



Holy Spirit and Water Baptism by Dick Gruber

Main Idea: Holy Spirit Helps Me Obey

Scripture: “As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him”
(Matthew 3:16, NIV)

Bible story: Matthew 3

Welcome

Pray to be filled with joy and the Holy Spirit as you present this lesson.

- **Welcome**—Welcome them to the best hour of their week. Smile and show enthusiasm for God and for the kids during your welcome time. Let them know that you love them and are excited to enter God’s presence with them.
- **Introduce the Main Idea**—Read the main idea as projected and have them read it once with you. Some leaders blow a train whistle or horn and have the kids stand and shout this idea. Do this multiple times throughout the service. You want them walking away knowing the “Holy Spirit Helps Me Obey.” To change this up, have the kids stand and whisper, stand and say it with an accent, or with a character voice. (I.E.: cartoon or puppet voices they know.) You may want to tell them what they will pray about at the end of the service. *“Today we are talking about Holy Spirit helping us obey. Water Baptism is an act of obedience. Jesus lived a life of obedience. Jesus was baptized to set an example for each of us. He commanded that every new believer get baptized. At the end of this service, we will ask Holy Spirit to help us obey in every area of our lives. Holy Spirit will help you obey your parents, other leaders, and Scripture. Holy Spirit can give you the courage to obey and be baptized in water. As a believer in Jesus, you can rely on Holy Spirit to help you when you pray. Some of you will leave this service wanting to be baptized in water just like Jesus was. Today, after our prayer time, you can take a coloring sheet home that explains water baptism. Look at this with your parents and talk with them about obeying Jesus and getting baptized in water. Your parents can contact the church to find out what steps can be taken to help you obey this command of scripture. I can hardly wait for our prayer time today.”*
- **Rules**—Every children’s ministry leader should have simple, easy-to-obey rules for every service. Examples include, “No walk, no talk,” or, “1. Honor God, 2. Honor your leaders, 3. Honor your friends.” Remind them of your rules for the service and encourage them to obey. Tell them that you believe they can follow the rules and in doing so, will have a better time than they could imagine.
- **Prayer**—Pray for God’s anointing and their self-control. Pray that each will receive more of Jesus because of this service.

Worship

- **Singing**—Sing one or two slow and fast songs. Choose songs that point the children toward Jesus. Scripture songs produced by JumpStart3, and Seeds Family Worship, are



good for this. Some leaders utilize the same worship music being sung in the adult and youth services.

- **Testify**—Never open a children’s service to unrehearsed testimonies from the audience. Doing so only invites every child to share anything related to God or not. You can video a testimony or share a true story at this time. If a child has a valid testimony to share, practice with them before church. You may also have children finish a sentence with one word. I.E.: “I thank God for _____.” Children fill in the blank.
- **Praise Break**—Take 30 seconds to do what God’s word says. During this praise break have the kids “be still and know that He is God.” You might say, “When I say go, I want everyone to do what the Bible says. The Bible says, “Be still and know that I am God.” For just 30 seconds we are all going to be still and know that He is God. Maybe you’ve never done this before. That’s okay. Everyone around you will be doing it so you won’t feel silly. Ready, Set, Go! Other praise breaks using Scriptural patterns include, “Shout unto God with a voice of triumph,” or, “O Lord open my lips and my mouth will declare your praise.”
- **Prayer**—Pray for needs of those in the room. Encourage any child with a need or worry bigger than they are to raise their hands and then come to the altar area. It is not necessary that they share with the entire room. Encourage everybody to pray for all who have indicated a prayer need.
- **Giving**—Giving is part of every worship service. Giving tithe to God is an act of worship and surrender. It says, “I love God and want Him to have the first fruits of all I have and all I am.” Giving generously to missions or other needs beyond tithing is worship as well.

Word

Scripture: “As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him” (Matthew 3:16, NIV).

