



Bible Point ▶

Jesus did what was right and pleased God.

Bible Verse

“Do what is right and good in the Lord’s sight” (Deuteronomy 6:18a).

Growing Closer to Jesus

Children will ■ hear a story about Jesus’ baptism,
 ■ learn how Jesus pleased God,
 ■ help Pockets please her mother, and
 ■ think of ways they can please God.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ **Jesus is baptized by John.**

**Matthew
3:13-17**



John the Baptist embraced a simple existence, living on locusts and wild honey in the Judean desert. He also preached a compelling message of repentance, urging people to turn away from sin and prepare for the coming of the kingdom of God. When people listened and confessed their sins, John baptized them in the waters of the Jordan River. When Jesus came to be baptized, John was troubled. “You, Lord? If anything, you should be baptizing me!” Jesus insisted, knowing that it was what God wanted. As Jesus came up out of the water, the Spirit descended on him like a dove, and a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love, and I am very pleased with him.”

Jesus’ willingness to be baptized sprang from a desire to please God. We often see that same trait in children. They’ll often go out of their way to let you know that they’ve followed instructions. Use this lesson to help children realize that they can please God by doing what is right.

Prayer

- Read Matthew 3:13-17.
- Jesus went to the Jordan River in order to be baptized and to please God. What have you done recently that God would find pleasing?
- Pray: Dear Lord, thank you for giving me an example to follow in Jesus. Please help me to teach my students to follow your Word by...

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use. Refer to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies columns to determine what you’ll need.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God’s direction in teaching the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Welcome Time	Welcome! —Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.	“Child Name Tags” (p. 98), markers, pins or tape	
Let’s Get Started Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	Option 1: Clean Coins —Wash pennies in a vinegar and salt solution.	Bowls, vinegar, salt, dirty pennies, soft cloths	
	Option 2: Fine Feathers —Make dove feathers to use during “Hear and Tell the Bible Story.”	White paper, pencil, scissors	
	Option 3: Sandy “Desserts” —Help prepare a “sandy” snack.	Graham crackers, instant pudding mix, milk, bowl, plastic spoons, paper cups, paper plates	
	Pick Up Our Toys —Sing a song as they pick up toys, and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
Bible Story Time	Setting the Stage —Follow fun instructions as they listen for a cue to turn around.	Empty 2-liter soda container, dry beans	
	Bible Song and Prayer Time —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.	Bible, basket of surprise cards from Lesson 6, CD player	
	Hear and Tell the Bible Story —Hold up their Fine Feathers when they hear Jesus doing right in the story of Jesus’ baptism from Matthew 3:13-17.	CD player, Fine Feathers from Option 2	 
	Do the Bible Story —Share things they can do to please God.		
Closing 	Pockets Pleases —Help Pockets find something to do that would please her mother.	A Fine Feather from Option 2	
	Sandy Snacks —Thank God for loving them, and then enjoy a snack.	Snacks from Option 3, plastic spoons	

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Welcome Time

■ Welcome!

SUPPLIES: “Child Name Tags” (p. 98), markers, pins or tape

- Kneel down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about last week’s “Today I Learned...” discussion. Ask questions such as “How did you obey your parents?” and “How did it feel to do the right things?”
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that ► Jesus did what was right and pleased God.**
- Hand out the child name tags children made in Lesson 6, and help them attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if some of the children weren’t in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopiable patterns.
- Direct children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.



It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help kids remember it and apply it to their lives.



Let’s Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate among the children to offer help as needed and direct children’s conversation toward today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “How do you feel when you’re all clean?” or “Have you ever seen anyone get baptized?”

■ Option 1: Clean Coins

SUPPLIES: bowls, vinegar, salt, dirty pennies, soft cloths

Before class, combine $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vinegar and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt in a small bowl. Set out three or four bowls of the salt-vinegar mixture, soft cloths, and a jar of dirty pennies.

