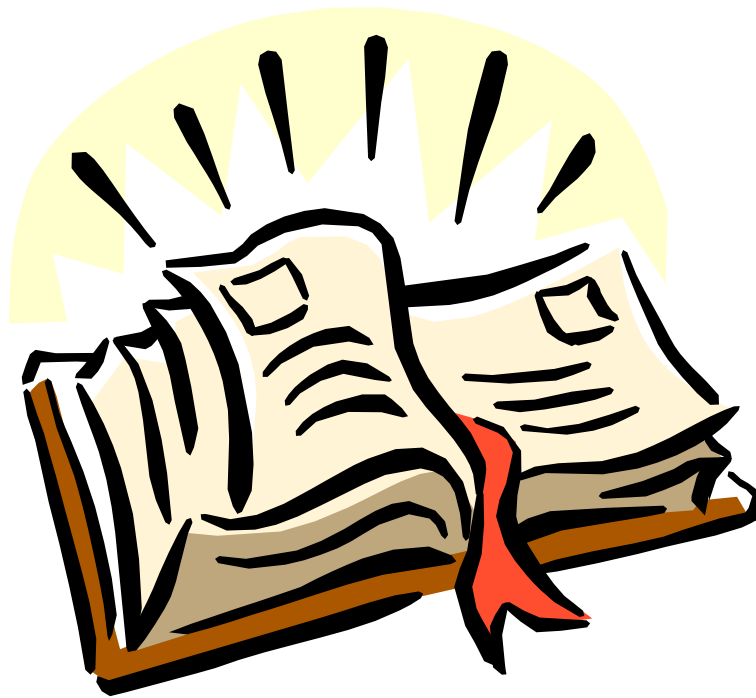


# Bible Time for Kids!



CHILDREN'S DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF: \_\_\_\_\_



**LESSON TITLE: John the Baptist**

**THEME: God's goodness leads us to repentance.**

**SCRIPTURE: Luke 3:1-22**

# Dear Parents...

Welcome to Bible Time for Kids! Bible Time for Kids is a series of daily devotions (five per week) for children and their families through which we hope to reinforce Sunday's lesson, provide ideas for the application of God's Word, and encourage your children to develop a daily devotional life. Since the age of your child will affect how they respond to the content, we suggest you make them age appropriate by adding your own ideas.

In the lesson this week, we learned about **John the Baptist (Luke 3:1-22)**. We encourage you to review these scriptures with your child. John the Baptist had a very special ministry. His purpose was to announce the arrival of the Messiah, our Lord and Savior—Jesus! John the Baptist is a very interesting man. We can learn a lot from his life and his service to the Lord.

His greatest message was "repent" as he prepared the people for Jesus' coming. To repent means to turn away from sin and to turn to God. The people needed to do some turning to prepare their hearts to meet Jesus. Today, as back then, all who would come to Jesus need to **repent**, to turn away from their sin and self-centeredness and to turn toward Jesus, receiving Him into their lives.

We hope you and your family will be blessed as you study God's Word together.

Day One

# Locusts and Wild Honey

**Text: Matthew 3:4** - "And John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey."

**Also read 1 Corinthians 1:26-31**

John the Baptist began his ministry about the time Jesus was born into a lowly manger. Most people who saw him probably thought he was a pretty strange guy. He lived out in the wilderness all by himself. He liked to wear camel's hair outfits with a leather belt. This was actually kind of the common dress for Hebrew prophets (sounds kind of itchy though!). John the Baptist ate locusts and wild honey. Can you imagine eating locusts for dinner?

John the Baptist didn't quite fit into what everyone may have thought when they imagined a "man of God." The picture in their minds of a man of God was probably the Pharisees with all of their long robes and expensive things; yet, what an awesome ministry he had—the forerunner to the Messiah!

