THE WAY OF JESUS

MEMORY VERSE: **“Jesus answered, “I am the way. And I am the truth and the life. The only way to the Father is through me.” John 14: 6**
WEEKLY BIG IDEA: **As believers, why do we get baptized?**
(Answer) JESUS CONNECTION: **Baptism is a time to let everyone know that you believe in Jesus and God’s promises, that He has forgiven you, saved you from your sins, and made you new.**
BIBLE STORY SCRIPTURE**: Baptism | Acts 9:4; 8:36-37; Luke 3:21-22**

SERIES OVERVIEW

Welcome to KXP! So glad that you are here. This is our second week in our new series called **The Way of Jesus**. This month we are learning about some very important things! These are things we know to be true through our faith in God and His Word. Let’s review our memory verse before we dive into our Bible story. ***John 14:6 “Jesus answered, “I am the way. I am the truth and the life. The only way to the Father is through me.”*** Jesus taught us who He is and how to grow closer to God every day. Jesus is our example to follow, and His ways are true.

LESSON INTRODUCTION

Last week, we asked the question, “Who is Jesus?” After spending time in God’s Word, we know that Jesus is the Son of God who came to save us. Our Big Idea today is another question. **As believers, why do we get baptized?** Has anyone here ever been baptized? Would you like to share your experience? That’s amazing! Has anyone in your family been baptized? What do you remember about their experience? Let’s look in our Bibles today and see what God’s Word has to say about the act of being baptized. Did you guys know that Jesus was baptized by His cousin, John the Baptist? That’s right! The Bible is full of incredible stories of baptisms. Let’s jump in.

BAPTISM

During the presentation of Scripture, use a physical Bible, when possible, to model exploring God’s Word together.

We have been talking about God’s Big Story, and part of God’s Story is about baptism. Baptism is a picture of God’s Rescue Plan and a way to remember what Jesus did for us. From the very beginning, people have made wrong choices and have been separated from God. But God still loves His people, even when we make bad choices. So, God sent His only Son, Jesus, to take the punishment for every wrong thing that has ever been done, so that no one would have to stay separated from God. Jesus lived a perfect life, died, was buried, and rose again! Jesus died on the cross so that we could have new life with Him. Once we’ve heard about Jesus and want to receive His Rescue, there are some steps we need to take.

First, we must REPENT. Last month, we talked about repenting when we pray. When we REPENT, we realize we’ve messed up, and we need God to forgive us. When we are forgiven, we want to obey God and follow the ways of Jesus. Jesus was generous, so we can be generous. Jesus served others, so we can serve others. He showed love to others, and He wants us to love others too. That’s what happened to a guy named Paul. Paul, who went by Saul back in the day, was famous for being mean to people who followed Jesus. He went to a city called Damascus to harass followers of Jesus. Saul thought they should be thrown in jail or put to death. Suddenly, a blinding light knocked Saul to the ground, and a voice spoke from heaven…

Acts 9:4 “Saul fell to the ground. He heard a voice saying to him, “Saul! Saul! Why are you doing things against me?”

After that shocking event, Saul repented and started FOLLOWING Jesus! And after he repented, the first thing Paul did was to be baptized. God changed his name from Saul to Paul. He's known as the "Apostle Paul," because he told people about Jesus everywhere he went.

After repenting, the next step towards baptism is to BELIEVE in Jesus. Some people get baptized right away, as soon as they start believing in Jesus; like in the story of Philip and the officer from Ethiopia. Philip was a follower of Jesus, and one day he met a man from Ethiopia who was traveling in a chariot. When Philip told him that JESUS was the One True Rescuer and Savior, the officer stopped his chariot and hopped out.

Acts 8:36-37 "While they were traveling down the road, they came to some water. The officer said, 'Look! Here is water! What is stopping me from being baptized?' Philip answered, 'If you believe with all your heart, you can.' The officer said, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.'"

So, Philip went into the water with him, and baptized him right there, by the side of the road, in front of everyone! He probably didn't even have a change of clothes!