Have each child drop a penny into the salt-vinegar mixture. After a few seconds, let them fish the pennies out and rub the pennies with a soft cloth. Point out how shiny the pennies have become! Tell children that today they’ll hear about a man who baptized people. Explain that baptism shows others that God has washed the bad things out of our lives and that we don’t want to do those bad things anymore. Say that today children will learn that ► Jesus did what was right and pleased God.



■ Option 2: Fine Feathers

SUPPLIES: white paper, pencil, scissors

Before class, use the stencil pattern on this page to outline several feathers on white paper. Have the children cut out the feather shapes. Then show them how to cut slits along both sides of their feathers. Allow children to make extra feathers for others to use during “Hear and Tell the Bible Story.” Explain that they’ll hear about a time when God’s Spirit came down on Jesus like a dove. Say that today children will learn that

► Jesus did what was right and pleased God.



BIBLE POINT ►



■ Option 3: Sandy “Desserts”

SUPPLIES: graham crackers, instant pudding mix, milk, bowl, plastic spoons, paper cups, paper plates

Place paper plates, plastic spoons, paper cups, and graham crackers on a table. Form two groups—the Sand Makers and the Soil Makers. Give two graham crackers to each Sand Maker, and direct them to rub the crackers together to form graham cracker “sand” on a paper plate. Have the Soil Makers help you stir 2 cups of milk into a bowl with a package of instant pudding mix. Have them stir until the pudding starts to become thick. Then allow the Soil Makers to help you spoon the pudding into paper cups, and have the Sand Makers sprinkle the graham cracker sand over the top. Tell children that someone in today’s story lived in a sandy desert area. Explain that they’ll learn that

► Jesus did what was right and pleased God.

Have a helper put the sandy desserts in a refrigerator until the Closing.

When everyone has arrived and you’re ready to move on to the Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they’re doing and get ready to clean up.



BIBLE POINT ►

■ Pick Up Our Toys

SUPPLIES: CD player



Lead children in singing “Pick Up Our Toys” (track 2) with the CD to the tune of “Skip to My Lou.” Encourage the children to sing along as they help clean up the room.

If you want to include the names of all the children in your class, sing the song without the CD, and repeat the naming section. If you choose to use the CD, vary the names you use each week.



SING

**We will pick up our toys.
We will pick up our toys.
We will pick up our toys
And put them all away.**

**There’s [name] picking up toys.
There’s [name] picking up toys.
There’s [name] picking up toys,
Putting them all away.**

(Repeat.)

Bible Story Time

■ *Setting the Stage*

SUPPLIES: empty 2-liter soda container, dry beans

Before this activity, pour ½ cup of dry beans into a clean, empty 2-liter soda container, and tighten the lid.

Tell the children you'll clap your hands to get their attention. Explain that when you clap, the children are to stop what they're doing, raise their hands, and focus on you. Encourage children to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities you've planned.

Have children stand in a large circle facing away from the center. Choose a volunteer to be the Signal Master. Give the Signal Master the 2-liter container, and have him or her stand in the middle of the circle.

Say: **I'm going to call out some fun instructions for you to follow. While you're doing these silly things, the Signal Master will shake the signal. When you hear the signal, stop what you're doing, turn around as fast as you can to face the center, and freeze. The first person to turn around and freeze will become the next Signal Master. We'll play until several people have had a chance to be the Signal Master.**

Call out the following directions. Allow children to enjoy each task before calling out the next one. The Signal Master may shake the signal any time during the game. You may want to add some fun instructions of your own.

- **Sing "Happy Birthday to You" to your shoes.**
- **Stand on one foot and flap your arms.**
- **Make animal noises.**
- **Hop up and down saying, "Boing, boing, boing."**
- **Pretend the wall is a mirror and you're fixing your hair.**
- **Juggle imaginary watermelons.**
- **Make a face like you've just eaten pickle pizza.**

Play until several children have had a turn to be the Signal Master. Repeat the above instructions if necessary. Then put the signal away, and have children sit down.