- **Excite**—Exciting the kids about God’s Word begins with speaking it aloud. Faith does come by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Recite and repeat the verse multiple times with the kids. Say it loud and say it soft. “God’s Word is true whether we shout it or whisper it.” Repetition is the key to learning...repetition is the key to learning...repetition is the key to learning. Get it? Good!
- **Eyeful**—Illustrate the verse in a way that is comfortable for you. The revelation method is an easy one that can be done in a variety of ways. Basically, you reveal one word at a time, or you take one away. Every time a new word is revealed or discarded; you repeat the verse with the kids. This can be analog or digital. **Analog:** Draw, write, or print the words on any surface. (I.E.: paper plates, poster board, balloons, old T-shirts.) Have kids hold these as you begin the teaching. Add or take away each word as the kids repeat it. **Digital:** The same can be done virtually by projecting words or pictures for all to see. Prepare a series of slides that reveal the words in your verse. These can be reversed as kids learn the verse.



- **Explain**—Take time while learning the verse to teach its meaning. *“Today’s verse shows that Holy Spirit was present at Jesus’ baptism. You may not see a dove or hear a voice from heaven, but Holy Spirit will be present when you obey and get baptized.”* Tie this verse to the Main Idea of the day. Kids will retain what they’ve repeated much longer because you took the time to help them understand the meaning behind what they are saying.

Bible Story: Matthew 3:11-17

- *Our story begins today at the Jordan River. John the Baptizer has been preaching and baptizing people. Let’s step into the story and see what happens. “I baptize with water those who repent of their sins and turn to God. But someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I’m not worthy even to be his slave and carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He is ready to separate the chaff from the wheat with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, gathering the wheat into his barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire.”* Then Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. But John tried to talk him out of it. “I am the one who needs to be baptized by you,” he said, “so why are you coming to me?” But Jesus said, “It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires.” So John agreed to baptize him. After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy” (Matthew 3:11-17, NLT).
 - *“What an amazing story! This story clearly shows us that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit were there at Jesus’ baptism in water. Holy Spirit helped Jesus to obey the will of the Father when he was baptized that day. Holy Spirit will be with you to help you obey scripture too.”*
- **Storytelling Tips**—Know the story. Read it over and over until you know the main points and characters. There is nothing wrong with reading a Bible story, but it comes across better to the kids if you know it ahead of time. Involve the children as you tell the story. Have them act it out or reenact your telling of it. This can be done by dressing characters in bathrobes or hats, using action figures, or telling it with stuffed animal actors. Some have even used snacks to act out the story then encouraged children to act it out with their snack. *Tie this story to the Main Idea of the lesson.*

Message:

Take a moment before beginning to stop and pray for God’s words and His anointing on this message. *You can use the pictures provided to make slides or drawings for this message.*

Holy Spirit helps us to obey. He helps us to obey our parents. He helps us to obey our teachers. Most of all, He helps us to obey His Word, the Bible. In the Bible Jesus commands, “Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19, NLT). This command tells us that every disciple, (a boy or



girl that becomes a Christian), should get baptized in water. Let's learn more about water baptism.



The first rule about water baptism is that you must be a Christian. You must have trusted Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your life. You have made Jesus your Savior and King. When Philip shared with the Ethiopian in Acts 8, the man believed in Jesus. He asked Philip to baptize him. Scripture says, "He ordered the carriage to stop, and they went down into the water, and Philip baptized him" (Acts 8:38, NLT).



Some people think that baptism cleans you from sin or even makes you a Christian. That is not what Scripture teaches. Mark wrote, "Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16, NLT). It is clear in this verse that believing, not baptism is what saves a person. Paul said it to the Philippian jailer, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, along with everyone in your household" (Acts 16:31, NLT).

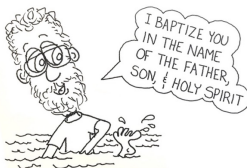
Once you believe in Jesus, you can be baptized. It is important to take this seriously. Being baptized is a way of telling everybody you know that you want to live for Jesus all your life. Talk with your parents about getting baptized. They know you better than anybody on planet earth. Your mom may be full of joy and want to make this happen soon. Or she may know that it would be better for you to wait until you understand this better. You and your parents can meet with a pastor if you want to get baptized.



