

PRAY *Have a parent open up this lesson in prayer*

“Dear God, bless us in our time of Family Worship! Help us to understand the Bible more so that we can love You. Amen.”

OPENING ACTIVITY

Increase or Decrease

Select a kid to think of a number between 1 and 100 (no changing numbers part way through). Then allow the other kids to guess the number. After each guess, the kid who’s thinking of the number will tell the kids if they should increase or decrease their guess to be closer to the number. When the kids guess the right number, the kid who got it right, gets to choose a new number.

Say: That was fun! You had to increase and decrease your guesses to get the correct answer. Today we will learn about a time when John told people that Jesus must increase while he decreased. What do you think it means for Jesus to increase?

Say: Jesus is God the Son. It is important to understand why He came to earth. Our Big Picture Question helps us understand what this all means. Our question is:

Why did Jesus become human?

Say: Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners. For Jesus to increase means that He is glorified as he obeys God’s plan!

READ take turns as family members to read parts of the Bible Story. Open a Bible to show where this story comes from.

The BIBLE Story

John Pointed to Jesus

Matthew 3; John 1; 3

Jesus and His disciples went out into the countryside. People came to see them, and Jesus taught the people. Many people were baptized.

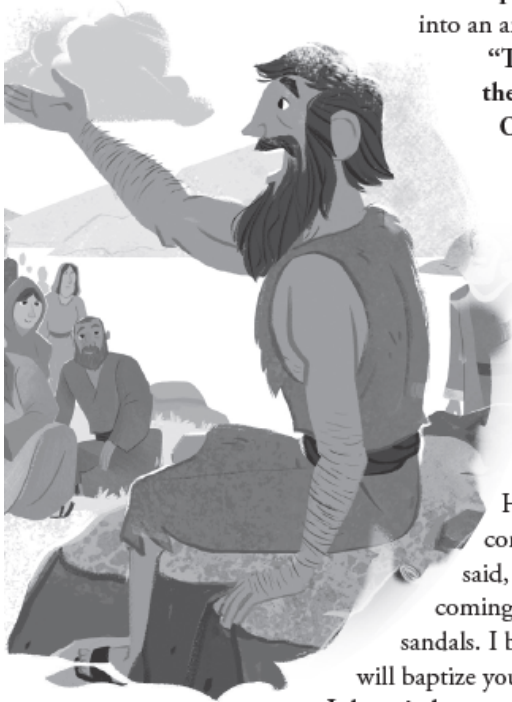
Nearby, John the Baptist was baptizing people too.

Some of the people who followed John got into an argument. They went to John.

“Teacher,” they said, “remember the man you talked about, the One who was with you on the other side of the Jordan River? His disciples are baptizing people, and people are starting to follow Him.”

John’s followers were talking about Jesus. John answered them, “You heard me say that I am not the Messiah. I am the messenger who goes before Him to announce that He is coming.” This was true. John had said, “Someone greater than me is coming. I am not worthy to remove His sandals. I baptize you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

John tried to explain by talking about a wedding. When two people get married, the man who marries the bride is the groom. His friend stands with him at the wedding, and he is happy to be there and hear the groom’s voice. John also knew



that a wedding is the groom's special day; **the groom's friend should not make it about himself.** This was how John felt—like a groom's friend—because he was happy that Jesus, the Messiah, had come. John said, "Jesus must increase, but I must decrease."

Then John explained why Jesus was more important than himself. John was from the earth, and he could only talk about things on earth. Jesus—the One who comes from heaven—talked about things in heaven because He had seen them! Still, no one believed what Jesus said.

Whoever believes Jesus knows that God tells the truth. God sent Jesus to earth, and Jesus speaks God's words.

The Father loves the Son and has given Him power over everything. Whoever believes in the Son will have eternal life, but whoever refuses to believe in the Son will not have eternal life. He will never be able to get away from God's judgment.

