. ministry). Furthermore, we will begin reflecting on how our personal and collective ministries are parallel with Jesus'.

Approach

The Community of Faith Approach is a means in which the whole community of faith (church, youth group, etc.) is learning and growing spiritually together. In this community, we each teach and learn from one another, no matter what age or life stage in which a person finds him or herself. Our content consists of people learning through their lives being shared together. Along with the traditions and lifestyle of the community, the value in this approach is relationship. In our lesson structure, we will incorporate each individual in both learning and teaching each other while examining and engaging in the traditions of our faith and the ministry of Jesus found in scripture.

The Context

This lesson could take place at youth group, during either a Wednesday night or Sunday night program time. To help all components

work well in a youth group setting, announce this lesson a few weeks in advance in order that both the students and the volunteers are spiritually and mentally prepared.

Plan to teach in a room that can accommodate partitions, or even in multiple rooms that are close together: one room for each of the three stations. This lesson is appropriate for junior high-aged youth through adult. How the stations are explained might need adjusting depending on the group.

Theological Exploration

Christ's baptism is an important milestone both in Christ's life and in the Christian story. We see that Christ comes and submits to being baptized by John the Baptist. He submits himself to a practice of repentance of which he has no need except that he will be fulfilling scripture. We see that Christ is baptized and as he leaves the waters of the Jordan River the spirit of God comes and rests its self on Christ, and God the Father says from Heaven, "This is my Son, whom I love; with whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17 NIV) In this instance we see evidence of the Trinity and with this act we see the beginning of Jesus' initiation into ministry followed by his venture into the desert in [Matthew Chapter 4](#). As we are baptized we follow both the example and the instruction ([Matthew 28:19](#)) of Jesus. Just like in Christ's life, baptism in our lives is an important event that sets the stage to share in ministry with him. It is important that this be remembered and reiterated lest we forget the meaning behind it and the significance of it.

Learning Goals

Upon completing this lesson, students will:

- Share together in the stories of Jesus' baptism and ministry along with their

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own personal stories of their baptism and their ministry here on earth.

- Discuss and interact together as each student is both teacher and learner.
- Interact, worship, and fellowship with different generations.

Scripture References

- [Matthew 3:13-17](#)
- [Luke 4:18-19](#)
- [John 9:1-12](#)
- [Matthew 6:5-15](#)

Exegetical Summary

When we think of baptism, we think of confession and repentance of sins ([Matthew 3:6](#)). So why would Jesus who is perfect and who had no sin need to be baptized? John wondered the same thing. He thought Jesus should baptize him. Jesus says it is to fulfill all righteousness. Jesus did not need to be baptized, but he submitted to it to fulfill God's plan.¹ Jesus allowed himself to be counted as one of us, as a sinner.² He submitted himself to God's will, even though the baptism and death would be for our sins, not his.³

After the baptism, God acknowledges Jesus' sacrifice. "Heaven was opened" may signify God's future revelation. Use of the word "dove" here probably means Spirit and may give reference to the dove that found dry land after the flood ([Genesis 8:8-12](#)). God spoke of his approval of His Son. This shows God is pleased with Jesus and Jesus is important and essential to God's plan.⁴

Preparing for the Lesson

- Be familiar with Matthew 3:13-17 and Luke 4:18-19. The Matthew passage

¹ <http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/IVP-NT/Matt/God-Honors-His-Humble-Son>;

Craig Keener, *Matthew* (Downers Grove Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1997).

² <http://www.rc.net/wcc/readings/matt3v13.htm>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid. 1

tells of Jesus' baptism and the Holy Spirit descending upon Him. The Luke passage proclaims an overview of Jesus' purpose behind his ministry. He came to bring the good news through action! His baptism and life are a representation of how we should live out our own lives!

- At the stations these passages are also referenced: John 9:1-12, which tells the story of Jesus healing a blind man and Matthew 6:5-15, where the Lord's Prayer is introduced.
- You will also need adult leaders to experience the lesson and guide students along the way.

Supplies Needed

- Butcher Paper
- Paint
- Paint Brushes
- Cups (for water and the paint)
- Bibles
- Prompts for three stations and water stations with Bible verses
- Poster Board
- Markers
- Bowls
- Water
- Pictures of doves
- Clay or Play-Doh
- CD of "water music"
- Song leader

Lesson Activities

Wednesday Night Youth Program or Sunday Night Youth Program: (Approximately 1 hour)

Remembering Jesus' Baptism—Remembering that We are "Marked Children of God" (5 minutes)

Students enter the room to the sounds of water moving. At the door students are invited to remove their shoes, denoted by posters on the wall. Upon entering, several bowls are set

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up on tables for each student to go to. At the table written instructions will guide them through touching the water and remembering that they are a “Marked Child of God.”

The posters should read: “Remove Shoes in Silence: You are on Holy Ground” and “Enter and Come to the Water: You are a Marked Child of God.”

Have prompts at each water station that are printed with the Matthew 3:13-17 passage in its entirety and the following: “When you feel ready touch the water as a symbol that you are a marked child of God. Remember that you are washed clean by this water and the Spirit.”

