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Jesus Is Baptized

Matthew 3:13–17 · Sprout · Ages 5–8

Before Jesus began teaching and healing, he lived quietly in the town of Nazareth for many years. Then one day he set out from Galilee and walked to the Jordan River.

His relative John was there. People called him John the Baptist. He wore rough clothes of camel's hair, and crowds came out to hear him. John told them to turn away from their sins and get ready, because the one God had promised was coming soon. People who were sorry for their sins went down into the river, and John baptized them in the water.

Now Jesus came and asked John to baptize him. John tried to stop him. He knew that Jesus was far greater than he was. He told Jesus that he was the one who needed Jesus to baptize him, not the other way around!

Jesus answered him kindly. He told John to go ahead, because this was part of doing everything God wanted. So John agreed.

Jesus had never sinned, not even once. He did not need to say sorry for anything. But he stepped into the water with all the people who did. He came to stand right beside sinners, so that he could save them.

John baptized Jesus in the Jordan. As soon as Jesus came up out of the water, something wonderful happened. The sky opened, and Jesus saw the Spirit of God, in the form of a dove, flying down to rest on him. Then a voice spoke from heaven. It was God the Father, telling everyone that Jesus was his own Son, the Son he loves and who makes him glad.

That day, God showed who he is: the Father speaking from heaven, the Son standing in the river, and the Holy Spirit coming down as a dove. One God in three Persons. We call this the Holy Trinity.

Jesus' baptism was also a beginning. Soon he would start teaching, healing and calling friends to follow him.

When we are baptized, our sins are washed away, the Holy Spirit comes to live in us, and God the Father makes us his children too.

Talk about it

1. Why did John try to stop Jesus from being baptized?
2. What happened when Jesus came up out of the water?
3. What does God do for us in Baptism?

Key verse: Mt 3:17. Look it up in your Bible.