Here's what happens when you get baptized. First, you get into the water with the pastor who is baptizing people. Then you testify. Testifying is simply telling everyone that you love Jesus. Tell them what God has done in your life and that you want to live for Jesus all your days.



It's a good idea after you testify to hold your nose. That way, water will not go up your nose. Just follow the pastor's directions. You can hold your nose with one hand and hold that wrist with your other hand. That way, the pastor can hold your arm when it comes time to dunk you under the water.



The pastor will immerse you in the water. Immerse just means that he or she will dunk you totally under the water and then pull you back out. The pastor says, "I baptize you in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Some churches clap and cheer when the person comes up out of the water. Remember that baptism is a symbol of what has happened in your heart and life. Going under the water is like dying to sin and the old way of living. Coming up out of the water is like your new



life in Christ. Paul wrote about it this way, “For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives” (Romans 6:4, NLT).

Holy Spirit helps us obey. He will help you to obey the command to be baptized. Work with your parent(s) and pastor when you feel you are ready to follow the Lord in Water Baptism. Like Jesus, Holy Spirit will be right there with you. He may not appear like a dove, but He is there.

Response Time

Things to remember:

- **Keep it simple.** Use kid-friendly language and explain what we are praying about using few words. Do what you can to prepare ahead of time with one or two sentences explaining the prayer time. This is no time to give an additional sermon to the kids. You have just preached the theme, “Holy Spirit Helps Me Obey.” Let it be for, and about, the kids.
- **Force nothing.** Remember that prayer is personal, spiritual activity. After preaching this message faithfully, provide a time where kids can respond on their own level. God will meet them. We never force a child to come pray at the altar. This is a kind invitation to practice what has been taught in the service. God knows each child better than they know themselves. Some kids are ready to pray for an extended period. Others are not. Be sensitive to your children and to the Spirit’s leading as you pray about obeying. Then let God do what He will do.
- **Posture and position.** Moving to an altar space in front is a good practice. Explain, *“Today we have been talking about Holy Spirit helping us obey. I’ve talked a lot about obeying and water baptism. When we pray, some of you will be asking God to help you have to courage to know when to get baptized. Others in this room know that you have had trouble obeying. In fact, there are times when some may disobey on purpose. Disobedience is wrong. It is a sin. Take this time today to ask Jesus to forgive you. He is faithful and just and will forgive you. After seeking forgiveness, ask Holy Spirit to help you obey. Let’s all find a place of prayer right now and talk to Holy Spirit about obeying. Remember, Scripture encourages us to, “Come close to God and He will come close to us” (James 4:8, NLT). Let’s all spend a little bit of time coming closer to God through prayer. “Holy Spirit, help every boy, girl, and leader as we pray today. Direct our prayers so that we are praying for exactly the right thing. We give this time to you. Help us to pray. Amen.”*
- **How long?** The length of altar/response time may be determined by how much time you have for your service. Try to leave fifteen minutes or more for this. If the kids pray for a few minutes and little happens, encourage them to continue praying when they get home. If they really pray and God moves in their lives, you may need more time. The altar starts in the front of your room and extends to the kid’s neighborhoods, homes, and backyards. Close the prayer time when it seems right. Trust Holy Spirit to lead you in this. Occasionally, prayer time extends beyond the parent’s service. When parents come



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to check their children out of your room, invite those whose children are still praying to join their boy or girl in prayer.

- **Encourage every child.** Encouragement is so important when praying with kids. You must be calm, cool, and patient. Every child is different, and God works in their lives in different ways. Encourage kids Baptized in the Holy Spirit to pray in their prayer language while praying at the altar. When you must close the prayer time, encourage every child. *“I can see that some of you are done praying and others would like to pray longer. Our time here is over, so I want to remind you that Jesus doesn’t stay at this altar when you go home from church. He is here with you now and will be when you pray at home. Take one of the Water Baptism coloring pages with you. Show it to your parents and talk to them about obeying Jesus and getting baptized. Ask Holy Spirit to help you pray. He will help you.”*

Dismiss the Kids