

Grade School Advent Series

John is Born- Luke 1:57-80

Welcome Question

"What have you learned through Advent this month?"

Introduction

Good Morning! It's our last week of Advent! Over the past three weeks, we talked about The Announcement of John, The Promise of Jesus' birth and the Songs of Joy and praise to God from Mary & Elizabeth. We have two babies on the way and one of them will arrive today!

Large Group Lesson

Let's start our lesson by seeing a video about the first baby's arrival! Watch this video...

Video: John was Born <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9LRYwS6t01w>

Just a few weeks ago, we talked about Gabriel bringing the great news to Zechariah and now it's happened! John is here! But the people who know Zechariah and Elizabeth are all confused....they didn't get the message from the angel like Zechariah did, so they don't understand why they want to name the baby John. No one in their family is named John.

Let's read Luke 1:57-66:

57 Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. 58 And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. 59 And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah after his father, 60 but his mother answered, "No; he shall be called John." 61 And they said to her, "None of your relatives is called by this name." 62 And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he wanted him to be called. 63 And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And they all wondered. 64 And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. 65 And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, 66 and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, "What then will this child be?" For the hand of the Lord was with him.

When Zechariah started speaking, everyone freaked out! First, they want to name the baby a crazy name and now Zechariah is speaking after nine months of silence! What!? And what's the first thing Zechariah says? Praises and prophecy to God. He starts praising God for the salvation that his own son gets to tell everyone is coming! John is going to grow up and tell everyone to get ready, because Jesus, the Messiah is coming!

Now most parents, would start praising God for their own, cute kid. Parents always think their own kid is the cutest and smartest and funniest, but not Zechariah. I'm sure he thought John was all those things, but Zechariah praised God for the next baby that was coming, the baby that would save the world; the baby that would forgive all sins! He does praise God for His own son, for allowing him to be the prophet of the Most High God.

At the end of these verses, the Bible talks a little bit more about what is going to happen. Let's look at verse 80: *And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.* John basically goes off after he grows up and gets ready for the days that he gets to prepare God's people for the Messiah. A very important job.

These past few weeks, God has asked his people to do some things that most people didn't understand. Mary got pregnant before she was married, Elizabeth was too old to have a baby, and Zechariah couldn't even speak and had to name his child some random name. Sometimes God asks us to do things that aren't necessarily normal or what everyone else is doing. People might make fun of us or be worried about the choices we make to obey God. But if God asks us to do something, we need to obey! God blesses His people that are obedient to Him. Just like our parents reward us when we obey them. You obey them because you love them and we also obey God because we love Him.

Advent Candle Lighting

Today, we are going to re-light our candles from the last three weeks, which were....HOPE, PEACE & JOY. As we light the candles, we continue our journey to Christmas toward the celebration of Jesus' birth and we think about the day when our loving Savior will return in glory.

Now, we light the candle of LOVE, and as we do, we remember that Christ alone is our ultimate source of hope, peace, joy, and love, and that he is God's perfect love created in a person. We remember our need for a Savior who will save us from our sins, and bring the love of God into our lives.

Have kids read the following verses:

- “God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
Romans 5:8
- “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. Love your neighbor as yourself” **Matthew 22:39**
- “God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him” **1 John 4:9**
- “We love because he first loved us” **1 John 4:19**

As we remember Christ's birth, and wait for Christ's Glorious return, may God fill our hearts with His love.

Close in Prayer

John is Born Small Group Questions

Bible Challenge:

This week's Memory Verse: "God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him" **1 John 4:9**

Last Week's Verse: "I will turn their mourning into joy; I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow." **Jeremiah 31:13**

Ask if anyone remembers the verse from last week. Give each child (who wants to) a chance to say it. Go over the verse for this week. Practice it together several times.

Advent Activity:

Using the supplies provided, children will create a banner with the word "LOVE" on it. Each week, they will make one for the four weeks of Advent. They will also attach their Bible verse for the week on the banner.

Discussion:

Introduce yourself and learn the kids names. Then use the following questions to lead a discussion.

- Why were the people confused that Elizabeth was naming the baby "John"? *Normally a baby was named for a family member.*
- Why do you think it was important to name the baby "John"?
- What happened to Zechariah after John was born? *He could speak!*
- What was the first thing Zechariah said? *Praise and prophecy*
- What would John grow up to do? *Prepare God's people for the Messiah*
- What would Jesus grow up to do? *Rescue His people by dying on a cross for their sins*
- Has God ever asked you to obey Him when others didn't want you to?
- Share what happened.

Prayer: Ask children if there is anything they need prayer for. Close your small group time in prayer.

If time allows, return to Large Group. Choose one child to share what they learned for Large Group Recap.