



Dear Parents,

Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the prophets had spoken of a forerunner—someone who would get people ready for Jesus. (Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1) At just the right time, “John came baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins” (Mark 1:4). These baptisms were an outward sign of cleansing for people who had repented of their sins.

John’s followers were concerned when they saw Jesus and His disciples, who were baptizing people too. They came to John, who pointed out several things about himself and about Jesus. Consider these comparisons as John explained that Jesus was greater than John.

First, who were they? John was clear: “I am not the Messiah” (John 3:28). John was not the bridegroom, but the groom’s friend. Jesus is the bridegroom. (John 3:29)

Where did they come from? John was from the earth, and he belonged to the earth. Jesus comes from above and is above all. (John 3:31)

What did they do? John said, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” John was a witness to the Light. (John 1:7-8) He was a voice in the wilderness, and Jesus is the Word. (John 1:14,23) John the Baptist told people to get ready for the Messiah. He baptized with water, but Jesus baptized with the Spirit. (John 1:33)

Finally, why were they here? John went before Jesus and rejoiced with Him. (John 3:28-29) Jesus came to give eternal life. (John 3:36)

John described his joy as being complete. (John 3:29) The One for whom he had prepared the people was here. The time had come for John to step aside and let Jesus take the spotlight. John’s mission was complete.

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.

Family Starting Points – Bible Passages: (Matthew 3; John 1,3)

| Preschool  | Elementary  |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>John told people to follow Jesus.</b></li> <li>• <b>Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to rescue sinners.</b></li> <li>• <b>Key Passage:</b><br/>“He must increase, but I must decrease.”<br/>John 3:30</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>John the Baptist told people to follow Jesus.</b></li> <li>• <b>Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.</b></li> <li>• <b>Key Passage:</b><br/>“He must increase, but I must decrease.”<br/>John 3:30</li> </ul> |