

City LG—January 29th, 2023

Today's Bible Story: Help Me (John the Baptist in Prison) • *Matthew 11:1-6 (James 1:5)*

Today's Bottom Line: If you don't understand something, ask.

Monthly Memory Verse: *The LORD gives wisdom. Knowledge and understanding come from his mouth.* Proverbs 2:6 (NIV)

WORSHIP: Fireblazin' and Zeal

"Hello, everyone! It's great to be here with you as we look at another part of God's Big Story.

"We started in the beginning when God made everything in the entire world! Unfortunately, people turned away from God, and the world was broken. But God had a plan all along to make things right.

"Part of that plan was sending a baby boy at just the right time. Who was that baby? (Pause for response.) That's right, Jesus! We've been learning a lot about Jesus this month—how He grew in wisdom and strength, how He was baptized in the Jordan River, and how He stood up to the devil's tricks in the desert.

"A couple of weeks ago, we talked about Jesus' cousin, John. John was born just six months before Jesus, to a priest named Zechariah and his wife, Elizabeth. Even before John was born, an angel visited Zechariah and told him that John would be the one to point people to the Messiah who was to come."

"The thing about John is that he was a little bit . . . different. He wore clothes made of camel hair, and he ate locusts and wild honey. John was probably pretty itchy wearing all that camel hair.

"But most importantly, God used John in a mighty way. John preached and taught people about God down by the Jordan River. He called people to turn back to God and prepare their hearts for the Rescuer who was to come. John also baptized people. He even baptized Jesus!

"When Jesus came out of the water, God's Holy Spirit came down like a dove and rested on Him. God spoke, saying . . .

Open the Bible to Matthew 3:17 and read.

"This is my Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with him.

"I'm sure John was surprised to see and hear that—just like everyone else!

"Let me tell you something else about John. He was very brave! He wasn't afraid to speak the truth to powerful leaders. John even stood up to King Herod, and told him that what he was doing went against God's law.

"As you can imagine, King Herod didn't really like being told what to do. Herod was so angry that he threw poor John into jail! Let's find out what happened next with the help of this week's Story Lab!"

CG: Lesson Video (Runtime: 11:00)

"John wasn't afraid to ask questions when there was something he wanted to understand. Asking questions is a great way to find knowledge! Poor John was stuck in prison, so it was important for him to know that everything he'd been standing for was still true: Jesus really was the Messiah.

"All of us will have questions from time to time, including questions about what we believe. When we do have questions, we can always talk to God about them. Let's learn this week's Bottom Line!"

CG: Bottom Line Video (Runtime: 1:00)

SLIDE: Bottom Line

[Bottom Line] “If you don’t understand something, ask God.”

“Jesus’ own brother, James, once wrote this.

Open the Bible to James 1:5 (NIV) and read.

“If any of you needs wisdom, you should ask God for it. He will give it to you.

“It’s so good to know that God is there to give us the wisdom and knowledge we need! Let’s pray about that.”

PRAY: “Dear God, sometimes we have questions about things that are happening in our lives or questions about what we believe. Sometimes we feel confused because things happen that just don’t seem to make sense. Help us remember that when we do have questions, we can pray to You, just like this, and talk to You about what’s on our mind. Thank You for always hearing us when we pray. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

“John was in a pretty tough situation. He was in prison. He was discouraged. and things didn’t seem to be going his way. All of that made John question what he already knew—that Jesus was the Messiah. So John did the best thing he knew to do. He took his questions to Jesus.

“Sure enough, Jesus answered John and made sure John knew that He really is the Son of God.

“All of us will have questions from time to time. There will be things that we don’t understand. When that happens, you don’t have to keep those questions inside.

SLIDE: Bottom Line

[Bottom Line] “If you don’t understand something, ask God.

“If you have questions in school about how to spell a word or solve a math problem, what can you do? (Pause for response.) Right, you can ask your teacher. If you have a question about things that are happening in your life or why things are the way they are, or maybe you have a question about what you believe, you can talk to God about those things, any time! You can ask the people around you who follow Jesus, too. They can help you talk things out, and they can also point you to different verses and parts of the Bible that can help you.

“God has put people in our lives who can help us talk about our questions so we can **make the wise choice**. And remember, God is always there to welcome our questions with love and compassion. You don’t ever have to keep your questions to yourself. Ask those questions so you can find knowledge!”

OFFERING TIME:

All this month, we have been bringing our money to support Vida Nueva Ministries in Piedras Negras, Mexico. Your offering helps people just like you to have the resources they need to experience a new life with Jesus! Here is a picture of our friends Eli and Mandy Garcia and their family...

SLIDE: Eli and Mandy

They are our friends and Parkview Global heroes that tell people about Jesus down in Mexico. So, if you brought your offering today, you can bring it up now while this video plays!

CG: Vida Nueva Ministries Video (Runtime: 2:00)