When someone has **heard** about the Rescue found in Jesus, **repented** of their wrong choices, and **believed** in Jesus, they are saved and have received the free gift of salvation from the Lord. Salvation and baptism don't have to happen at the same time. You might have asked Jesus into your heart at age 8 but you aren't quite ready to be baptized. After you talk to your family and KXP leaders to learn more about baptism, you might be ready at age 10 or 11. Not everyone is saved or baptized at the same time or same age. Here's something you can relate to - kids learn to ride a bike at different ages, right? It doesn't matter when you learn – at age 6 or 13 or 25 – all that matters is that you learn to ride your bike when you are ready. Another example is losing your first tooth. You might lose your first tooth in the first grade, but your best friend might not lose her first tooth until second grade. Your body lets you know when it is ready to lose a tooth; just like God's Spirit lets you know when you are ready to accept Jesus as your Savior and when to let everyone know through baptism.

When you are baptized, you stand or sit in a body of water. You might stand in a large pool-like tub or sit in a low bathtub. You might stand in a river, lake, or stream. You may even be in a swimming pool in the backyard. Water is a huge part of baptism because it represents the washing away of our sins. It's a symbol that your heart and life are washed clean. Next, you are lowered completely into the water. You go under the water to show that you are laying down your old life before you believed, just as Jesus laid down His life for us. And just like Jesus rose again from the grave, after being lowered fully in the water, you are raised back up to come out of the water, showing that you are ready for the new life God promises. It's a way to say to the world, "I follow Jesus."

Luke 3:21-22 "When all the people were being baptized by John, Jesus also was baptized. While Jesus was praying, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit came down on him. The Spirit was in the form of a dove. Then a voice came from heaven and said, 'You are my Son, and I love you. I am very pleased with you.'"

LESSON CONCLUSION

Even though Jesus never sinned and was always connected to His Father, Jesus wanted John to baptize Him for all to see. Jesus is our example to follow. He showed us how to love and honor God and trust His good plans for our lives. Now, baptism doesn't mean everything will suddenly be perfect. Only Jesus was perfect. Bad things still might happen and even people who've been baptized will make wrong choices sometimes. But when that happens, they don't have to get baptized again. Instead, they can remember how Jesus rescued and saved them. No matter what, we can always ask God to forgive us, and He always will, because He loves us. You do not have to be baptized to be saved, but once you put your hope and belief in Jesus and all He has done for you, baptism is a way to show others what you believe.

JESUS CONNECTION

As believers, why do we get baptized?
We can follow Jesus' way through baptism to let others know that we believe in Him and all that He has done to save us.

SMALL GROUP: REVIEW & DISCUSSION

This is a time to check kids' understanding of the Bible story and its Truths. These guided questions can spark minds to continue seeking understanding of God and His Son, Jesus.

Recall:

- How did Saul (who became Paul) feel about believers before he became a follower of Jesus? *(He was mean to them and wanted them thrown in jail or put to death)*
- What changed his mind and behavior? *(Hearing about Jesus, repenting of his sins, and believing in Him)*
- What did the officer from Ethiopia do after Philip shared the Good News of Jesus with him? *(He jumped out of his chariot and was baptized in the nearby water)*

Discussion & Application:

- Tell me the steps you should take before being baptized? *(hear, repent, believe, talk to a grown-up)*
- What is one thing you learned from today's lesson?
- How will you use what you learned this week?

PRAYER

Dear Lord, our hearts are filled with gratitude because You sent Jesus to show us the way to have a close relationship with You. Jesus showed everyone that He trusts You and was obedient to Your Word. Please help us follow Jesus with our whole hearts and learn more about His life so that we can shape our thoughts, choices, and behaviors to be more like His every day. In the amazing name of Jesus, we pray – Amen.

LIVE IT OUT CHALLENGE

This challenge will prompt kids to make the KXP lesson personal. It can encourage them to live out what The Bible teaches us.

Challenge: Act It Out

- Leaders act out different words connected to baptism in a charade-style game.
- Act out the words: hear, repent, believe, water, celebration
- The kids will guess.
- A helpful option for younger children might be to list the words on the board for them to choose from when guessing.
- Leaders, ask if anyone would like to take home a **"Becoming a Christian"** booklet to read through with their parents.