Christ Connection: John the Baptist told people to get ready for Jesus, the promised Messiah. Now that Jesus was on earth, John's mission was complete. Jesus was greater than John, and John joyfully stepped aside as Jesus began His earthly ministry.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Use sound effects:** Play sound effects of a river as you tell the story.
- **Make a T-chart:** List words John used to describe himself and Jesus (*not the Messiah/Messiah, groom's friend/groom, and so on*).

Take to Heart

As a family, take time to memorize the Key Bible Passage over the next several weeks! Take it to heart and notice how God's Word becomes alive in you!

"He must become greater; I must become less."

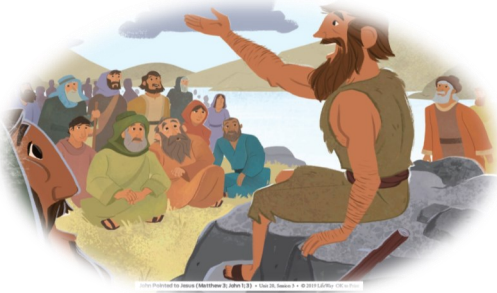
— John 3:30

LEARN *as you read through the lesson, have kids each read a question and the answers. Let's learn about God's Word together!*

Say: You might recognize a lot of today's story from our memory verse! John understood that Jesus is the most important. John wanted those who were following him to understand how important Jesus was!

Ask: What were Jesus and his disciples doing?

Say: We read that Jesus and his disciples were teaching people and baptizing people!



Ask: Why were John's disciples arguing?

Say: John's disciples were arguing because they were getting jealous! Jesus and His disciples were becoming more

popular than John. They wanted to be most popular!

Ask: John's disciples wanted to be most popular. But what did John want to happen?

Say: John wasn't concerned about being popular. His only concern was for people to glorify God by believing in Jesus!

Ask: Why is it good to glorify God?

Say: We were created to glorify God! That is our purpose in life. Our desire in life should be the same as John the Baptist's. We must become less and Jesus must become greater. This is what the Bible calls humility. Our first step towards humility is understand who Jesus is. He is God's beloved Son. He is the Messiah. The story of our life, is ultimately about Jesus and not about us. When we want God to get all the glory in our life, we begin to be humble.

Say: We can become humble by following John's example. Now that Jesus was on earth, John's mission was complete. Now that Jesus was on earth, John gladly stepped aside for Jesus to work. Don't let your pride get in the way of the work that Jesus wants to do in your life!

PRACTICE YOUR FAITH

The Word of God changes lives! These lessons too should lead us to change and be a new person in Jesus Christ! Take time to talk about ways you can live into this teaching.

Ask: When is it hard to glorify God?

Discuss situations kids may face that can fill them with pride or arrogance. Explain that sinful pride makes it impossible to glorify God. Remind them that our gifts and talents were given by God as a way to glorify God. When we do well, we can thank God and remind other people about His goodness to bless us with talents or skills.

PRAY

“God, help us to show the same humility that John showed. Help us to understand that Jesus deserves all the glory. May we be humble so that you can work in our lives. In Jesus' name, Amen.”

THE GOSPEL

GOD'S PLAN for US

The gospel is the good news, the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use these prompts to share the gospel with your kids.



GOD RULES. Ask: "Who is in charge at home?" Explain that because God created everything, He is in charge of everything. Read Revelation 4:11.



WE SINNED. Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell kids that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. Read Romans 3:23.



GOD PROVIDED. Explain that God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. Read John 3:16.



JESUS GIVES. Ask: "What is the best gift you've ever received?" Say that Jesus took our punishment for sin by giving His life, and He gives us His righteousness. God sees us as if we lived the perfect life Jesus lived. This is the best gift ever! Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.



WE RESPOND. Explain that everyone has a choice to make. Ask: "Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord? You can turn from self and sin and turn to Jesus." Read Romans 10:9-10.

Hint for Next Week's Lesson: can you guess what it is on?