In our reading in 1 Corinthians, we learn that God uses people that may seem strange or foolish to the world in great ways. In doing so, He confounds (amazes, confuses, and even embarrasses) people who feel they are wise and capable and receives glory for the work He does in us! Remember, God is always looking at our hearts, not our outward appearance. He is just looking for people and children whose hearts are willing to serve Him, no matter how foolish the world may think they are. It is God who enables us to serve Him with the gifts He has blessed each one of us with, and as we obey His call, He will reward our faithfulness. If you're feeling a little foolish, just remember, God called John the Baptist. Unless you order a Kid's Meal of "Locusts and Wild Honey" the next time you are at the drive through window of a fast food restaurant, you are not likely to top John the Baptist in "peculiarity."

- Pretend you are back in Bible times, and you need to describe John the Baptist to someone who had never seen him but needed to find him. What does he look like? What is he doing?
- Why does God choose to use people who are "foolish" in the world eyes?
- God is looking for people to serve Him. If God is not looking for wise, capable people with a great outward appearance, who is He looking for?

## Kid's Bible Dictionary



- Locusts:** A type of insect, similar to a grasshopper, that is common in the Middle East. In Bible times, they were eaten because they were a good source of protein.
- Wilderness:** Where John the Baptist lived. Away from the city, out in the country or desert regions.

# Abraham is My Dad!

**Text: Luke 3:8** - "Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as *our* father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.

**Also read John 8:39,40**

"Why didn't the Israelites want to believe in Jesus?" asked Joel. "Well," Mom replied, "some of them did believe in Jesus, but most of them didn't because of their pride. Many of them believed that they were already saved from their sins and going to heaven just because they were in Abraham's family. They could trace their family tree all of the way back to Abraham, and because Abraham had a special relationship with God, they felt that they were okay with God. The people did not understand that God wanted to have a relationship with each one of them, individually, and that He provided the way for that to happen by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross, taking the punishment for the sins of the world."

"Let me give you an example," Mom continued, "think about Grandpa John. Remember how that he was a missionary for many years and always served the Lord and loved Him greatly?" "Yeah," Joel replied, "he had a pretty exciting life on the mission field!" "That's right!" Mom said, "but what if you said that you didn't need Jesus because Grandpa John did a lot of great stuff for the Lord, and since you are related to Grandpa John, you don't have to ask Jesus to come into your heart? That is really what the Israelites did with Jesus. They thought that being children of Abraham was all that was needed to be right with God."

"I really like having my *own* relationship with the Lord," Joel said. "That's the important thing," replied Mom, "We will each answer to God for the choice we make to accept or reject salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Those who accept Jesus will become His own dear children—each one, individually!"

It's an awesome privilege that we can call God our Father and know that we are His children! What about you? Do you know you are His child? If not, believe in and accept Jesus, today, and He will lavish (pour) His love upon you.

- Why did many of the Israelites think they were already saved from their sins?
- Does being born into a Christian family, make you a Christian?
- How can we have a relationship with Jesus? (hint: John 3:16)

## Kid's Bible Dictionary



**Child of Abraham:** Someone who is related to Abraham.

**Child of God:** Someone who has been born into God's family by believing in Jesus.

# Making a U-turn

**Text: Romans 2:4** - "Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?"

**Also read Ephesians 2:4-7**

"Okay," Dad said, "I think that it may be time to get out the map now and look at the directions." The Johnson family was heading to the coast for a vacation. Dad thought that he remembered where the motel was, but now he wasn't so sure. As Mom looked at the map, she noticed that they had missed their turn off about 5 miles back. "Well, I guess my memory just isn't quite what it used to be," Dad said. So they went on to the next exit and made a U-turn to start going the right direction. They finally found the right turn off and found the motel. It turned out to be a nice vacation.

When you think of the word "repentance," what do you think of? One way of helping you to think of "repentance" is to think about making a U-turn. In the story above, Dad was going in the wrong direction; a U-turn was the only way to solve the problem. Before we come to know Jesus, our lives are going in the wrong direction. As long as we continue on that same road, we will never get to the place we need to be. We need a road map to tell us what direction we need to take. God has given man a road map—the Bible, God's Word, which shows us the direction for our lives.