Ask: • **Why did you turn around in this game?** (Because we were supposed to; because I wanted to be the Signal Master; because we heard the signal.)

• **What happened when we all turned around?** (The game changed; someone got to be the Signal Master; everyone froze in place.)

Say: **Most of you wanted to turn away from our silly actions so you'd get to use the signal. Today we're going to hear about a man named John who spent his whole life trying to get people to turn away from the bad things they were doing and start living for God. John's work was so important that even Jesus came to him. We'll learn that ► Jesus did what was right and pleased God.**



◀ BIBLE POINT

■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, basket of surprise cards from Lesson 6, CD player



Set the basket of surprise cards that you made in Lesson 6 next to you. If you don't have surprise cards, follow the directions in the "Bible Song and Prayer Time" section of Lesson 6 for this activity. Bookmark **Matthew 3:13-17** in the Bible you'll be using.

Have children sit in a circle. Say: **Each week when we come to our circle for our Bible Story, I'll choose a Bible helper. The Bible helper will bring me the Bible marked with our Bible story for the week. Before I choose today's Bible helper, let's sing our Bible song. As we sing, I'll pass out the surprise cards. Don't look inside your card until the song is over.**

Lead children in singing "Read God's Book" (track 3) with the CD to the tune of "The Muffin Man." As you sing, pass out the folded surprise cards.



**Now it's time to read God's book,
Read God's book, read God's book.
Now it's time to read God's book.
Let's hear a Bible story.**

**Now it's time to read God's book,
Read God's book, read God's book.
Now it's time to read God's book.
Let's hear a Bible story.**

(Repeat.)

After the song, say: **You may look inside your surprise cards. The person who has the thumbs up stamped inside his or her card will be our Bible helper for today.**

Identify the Bible helper, and then have the rest of the children clap for him or her. Ask the Bible helper to bring you the Bible. Assist the Bible helper in opening the Bible to the marked place, and show the children where your story comes from. Then have the Bible helper sit down.

Say: [Name] **was our special Bible helper today. Each week we'll have only one special Bible helper, but each one of you is a special part of our class! Today we're all learning that ► Jesus did what was right and pleased God.**

Let's say a special prayer now and ask God to help us learn how Jesus did what was right. I'll pass around this basket. When the basket comes to you, put your surprise card in it and say, "God, thank you for sending Jesus to show us what is right."

Pass around the basket or box. When you've collected everyone's surprise card, set the basket aside for use next week, and pick up the Bible. Lead children in this prayer: **God, thank you for the Bible and all the stories in it. Teach us today that ► Jesus did what was right and pleased God.**



This Bible story is featured in *My First Hands-On Bible*. Order several now for your ministry at group.com.



■ Hear and Tell the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: CD player, *Fine Feathers* from Option 2



Before class, tape together the ends of *Story Circle 3*.

Gather children, and bring out the *Story Circle*. Say: **Our Bible story comes from the book of Matthew in the Bible. Our *Story Circle* shows us pictures of our Bible story.**

Give each child one of the Fine Feathers from Option 2. Say: **Every time you hear the name *Jesus* on the CD, wave your feathers over your heads. Listen carefully!** Play “At the Jordan River” (track 16) on the CD. Each time you hear the chime, turn the circle so children can see the next part of the story.

When the track ends, have children put their feathers aside.

Ask: • **Why did people get baptized?** (To show that their sins were washed away; to show that they wanted to change.)

• **Why was John surprised that Jesus wanted to be baptized?** (Because he didn’t have any sins; he’d always done what was right; Jesus was so good.)

• **What did the voice from heaven say?** (That Jesus was God’s Son; that God was pleased with Jesus; that God loved Jesus.)

• **How do you think Jesus felt after hearing God’s message to him?** (Happy; loved; good.)

Say: **We’ve been learning a lot about Jesus doing right. Let’s sing a song that will help us remember to do what’s right, too.**

Lead children in singing “Be Like Jesus” (track 17) to the tune of “London Bridge” with the CD.



