

Bible background

Matthew 3:13-17

Aim of lesson

- (a) To show that Jesus, now grown up, was given God's power to begin the work God wanted him to do.
- (b) To teach about baptism.

Preparation required

You will need a bowl of mud, a bowl of water, a towel and colouring materials.

Suggested outline of lesson

1. If you are teaching in an area which is suitable for water, then it would be helpful to begin by telling the children to get one hand muddy and then wash it clean in a bowl of water, as an illustration of what baptism is.
2. Talk about washing dirty things to make them clean. Tell how God wanted people to be able to wash on the inside too. He wanted them to be clean from all the naughty and bad things they had done. He wanted the people to know that he would forgive them if they asked, so he sent a man called John to baptise them.

John took them to the river and dipped them under the water as a sign that God was washing them clean from the bad things they had done.
3. Teach the first three verses of the song 'John was baptising'.
4. Use the activity sheet here to show how Jesus, now he had grown up to be a man, also came to be baptised - how John did not want to baptise him as he had done nothing wrong - how Jesus said he wanted to be baptised anyway because it was the right thing to do.
5. Teach the rest of the song.
6. Let the children tell you from the activity sheet picture what came down as Jesus came up out of the water. Explain that the dove was to show that God was giving his Son power to do miracles. Let the children trace the words of the voice from heaven and tell you what God said.

Alternative activities

1. If you have a water tray, baby bath or washing up bowl, use play figures to act out the story. Be prepared for water... everywhere!

You will probably need: another adult to help, protective aprons, a waterproof covering for the floor e.g. a groundsheet, a mop or floor cloths, towels for drying hands.
2. Make a Plasticine or play dough river, figures and dove.
3. Make a collage picture of the scene. Try and find some suitably textured cloth for John's clothing.

Relevance to the children's lives

Jesus pleased his Father because he did what was right. God is pleased with us too whenever we do what is right.

Prayer

Jesus was praying when he was baptised. Ask the children what they think he said.

Verse

'Jesus ... was baptised by John in the Jordan.' Mark 1:9.

Song

John was baptising (Tune: Go Tell Aunt Rhodie)

- v.1 John was baptising
John was baptising
John was baptising to wash away all sin.
- v.2 He stood at the river (*three times*)
The people came to him.
- v.3 They went in the water (*three times*)
To wash away their sin.
- v.4 One day came Jesus (*three times*)
To be baptised by him.
- v.5 But John did not want to (*three times*)
He said you have no sin.
- v.6 But John baptised Jesus (*three times*)
And a dove came down on him.

Music: Traditional.