



SESSION 5: The Arrival

Jesus' Baptism

Session 5: The Arrival

Key takeaways for Pre-Disciples:

- God has sent his promised king, His very own son, Jesus , will save people from their sins
- God sent John, to prepare the way for Jesus, by calling people to be baptised, and turn away from their evil and disobedience and to turn to God, to trust and follow Him in a changed life.
- God publically announces that Jesus is his Son and he delights in him.

Part 1

identity

worship

mission

Part 1: catch up

- Icebreaker question – Get everyone to share about how their week has gone, what has been happening in their life in the past 7 days. Listen out for things you could pray for.
- Ask everyone how they got on sharing the story
 - (this is not to keep tabs on people, but is a helpful reminder that part of them learning the story well is you asking them every week if they managed to share it.)
- Ask someone to re-tell last week's story

Part 2 (story)

identity

community

mission

Jesus' Baptism: The Arrival of the King (Matthew 3:1-17, Mark 1:4-11, Luke 3:1-22, John 1:19-18)

Story-Audio-Link: <https://christ-central.org.uk/pre-disciple/>

So God's people waited on the promise for a king who would restore them back into life with God. Many years past.

*Until the time had come, **God did finally send his promised king, his very own Son, and God sent angels to announce the good news that he had been born and that his name was Jesus which means God will save his people.***

*A few years past and **God called one more spokesmen to prepare the way for his King, and this man's name was John. Now John lived in the desert, and ate honey and locusts and wore camel's hair for clothing.***



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*And John had a message from God, he told people that **God's King was coming, and that God was calling people to turn away from their evil and disobedience and to trust God and follow him, and the way that people could respond to this call was to be baptised in the river where John was and be forgiven.***

*Now huge crowds of people came out to the wilderness where John was, and some of the religious leaders also came to inspect what was going on. When John saw them he said 'you bunch of snakes, don't say you are right with God because of your family heritage ...God's judgement is coming and **you too must live a life that shows you have turned away from evil and disobedience and turned to follow God.**'*

Now everyone was expecting the Promised King to come soon, and they were eager to know if John was he. John answered their questions by saying, "I baptise you with water, but someone is coming soon who is greater than I am, so much greater that I am not even worthy to be His slave. He will baptise you with God's Spirit."

*One day when the crowds were being baptised, **Jesus Himself came to be baptised by John**, even though Jesus had never disobeyed God. But John tried to talk Him out of it. "I am the one who needs to be baptised by you," he said, "so why are you coming to me?" But Jesus said "**It should be done because God wants it.**" So John agreed to baptise Him.*

*After His baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, **the heavens were opened and He saw God's Spirit descending like a dove and settling on Him. And God's voice resounded out from the sky, "This is my beloved Son, who brings me great joy."** From this point Jesus went out and from town to town, **began healing the sick and proclaiming the good news that God's kingdom had come, God has come to be present with his people.***

And that's the story from God's word.

Re-tell the story as group: allow everyone to share a section of the story. If there is more than 6 people consider breaking up into pairs to retell the story.

Questions for discussion

1. What do you like about this story/What stood out to you?
2. What bothered you about this story?
3. What does this story show you about God?
4. What does this story show you about people?

Part 3 (practice / takeaways)

identity

worship

mission

Ask the remaining questions:

5. What does this story mean for your life? How will you live your life differently having learned this story?
6. How will you remember this story? (tell it!)



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7. Who are you able to tell this story to?

Encourage everyone in the group to think of people in their life whom they could retell the story to; mention that at the next session we will recap the story and ask who remembered to tell the story. Again it is helpful to emphasise the reason for going and telling the story ourselves is that it is the best way for us to remember the story.

Other useful media resources: my favourite video off Jesus getting baptised

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZ5jm5lx5bY>

Notes for leaders - questions / topics that may arise

What is God's Kingdom?

The Kingdom of God is literally the place where God reigns and rules as king. In the Garden, the first man and woman lived in God's kingdom as caretakers over the earth, however when they rebelled against God in partnership with the snake/the satan, the world and humanity became deeply distorted and broken as their relationship to God was broken. Humanity continued their rebellion against God and the world continues to be infected with the consequence of this separation from God; sickness, death, injustice.

When God sends His Son to earth, His very presence comes to live in the midst of this broken world, to bring the reign of God to the earth, through transforming individuals in physical healing and spiritually back into relationship with God. This is why in Mark 1, Jesus announces the Good News that Kingdom of God has come near, because Jesus is the promised King bringing the Kingdom of God.

This is a video that gives a bit more context to the Good News of the Kingdom God that Jesus proclaimed. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmFPS0f-kzs&t=197s>

What is the significance of being baptised?

Within the community of Israel, the act of being immersed in water contained a couple deep meanings. Firstly, to go down into the waters is a symbol of death and the subsequent coming out of the water represents new life. This theme runs through the stories of creation; God separating the waters to bring forth life, similarly the story of Noah and the flood, where God's act of separating the waters is reversed and the waters bring death, yet Noah and his family are rescued through the waters into a new life. This theme is most obvious in the story of Moses, who is saved through the waters as a baby in the *tebah* (though often translated basket – it is only used in one other story in the Bible, literally the exact work used to describe the ark in Genesis 6-8), and all the Israelites go down into the depths of the sea Red Sea, whilst Pharaoh and his army are destroyed in the sea, God leads the people out from the waters into a new life freed from Egypt's control.



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This is why Paul can refer to all Israel being baptised in the sea in 1 Cor 10:2. This motif of the waters marking death and life in the context of John's message marks the end of an old era and the beginning of a new. For John, this is why his accompanying message was for people to be forgiven, by turning away from their old life of disobedience and to embrace a new life of following God in preparation for the coming of God's promised King.

A second use of water symbolism is the use of water in ritual purification. Under the Law of Moses ritual washing was necessary part of moving from a state of being ritually unclean to clean (Leviticus 14:5-6, 50-52, 15:13, et 21:4). In the context of John, this process of Baptism was required of Non Jewish people who wished to convert to Judaism, as they were seen to be in a state of uncleanness before God. John's message however is that all Israel is in a place of uncleanness and must not think that because they are Abraham's descendants they do not need to undergo the same movement away from evil and disobedience and towards living a life of trusting obedience.

Baptism then functions as the physical and tangible sign of this movement in the heart and life of the individual, from unclean to clean, from death of the old life to birth of the new life.



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Feedback from Group Leader

In our vision for discipleship, we have identified 4 key ingredients to healthy and growing disciples. As you are leading your group, for each session, make some notes under each heading for how the group is faring in each of these areas.

identity

worship

community

mission