SING

Jesus did just what was right,
Every day,
Every night.
He was pleasing in God’s sight—
I want to be like Jesus!

I can try to do what’s right,
Every day,
Every night.
I’ll be pleasing in God’s sight—
I want to be like Jesus!



Say: ► ***Jesus did what was right and pleased God. We can try to be like Jesus, too. Let’s take turns finishing this sentence: “I can do what is right by...” I’ll start.***

Give an example such as “I can do what is right by saying ‘please’ and ‘thank you.’” After children participate, say: **Jesus is our example! If we try to be like Jesus, we know we’ll do what’s right and good.**

Pray: **Dear Lord, we want to be more like Jesus.**

Teach us more about him in our lesson today so that we can learn to do what is right and good. In Jesus’ name, amen.



BIBLE POINT

We can sing a song about doing what’s right. It’s from our Bible verse, Deuteronomy 6:18, ► “Do what is right and good in the Lord’s sight.” Let’s listen to it first, and then we’ll join in. Lead the children in singing “Right and Good” (Deuteronomy 6:18a) (track 13) to the tune of “Rise and Shine” with the CD.



BIBLE VERSE



SING

Do what is right
And good in the Lord’s sight.
Do what is right
And good in the Lord’s sight.
Do—what’s—right—and
(Clap) Good in the Lord’s sight.
We want to be like Jesus!
(Repeat.)

Say: **Just as Jesus pleased God, God wants us to please him, too. We'll hear lots of ways to do that in our next activity!**

■ Do the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: none

Have children form two circles, one inside the other, with the same number of children in each circle. Say: ► ***Jesus did what was right and pleased God. When we do things that are right, we please God, too. This action rhyme will help you think of things you can do to please God.***

Lead children in the following action rhyme. Direct the children in each circle to move in opposite directions as they say the rhyme.

Hop, hop. (*Hop twice.*)

Step, step. (*Step twice.*)

Jump—one, two! (*Jump twice.*)

Jesus wanted to please God. (*Clap on each word.*)

And I do, too! (*Point to self.*)

Instruct children to stop on the last phrase and then pair up with the closest person in the other circle. Have each partner share one thing he or she can do to please God. Children may say things such as obeying parents, helping around the house, praying, singing Bible songs, or being kind to their friends. Repeat the rhyme several times so children have a chance to think of and hear lots of ways to please God.

After the last repetition, have partners sit together and discuss these questions:

- **Why is it important to please God?** (To show that we love him; because God wants what's best for us; because we're his followers.)
- **What's one way you'll please God this week?** (I'll be nice to my little brother; I'll share my toys at school; I'll sing Bible songs.)

Say: ► ***Jesus did what was right and pleased God. You've all thought of lots of ways that you can please God. Take your feathers home as a reminder to do what's right and to please God. I made an extra feather for our friend Pockets. Let's call her out, and I'll give it to her. Pockets! Pockets!***

Closing

■ Pockets Pleases

SUPPLIES: a Fine Feather from Option 2

Before this activity, make a Fine Feather from Option 2 for Pockets, and bring it to the story area.

Bring out Pockets the Kangaroo, and go through the following puppet script. When you finish the script, put Pockets away and out of sight.





Pockets: *(Enters singing.)* I love my mommy. I love my mommy. I love my mommy. She is so wonderful!

Teacher: That sounds like a nice song, Pockets. Tell us what you love so much about your mommy.

Pockets: She's wooonderful! She makes super pancakes, fixes my hair bows perfectly, and gives the BEST hugs! I wish there was something I could do that would make her really happy.

Teacher: I'm so glad you realize what a great mom you have! It's good to want to please our parents. Hmmm, let's see if the children can help you think of something to do that would please your mother. *(Have children give Pockets suggestions such as cleaning her room, helping with her baby sister, or giving a huge hug!)*

Pockets: Those are all terrific ideas...but I'm not sure they're enough. I want to really please my mom.

