



Date: _____

Series: Meet the Amazing Jesus
Winter Year 3, Lesson 35

Repent—Turn to God

Primary Scripture: Luke 3:1-23 The ministry of John the Baptist

Key Verse: 1 John 1:9, “God is faithful and reliable. If we confess our sins, he forgives them and cleanses us from everything we’ve done wrong.”

How does this address a need in our kids' lives?

Kids need to know that their choices make a difference. The message behind repentance is to make a choice to follow God’s way and not the way of sin. This choice can only happen through the power of the Holy Spirit. It comes because of our faith relationship with Jesus. Daily we are called to repentance, which means we turn away from our sins and turn towards God to follow his way. Our faith always keeps us in a position of turning to God. In him, we always find forgiveness and the power of his life in ours.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Jesus took our sins upon himself. Even at his baptism, Jesus was baptized into the message of repentance, though he had nothing to repent of. He was holy. Identifying with humanity’s sin, Jesus took that sin with him to the cross.

Jesus in us: Having been baptized into Christ, Jesus dwells in us. As we remember our baptisms daily, we see how God’s presence in us keeps us turning from our sin to him.

Jesus through us: We, like John the Baptist, can proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is at hand and now is the time for all to turn from their sin to God.

Stamp of Excellence:

Remind the kids what excellent worship looks like. We are in God's presence to honor him. Put on your best manners. This might include wearing your name tag, participating eagerly at all times, listening when the leader is talking, raising your hand to speak, not distracting others, playing the learning game with cooperation, singing enthusiastically, and praying reverently. Offer rewards or positive reinforcement to those who worship with excellence.



Worship

Invocation:

Let kids bring forward the worship symbols such as a cross, candles, Bible, and offering plate. Invite God's presence and call by name Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Attention Grabber:

Capture the children's attention and help them focus on the worship theme for the day.

Supplies: a tool belt, hammer, one or more long nails, staple gun, duct tape, a banana

Enter wearing a tool belt with a hammer, a roll of duct tape, a staple gun, and some large nails in it. Have a banana ready, out of sight.

Adapt the following story to your own life situation, e.g., if you are single, it happened when you were a teenager still living at home; if you are a wife, tell it as though it was your husband's experience.

Not long ago, I was working around the house...

Put your hands on the tool belt.

...being a good husband – doing what they call “Honey-do’s” – “Honey, would you do this for me? Honey, would you do that?”

We were to host a party that night at our house, so I was helping get it all spruced up.

Well, doing *honey do's* can cause a man to work up a powerful hunger. So I came waltzing into the kitchen to see if I could find something to eat. Guess what I saw on the kitchen table – a beautiful bunch of ripe bananas—the bananas my wife was going to use for the evening's dessert.

But I love bananas! They are so sweet and delicious – just about my favorite thing to eat in the whole world. Surely she wouldn't miss it if I took just one...

So I took a banana from the bunch and started to peel it.

Take out the banana and peel it just 2-3 inches from the top. Start to take a bite but don't bite all the way through.

Before I could go any farther, I heard my wife's voice from the bedroom: "_____ (your name), is that you?" I said, "Uh huh."

She said, "What are you doing?"

I said, "I'm getting something to eat."

She said, "Don't eat any of the bananas. I'm going to use them in a dessert for tonight's party and I need every one. I'm coming in there in just a minute to get it started."

Uh oh. Now what do I do? If I admit I already started peeling one, I'm gonna be in trouble. "Okay, dear." I looked around, trying to figure out what to do. And then I got a brilliant idea!

Look down at your tool belt. Hold up the staple gun and look at the kids with a sly smile.

I can staple it back together!

Staple the peel back, but demonstrate that the peel still isn't secured well enough.

Hmmm. The staples must be too short. Now what? I know!

Hold up the hammer and a long nail, look at the kids and smile.

This is bound to work!

Nail the peel into the banana until it sticks out the other side.

Uh oh. The nails are too long.

Look down at your tool belt again.

I've got it!

Hold up the duct tape.

This will do the trick!

As you tape the banana back together, make a total mess of it.

Uh oh. What do you think I should do now?

Take one or more suggestions until one of the kids suggests just admitting what you have done and accepting the consequences.

You know, that's exactly what I did! What do you think my wife said?

Again take one or more responses.

She said, "That's okay, honey. Go ahead and eat the part you touched. There will still be enough."

I looked at the banana. I wasn't about to eat that mess! And then I realized – if I had only admitted it to my wife sooner, before I started trying to cover things up, I could have had a couple of bites of banana. But because I tried to hide what I did, I didn't get anything.

It can be just like that with God and us, can't it? Sometimes we try to hide our sins, and things only get worse. Our worship today will focus on God's wonderful forgiving heart, and how blessed we will be when we are honest with him about our sin.

Let's praise him for his wonderful love right now.

Songs of Worship:

Choose two or three songs. Briefly introduce songs so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God!

Your choice of music.

The Power of the Cross:

Jesus has given his life for us that we might have forgiveness and power to live for him.

Supplies: "SIN" sign, "JESUS" sign

In advance, hang a sign on the back wall that reads "SIN." Hang a sign on the front wall that reads "JESUS." Construct both of these signs similarly. Ask all of the kids to turn around and face the back wall. Ask them if anyone notices anything special or unusual. Someone will identify the "SIN" sign. Next, ask the kids to turn around and ask what they see now. Someone will point out the "JESUS" sign.

Which would you rather have in your lives? Jesus, who showed his love for you by dying on the cross for your sins and who wants to be a part of your lives, OR sin, which means doing the things that God does not want? Which do you want to face?

Now turn to the back wall again. I have a code word. When I say that code word, I want you to turn around and face the front wall. The code word is “Repent.” Let’s see if we can all do this together. Ready?

