

John the Baptist

REPENT • ADVENT 2 • YEAR B

MARK 1:1-8

Grades
1-2



2

What is happening in this story?

The Gospel of Mark begins with “good news.” Kids get to find out how Jesus got started with his ministry (or work) while he was on earth. They may be more familiar with Jesus as Mary and Joseph’s son, born in a manger. There’s a memorable main character in this story, John the Baptist. He announces clearly, like the angels did in Bethlehem, that Jesus is very significant. John also preaches in firm, memorable ways about repentance—turning around from sin to live life anew.

Why does this story matter for kids?

Kids can grow into the idea that all Christian life begins with repentance. This was part of John’s message to those who would listen. They may already be familiar with faith-based terms like *sin* and *forgiveness*, or heard from others that, when we sin, we can ask for and receive forgiveness from God—and from those we’ve sinned against. Repentance doesn’t mean feeling bad for what we are doing wrong. It means turning around and changing, walking away from bad choices and starting to make good choices.

What is the lectionary connection?

On this second Sunday of Advent, we hear messages about repentance in not only the gospel reading, but the First and Second Readings as well. Repentance matters. As we wait for Christmas, and the second coming of Christ, we can examine our hearts and repent from sin, turning instead to the forgiveness and new life in Christ.

AGE LEVEL TIP

Today’s story might get kids talking about their own or someone else’s baptism. As you share in these stories, be mindful that not all kids have had experiences with or exposure to baptism.



GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Clear tape
- Markers
- Scissors

LESSON SUPPLIES

- Water
- Plastic tub
- Plastic cups
- Towel (1 large)
- Birthday candle (blue)
- Dot stickers (red, yellow, orange)
- Craft sticks

WHIRL SUPPLIES • WHIRL STORY BIBLES • DVD • WALL CHART • LEAFLETS

Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Before class, fill a plastic tub one-quarter full of water. Place the tub on a large towel. Encourage kids to move cups in and out of the water.

Invite kids to gather near the Wall Chart.

Point out today's date, church season (Advent), color (blue), and icon (Advent wreath). **This is the second week in Advent.** Point out the candle in the previous wedge. Then tape a blue birthday candle to today's wedge. Invite a volunteer to stick small red, orange, and yellow dot stickers to make a flame over the candle.

During Advent we get ready for Jesus to come. How many weeks are left before Christmas? Help kids count the remaining wedges in Advent.

Crouch low, saying, **"Wait, wait, anticipate. Jesus is coming!"** Begin speaking softly, growing a little louder with each word. Rise taller and taller as you say each word, ending with a little jump.

Pass out leaflets and markers.

During Advent we get ready for Jesus to come. Talk with kids about what they see in the pictures. Encourage kids to circle any of the represented traditions that they

participate in during Advent. **People get ready for Jesus in many different ways. What are some things your family does to get ready for Christmas? Do you mark the days on a wall calendar? Read from the Bible? Decorate a tree? Bake cookies?** Allow kids to respond, then have them draw something their family does in the box provided. Collect their leaflets until Respond.

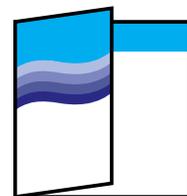
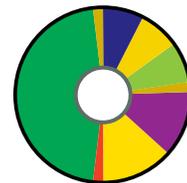
Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

The kids are getting ready to put on a Christmas pageant. Let's see how it goes.

View Episode 2, "Clogged Conscious," on the Whirl Year B Winter PreK–Grade 2 DVD.

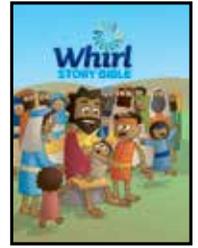
Ask kids these questions about the video:

- **Why was Clara upset?**
- **How do you feel when you know that you've done something you're not supposed to do?**
- **Clara talked about repenting. What does that mean?** (Change behavior, do something different)
- **Does God always forgive us?**



Pass out Whirl Story Bibles to kids.

Let's find our story today! Open your Bible with kids to "Get Ready for Jesus!" on page 198. Start by pointing out the graphic that shows the Advent wreath in the blue circle for the Advent season. Before you read, invite kids to look for John the Baptist, people listening to John, and a man being baptized in the Jordan River.



Read the story and Ada and Otto's questions and comments on each page.

Ask these questions after you read the story:

- Why did John the Baptist tell people to "get ready"?
- What did John tell the people to do to get ready for Jesus?
- Do you think you would have listened to John? Why or why not?
- What can you do to get ready for Jesus?

Play together.

John told the people to repent. That means turn around and do something different. Let's play a turn around game. Choose one person to be John. Kids stand in a wide circle around him and ask, "What time is it?" When John says a time, kids move that number of steps toward him. When John says, "Time to turn around—repent!" kids turn and run away while John tries to tag them.

BIBLE BIT

- God gave the "okay" to eat locusts in Leviticus 11:22. "Of these you may eat any kind of locust, katydid, cricket or grasshopper." Locusts contain more protein than many grains.

WATCH IT AGAIN

- In the pageant, the angel tries to bring Mary some "good news." What good news did Clara need to hear?

OUR CHURCH

- Arrange a visit to the place where baptisms are normally conducted in your church.
- Invite a pastor or elder to talk to the kids about baptism.

RESPOND 10

Pass out leaflets, scissors, craft sticks, and crayons.

Unfold and tear off leaflet square.

1. **John told people to repent (change their behavior) and be baptized to get ready for Jesus. Let's play the story.**
2. Have kids cut out the two Bible times people along the red lines on the back of the leaflet panel, fold in half along the green dotted line, and tape back-to-back on one end of a craft stick.
3. Help kids cut a slit in the leaflet along the red line.
4. Show kids how to refold their leaflets in half along the same red line where they just cut their slits. Make sure the baptism artwork is on the inside of the fold.
5. Have kids fold the bottom part of the leaflet back along the white dotted line. When kids hold the leaflet now, there should appear to be layers of water in the scene.
6. Invite kids to insert the craft stick into the slit on their leaflet.
7. **Move the stick up and down to show people being baptized in the river.**
8. **What can you do to get ready for Jesus?** Allow kids to respond.

LAUNCH 10

Circle up with kids for a quick review.

Today we talked about ways to get ready for Jesus during Advent. John the Baptist told people to repent and change their behavior. Stand up and show me what it means to repent. Invite kids to stand up and turn around. **How can you get ready for Jesus?** Allow kids to respond.

Pass out leaflet panels and markers.

Invite kids to connect the dashes to make four curved lines. People might have frowned before repenting. **Turn the face around to show how people felt after repenting!**

Send kids out.

Crouch low, saying, **“Wait, wait, anticipate. Jesus is coming!”** Begin speaking softly, growing a little louder with each word. Rise taller and taller as you say each word, ending with a little jump.

Pray together: **Dear Jesus, help me turn around and get ready for you to come! Thank you! Amen.**

Thank kids for helping to get ready for Jesus. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.