Once Dad realized he was going the wrong direction, he had to take the right action—he had to turn his car around and start going the right way. When we understand through God's Word that we are going in the wrong direction, the action to take is simple—turn around! As we choose to turn around and serve the Lord, God will forgive our sins and strengthen and enable us to get going in the right direction. Repentance is really all about turning around.

- Have you or your family ever been lost somewhere? What did you do?
- What is a good way to describe "repentance?"
- What is the right action to take when we realize we are going in the wrong direction?

## Kid's Bible Dictionary



**Repentance:** The act of turning away from sin and turning to God.

# The Forerunner

**Text: Luke 3:16** - "John answered, saying to *them* all, 'I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.'"

**Also read John 1:6-13**

John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus. What does this mean? John the Baptist was chosen by the Lord *to go before* Jesus and preach about repentance (people changing their direction—see Day Three). He was preparing the way for people to receive Jesus as their Savior. In John 1:6-11, the Bible talks about what John did as the forerunner of Jesus. He came as a witness, to bear witness of the light that all through Him might believe. John was to tell the world about the Light of the world—Jesus—who was about to be revealed.

It was of great importance to John that people realized he was only someone to point the way to Jesus (John 3:28-30). His ministry was all about them seeing and coming to know JESUS! As you read John 1:6-13, what do you learn about Jesus? First of all, it says that Jesus is the *true* Light. Many others may say they are the light or have the light, but Jesus is the only one who truly is the Light of the world. The Bible also says that Jesus *gives* light to every person. Anyone can know God and have a relationship with Him through Jesus. No one will be left out. That is good news!

Though He came to give the world light, the world didn't want to *know* Him. They did not want to come to the light. In John 3:20, we read they would not come to the light because their deeds (actions) were evil. Unfortunately, most of the world rejects Jesus and the light. Even His own people, Israel, did not receive Him when He came. But, what a great promise we have in verses 12 and 13. As many as would *receive* Him became children of God. If you have received Jesus, you are a child of God. The light of the world lives in your heart!

- What did God call John the Baptist to do?
- In John 1:9, we learn that Jesus is the true \_\_\_\_\_.
- According to John 1:12, who will become children of God?

## Kid's Bible Dictionary



**Forerunner:** Someone who goes before another, usually to announce their coming.

**Light of the World:** Another name for Jesus.

Day Five

# Bearing Worthy Fruit

**Text: Luke 3:8** - "Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance,"

**Also read Luke 3:10-14**

This week we have talked a lot about repentance. Do you remember what repentance is? If you need help, you can look back to Day Three. For today, we are going to give you two situations, and you will get to decide which situation best describes what true repentance is. Are you ready? Let's go!

**SITUATION ONE:** Jared is playing with a toy and his little brother comes up and takes the toy out of his hands. Jared gets very upset and goes over and takes the toy back out of his brother's hand. He then pushes his brother down, which makes him cry. He then realizes that what he has done is wrong and asks his brother to forgive him for getting mad and pushing him down. An hour later his brother comes and takes another toy right out of his hands. This time Jared asks nicely for the toy back and his brother gives it back.

**SITUATION TWO:** Molly was in her class in school. She began to write funny notes to her friend Megan. Megan began to giggle at the notes and the teacher noticed that something was going on. She asked Megan and Molly what was going on and Molly admitted to writing a note and told the teacher that she was sorry. Later in the day, Molly wrote another note and gave it to Megan to try to get her to laugh.

Which situation demonstrates "true" repentance? Did Jared really repent or did Molly? The Bible says that when we say we are sorry for something and really repent, we will begin to act differently. We will change the way we are acting which will prove our repentance is real. Next time you say sorry, test yourself to see if you showed real repentance—did you change directions? Did you, then, begin to act differently?

- What is repentance? (See Day Three if you forgot.)
- Have you ever had someone tell you sorry when they really did not mean it?
- How will we know if we have truly repented?

## Kid's Prayer Time



As you pray this week, thank the Lord for His word and getting to learn about John the Baptist. Ask Him to help you to put into practice everything that you have learned. Have a great week!

# Memory Verse...

First and Second Grade

“And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.”

Third Grade and Above

“And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.”

Luke 3:3