One... Two... Three... Repent!

“Repent” means to turn from your sin and turn to God. Let’s practice the exercise one more time. Turn around... **One... Two... Three... Repent!**

Let’s repent by turning to God. Let’s talk to him about anything that we have on our minds that we may have done to sin against him or anyone else. Let’s ask his forgiveness in Jesus’ name now silently.

1 John 1:9 says, *“God is faithful and reliable. If we confess our sins, he forgives them and cleanses us from everything we’ve done wrong.”*

I want you to know that when you face Jesus, you are forgiven. You are clean in God’s sight.

Let’s sing about his amazing grace right now.

Song of Response:

Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want to help them celebrate what God has done by singing a song of praise.

Offering:

Teach the importance of giving and talk about the mission activities they are supporting.

Have the kids come forward and bring their offerings. As they do so, remind them that sometimes money can be something the devil uses to cause people to sin.

People sin with money when they love money more than they love God. That is why giving our offerings are so important. It is a way that we can show God that we love him more than we love money. When we give our offerings, we are saying “thank you” to God for giving us money in the first place.



The Word

Bible Presentation:

Help children pay attention by giving them a word or concept to listen for as you read. Consider letting a child read who could do so with excellence.

Show the video titled *The Animated Stories from the New Testament: John the Baptist*, published by Nest Family Entertainment.

OR

Read Luke 3:1-23 in a creative way.

Application:

What were some of the ways John preached that the people should repent from their sins? *(They should be baptized. They should give food and clothes to those who need them. They should not cheat people or use blackmail or threats to get money from others.)*

How are these acts turning away from sin and turning toward God? *(People choose to treat others in a godly way rather than out of selfishness.)*

What did God say about his Son, Jesus, when he was baptized? *(“You are my Son, whom I love. I am pleased with you.”)*

Learning Game:

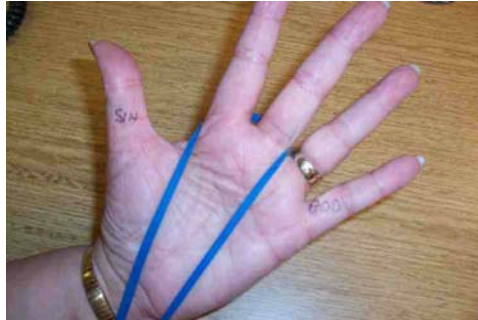
Some churches dismiss children from the adult service at this time to join Kids Church. The learning game provides a fun kinesthetic activity to help kids connect with each other. The learning point will help reinforce the theme of the day.

Normally the learning game happens in the middle of the hour. We have moved it to the end of the worship today so kids can practice with the trick until their parents arrive

“Repent Rubber Bands”

Supplies needed: marker or pen, rubber bands

Show the kids the following trick. Afterwards, share rubber bands with them and let them practice the trick. You can demonstrate this on your own hand, or use a volunteer.



Write the word “sin” on the inside of your thumb. Then write the word “God” on the inside of your little finger between the knuckle and first joint. Next, hold your hand flat and open, so fingers are pointing upward. Place a small-medium rubber band around the pointer finger and middle finger. Pull the rubber band gently on the palm side, making a space.

Now curl all four fingers down and into the space you just made. Then let the rubber band go so it's touching all four fingernails. When you extend your fingers straight upwards again, the rubber band will flip from the pointer finger and middle finger to the ring finger and the little finger.



The rubber band that was pointing to sin is now pointing to God. That is the definition of repent – to turn from our sin to God.

Explain to the kids that John the Baptist gave a message that prophets throughout the Bible gave.

John warned people and encouraged them to turn from their sin and selfishness to God. We, too, need to do the same thing.

Execute the trick. Reload.

John the Baptist baptized Jesus. In doing so, Jesus said, “I agree that everyone must repent by turning from their own sin and turning to God.”

Execute the trick.

John the Baptist did not want to baptize Jesus because he knew Jesus was without sin. Jesus did not have to turn from sin and repent. Jesus knew that he would take all of our sin upon himself. He said, "Let me be baptized so I can show my agreement to the message of repentance. All people should turn from their sin and turn to God."

Execute trick.

When we are baptized today, God makes a special agreement with us. He connects us with Jesus himself and shows it in a public way. When we are baptized, we demonstrate the message of repentance. This shows that we turn from our sin and turn to God.

Execute trick. Then distribute rubber bands and have kids do it.

If time allows, have one child come forward and demonstrate the rubber band trick for the others, explaining how this is like repentance: Turning from sin to God.



Witness

Witness and Tell:

Give children opportunities to share how God is working in their lives. It is best to use a microphone to ask children interview questions around the theme for the day.

If time allows, have kids share sins in their lives in which they have repented.

Prayer:

Let the kids pray out loud. If you are using a microphone, invite children to form a prayer line and speak their thanksgivings or requests. If you have portable microphones, you can roam the audience. Kids can also go to prayer stations set up for specific types of prayer.

Blessing:

Speak a blessing prayer over the children. Personalize this to your setting. Use a special scripture verse or blessing around the theme of the day.

Song of Sending:

Choose one song. Briefly introduce song so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God.

Supplies:

Attention Grabber:

- tool belt
- hammer
- one or more long nails
- staple gun
- duct tape
- banana

Power of the Cross:

- SIN sign
- JESUS sign

Game:

- marker or pen
- rubber bands (enough for every child)

Bible Presentation:

- video titled *The Animated Stories from the New Testament: John the Baptist*, published by Nest Family Entertainment — order from:
http://www.nestfamily.com/childrens-bible-stories/store/product_detail.asp?ProductID=JBD&ProductIDF=&deptid=1&start=1&page_rec=20

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