



## WHAT IS BAPTISM?

*In our last program, we told us about Jesus when He was a child, what He was like, what He did, how He lived and His first visit to the temple in Jerusalem. Do you remember how old He was? 12 years old.*

*In our story today, we're going to speak about Him again, but this time He is about thirty years old and He's going to be baptized. Perhaps you are wondering....what is baptism exactly?... what happened when Jesus was baptized? Here are some questions that we all may ask ourselves and we will now help you to understand by talking about this episode of the Gospel.*

*Here is today's question: Why do people get baptized? At the end of today's story you will be able to answer this question.*

## WHAT HAPPENED WHEN JESUS WAS BAPTIZED?



When the angel Gabriel came to tell Zechariah and Elisabeth that they were going to have a son, he said to them:

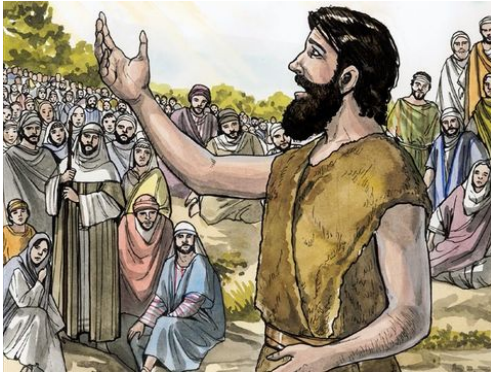
“You will call your son John. He will be a great prophet, he will speak to men on behalf of God. He will prepare for the coming of the promised savior.”

Their little boy, then became a young man and went to live alone in the desert.



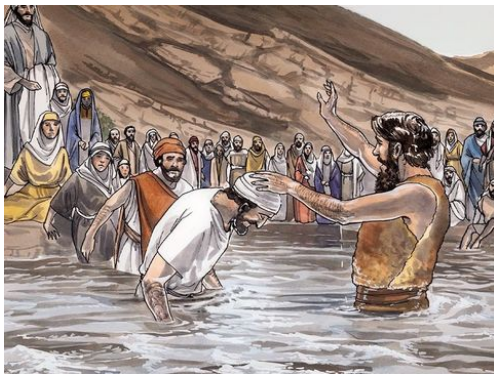
He wore a camel skin garment tied around his waist with a leather belt. He didn't worry much about his meals, he ate whatever found there, he ate roast grasshoppers and wild honey. He spent a lot of time praying and listening to God.

When the time came, he began to speak on behalf of God. Many men and women came to listen to him.



He told them: "You have strayed far from God. Look at the evil you are doing, God does not agree. Stop stealing, cheating, being violent, lying and being selfish. Repent, that is, turn your back on evil and turn to good. Change your ways. Ask God for forgiveness that He might pardon your disobedience and wickedness. He is ready to forgive you. He wants to

show that you need to begin a new life - a life of doing good, taking care of others, and sharing what you have with those who have nothing.



Many people came to understand that they had done things that were wrong. They asked God for forgiveness and came to John by the Jordan River. John plunged them into the water and baptized them. In doing this, the people were showing that they had decided to give up what they were doing wrong. They asked God for forgiveness and believed that God

forgave them and they then decided to change their ways.

One day, John was very surprised. He saw a man coming to him to be baptized. It was Jesus.

"No", John said to Him, "You do not need to be baptized for You have never done anything wrong, You should baptize me instead."

But Jesus insisted, "For the moment, you must accept, for it is important that we do all that is right before God."

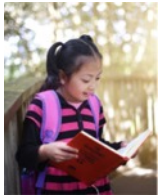
So, John plunged Jesus into the water and baptized Him. As Jesus came out of the water, supernatural things started to happen: Heaven opened and John saw the Spirit of God descending on Jesus in the form of a dove and resting on him. At the same time, a voice resounded from heaven. It was the voice of God:

"This is my beloved son, I take pleasure in him."

Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit.

He was then ready to begin His mission. He came back from the river Jordan, and the Spirit of God would lead Him to a totally different place, to the desert where He would be all alone. This is where we will find him in our next story.

### **1, 2 3, 4 AND YOU AND ME!**



*John the Baptist spoke to the people of his time, but what he told them is still true today.*

*God speaks to me as He does to you:*

*-You must acknowledge that you do not always do the right thing, so you must ask me for forgiveness and I am ready to forgive you .Then, you must decide to do what is right and I will be with you to help you.*

*You can respond to God's call. You can enter your room for example, or you can go to a quiet place and talk to Him. You may not see Him but He will hear you. You can tell Him what is wrong and ask Him for forgiveness and help.*

*Then, when you are older, you too, can be baptized.*

*Now let's answer the question: Why do men and women get baptized?*

*They do it in obedience to God. They ask forgiveness for their mistakes, they believe that God forgives them, and they commit to doing what is right.*

### **4, 3, 2, 1 AND WE PARENTS!**



*For centuries the people of Israel continued to practice religious rites, but no longer feared God. John the Baptist's mission was to awaken consciences, to reprimand them severely, to warn of the seriousness of disobedience, of sin, so that everyone could return to God sincerely, asks Him for forgiveness and commit to obeying Him. Then the person could be baptized. Baptism is a personal commitment before God and before men.*

*We teach our children to turn away from evil and to love what is good. We make them aware that God sees us and that He is always ready to welcome us and forgive us if we are sincere. We know that He has compassion on us and our children?*