Students will be invited to sit down in chairs or on the ground after they are finished.

Ice Breaker (5 Minutes)

Baptism Sharing: Have students and adult leaders break up in to groups of four and share the story of their baptism, if they remember it. Many times people were babies, but maybe there is a funny story that their family commonly shares. Perhaps they were older and remember the experience well. This will help students and adult leaders connect through their own stories.

Transition: Our baptism not only washes us clean but it also ties us together as a Body of Christ and links us directly to Jesus’ mission and ministry.

Jesus’ Ministry Stations: (30 Min)

Three stations are set up around the room, or in three rooms close together

Remembering the Ministry of Jesus: Students will interact in each station together in small group communities and in discussion. Explain that there are three stations around the room. Split up your group into three groups (you can do this any way you would like.) Ideally, each group should have at least one adult leader to

go through the stations with them. Explain that each group will rotate through each station every 10 minutes, signaled by a leader. (Stations are listed below.)

Station 1: “Jesus Yielded to the Holy Spirit”⁵

Biblical Focus: Luke 4:18-19—Jesus’ mission, message, and example were incredible illustrations of Jesus allowing the Holy Spirit to freely descend upon him and through him. Include a visual of a dove here, symbolizing the Holy Spirit.

Discuss:

1. What does the word Holy Spirit mean to you?
2. If you have one, share an example of a time when you allowed the Holy Spirit to guide and work through you or when you experienced the Holy Spirit working through someone else.
3. In this passage Jesus proclaims that the Holy Spirit is upon him and then outlines God’s mission for his life. How do you think you can focus your life to be a part of Jesus’ mission?

Station 2: “Jesus came to Embodiment the kingdom of God and to make it present to All people”⁶

Biblical Focus: John 9:1-12—Jesus performed act after act bringing the kingdom to Earth! He ate with tax collectors, prostitutes, lepers...people with whom their society would have never dreamed of associating. He raised the dead, healed the blind, walked on water, and performed the IMPOSSIBLE! Jesus came to “bring the good news.” He came to set the captive free and provide sight to the blind and eternal life to all that would listen! Not a single person was excluded from this kingdom as long as they chose to follow!

⁵ Folmsbee, Chris. *Story Signs and Sacred Rhythms: A Narrative Approach to Youth Ministry*. Zondervan: Grand Rapids MI. 2010. 105-106.

⁶ Ibid.

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Discuss:

1. How can you as a group “embody the kingdom of God?”
2. How can you “bring the good news? Express this idea through the use of the clay provided.
3. After creating your clay image, hold hands and close out in prayer, proclaiming that we as a community seek to restore the kingdom. We each play a vital role and not a single person is excluded from the mission Jesus set before us.

Station 3: “Jesus was a person of Prayer”⁷

Biblical Focus: Matthew 6:5-15—Jesus shows us how important prayer is to our spiritual lives in a tangible way throughout scripture. Whether it was with others or by himself, Jesus made prayer a huge focal point in His ministry. He calls us to follow His example by praying for others and the world around us.

Discuss:

1. Students are invited to share prayer concerns for other people and offer a time of prayer for those people. At this station there should be a map of the world, paints, and paintbrushes provided. Students will be invited to discuss issues going on within our world and communities. Students are then invited to paint the prayers of the world on the map provided and pray over those things together. Before dismissing to the next station, recite the Lord’s Prayer as a group gathered around the map of the world.

Scripture Reading with Concluding Thoughts Shared (5 minutes)

Read Matthew 3:13-17 again.

⁷ Ibid.

Jesus desired to restore a community of people and desired for them to be about His mission, message and means.⁸ We all have a ministry here on earth, an extension of bringing the kingdom here and now. Through Jesus’ ministry and life we have a perfect example of the tools we need to live out this ministry as well. Let’s stand and worship together remembering and celebrating the fact that we are marked by the water as children of God!

Communal Worship (25 minutes)

Sing four songs tying these ideas together for your group, for example: “Call to Action,” by Dutton; “Rain Down Your Love,” by David Crowder; “Desert Song,” by Hillsong; or “Our God is Greater,” by Chris Tomlin.

Close out with prayer that intentionally talks about our baptism washing us clean and marking us as a people linked to Jesus’ ministry.

Dismiss in silence. Turn water sounds on as students exit.

⁸ Ibid.

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Reflection and Evaluation

Please rate the following questions below using the chart.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 -----
6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9 ----- 10

- On a scale from 1-10, with 1 being the “easiest to engage” and 10 being the “most difficult” to engage, how would you rate the complexity of the material covered in this lesson?
- On a scale from 1-10, with 1 being “lots of room for improvement” and 10 being “very well,” how would you rate yourself on your ability as a facilitator to leave space (i.e. silence) for students to respond?
- On a scale from 1-10, with 1 being the “least prepared” and 10 being the “most prepared,” how well do feel you were prepared to facilitate this lesson?
- In what ways does the content of this lesson meet you personally in your life today?
- In what ways did the participants respond to the content of this lesson? Did they mostly listen or talk?
- Name one thing that you would do differently if you could facilitate this lesson all over again.