Teacher: I'm sure all those things will really please your mom, Pockets, because they all show that you love her. And nothing can please her more than that, because she loves you, too. We've just been talking about pleasing someone else who loves us. Children, can you tell Pockets about our story today? *(Allow children to tell about Jesus and what he did that pleased God.)* ► **Jesus did what was right and pleased God.** In fact, I made you this feather to remind you to please God, too.

Pockets: Oh, a feather...just like the dove that came down from heaven! Thank you! *(Pauses)* So, do you think if I do what's right and show my mommy how much I love her that she'll be pleased?

Teacher: I know she will, Pockets!

Pockets: Oh, hooray! I think I'll sing her the song I just made up. Thanks, everyone! 'Bye! *(Exits singing song from beginning of script.)*

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■ Sandy Snacks

SUPPLIES: snacks from Option 3, plastic spoons

Have children sit at tables while you distribute the sandy “desserts” from Option 3.

Ask: • **Who lived in the desert and baptized people in the river?** (John.)

• **Why did Jesus want John to baptize him?** (Because that was what God wanted; because it was the right thing to do.)

Say: ► **Jesus did what was right and pleased God.** Before we eat our “deserts,” use your finger to make a path through the graham cracker



sand. Pretend you're making a path that will lead to doing right! Allow a moment for children to make their paths. Then pray: **Dear God, thank you that you love us all the time, even when we mess up. Help us do our best to do what's right this week and to please you in all we do. In Jesus' name, amen.**



Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.



For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ **Lively Learning: Hop, Step, and Jump Charades**

Form pairs, and have partners link arms as they do the following action rhyme.

Hop, hop. (*Hop twice.*)

Step, step. (*Step twice.*)

Jump—one, two! (*Jump twice.*)

Jesus wanted to please God. (*Clap on each word.*)

And I do, too! (*Point to self.*)

At the end of the verse, choose a pair to act out something that would be pleasing to God, such as giving a gentle hug, helping push in chairs or cleaning up, saying kind and encouraging words, or singing a Bible song. Then repeat the rhyme, and choose another pair to show pleasing actions.

■ **Make to Take: Delightful Doves**

Before this activity, trace the dove figure shown on this page. You'll need one dove figure for each child. Have the children cut out their dove shapes. Then have them punch two holes in their doves, one near the top in the middle and one just below it. Demonstrate how to thread two 4-inch lengths of white ribbon through the lower hole to form wings. Provide an 8-inch length of colored ribbon to loop through the upper hole and tie to make a hanger. As children are working, discuss how God's Spirit came down on Jesus in the form of a dove.

■ **Treat to Eat: Locusts for Lunch!**

Mix equal parts of cream cheese and powdered sugar to make dough. Give each child a small chunk of dough and two graham cracker rectangles. Show children how to roll the dough into a ball and then push the end of each cracker into it to form wings. Explain that John lived in the desert and ate bugs called locusts.



■ **Story Picture: Jesus Is Baptized**

Give each child a copy of the "Today I Learned..." handout. Place glue, crayons, and clear cellophane on the table. Let the children color the water on the handouts and glue cellophane to them for added shine. As the children are working, talk about how the voice from heaven and the dove showed how much God loved Jesus.

Today I learned...

Jesus did what
was right and
pleased God.

Today your child learned that Jesus did what was right and pleased God. They heard that Jesus went to John to be baptized. They also talked about ways they can please God this week.

Verse to Learn

"Do what is right and good in the Lord's sight"
(Deuteronomy 6:18a).

Ask Me...

- What happened when Jesus was baptized?
- How did God show that he loved Jesus?
- How do you think our family pleases God?

Family Fun

- Using sugar-cookie dough, bake dove-shaped cookies. Throughout the week give your children dove cookies when they do something right and you are pleased with them. Affirm them for living right, as Jesus did.

Jesus Is Baptized (Matthew 3:13-17)

