

The Messengers from John the Baptist

Before you begin the story, pass out the emojis (2 each) in order to the volunteers. You will need 8 volunteers total, use teen helpers and older kids. Cue the volunteers by pointing to them so they know when to reveal their emoji. After the first 8 emojis, start over.

In our story today, John the Baptist needs a little help with the truth. So he sends his questions straight to the source who could answer them—Jesus. Let's check it out!

WORSHIP LEADER: The Lord be with you.

KIDS: And with your Spirit.

WORSHIP LEADER: This is a reading from the Gospel of Matthew.

KIDS: Glory to You, Oh Lord (show kids how to make the cross on forehead, lips, & heart)

If you were here last week, you might remember we were heard the story of guy named John the Baptist. You might remember he liked to wear camel skin clothing or that he loved to eat bugs. **(Hold up: Yuck emoji.)** This memorable guy loved God.

As a matter of fact, we learned last week that John preached about God's truth and told the people they should repent for their sins and they would be filled with God's grace. **(Hold up: Thumbs up! Emoji).** John knew who God was and because of that many wondered if he was a prophet or Elijah. Others wanted to know if he was the Messiah. John knew the truth. He was here to prepare the way for someone else named Jesus.

John even baptized Jesus in Jordan River and that's when John saw God's Holy spirit land on Jesus as a dove and heard the voice of God. **(Hold up: Dove emoji)** It was at that moment; Jesus started his preaching and John was a huge part of it.

After that day, John the Baptist, kept on teaching God's word to anyone who would listen. He always told Truth and sometimes that got him into trouble. One time, John scolded the king, Herod Antipas, for making bad choices. This made Herod very angry and he arrested John and threw him in jail, never to be free again. **(Hold up Angry emoji.)** I imagine that John was a little scared in that cell. **(Hold up scared emoji.)**

All of those fears, might have led to some doubt. John's faith was strong, but now that times were tough, he was starting be afraid and worry that he might not be sharing the right message of truth. He was beginning to have some doubts about whether Jesus was really the Messiah. If John's purpose was to prepare people for the coming of the Messiah and if Jesus was the Messiah, then why was John in prison when he could have been preaching to the crowds and preparing their hearts? **(Hold up question emoji)**

John was hurting and was in need of some grace so he turned to his friends and Jesus to help him. Because he was in prison, John knew he could not ask Jesus himself so he asked some of his followers to find Jesus and ask Him a question so that he would know the truth.

Immediately, his followers went in search of Jesus. When the followers reached Jesus, they asked Him, “Tell us. Are you the one John said was going to come or should we expect someone else?” Jesus answered, “Go back and tell John what you are hearing and seeing: The Blind can see, **(Hold up eyes emoji.)** the lame can walk **(Hold up Footprint emoji)** , those who suffer from dreaded skin diseases are made clean **(Hold up the bathtub emoji)**, the deaf hear **(Hold up the ear emoji)**, the dead are brought back to life **(Hold up smiley face emoji)** , and the Good news is preached to the poor. How happy are those who have no doubts about me!” **(Hold up smiley face with smiling eyes emoji.)**

John’s followers listened to Jesus’ answer and then traveled back to John to tell him what they had heard. Jesus wanted to assure John that he was the Messiah. Jesus knew that the world could be scary at times **(hold up scared emoji)** and people were hurting.

Truth can be hard to face. But Jesus also wanted him to look at the healing that comes from God’s grace. **(Hold up Bandage Emoji)** Through God’s Grace, blind could see, the lame could walk, the deaf could hear, and the lepers were cured. Jesus was not mad at John for doubting. He lovingly reminded John of His message of love. **(Hold up Heart emoji)**

Jesus knew that even the strongest of faith can get shaken by difficult times, and when John was thrown into prison, the fears must have started to make their way in. John had to be sure, so he asked Jesus. And you know what? The answer he got was a message of truth filled with grace.

And anytime we ask for truth when we are faced with a hurting world, we can trust that we'll get answer filled with love too. **(Hold up smiley face with heart eyes emoji.)**

WORSHIP LEADER: This is the Gospel of the Lord

KIDS: Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.