



# FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

## YEAR 3

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Generations of Grace  
13248 Roscoe Blvd.  
Sun Valley, CA 91352

[www.generationsofgrace.com](http://www.generationsofgrace.com)

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# WELCOME TO *Generations of Grace*



This curriculum has been designed to deepen your own study of God's word so that you might be able to properly understand and accurately teach each lesson. It's our prayer that this curriculum would be a blessing to your ministry and home as God uses it to encourage your family.



## Share the Lesson

- **Five-Day Devotionals** – Guides the family through the Generations of Grace lesson, a cross-reference passage, and a passage about Christ to lead the family through the whole counsel of God.
- **Generations of Grace Passages** – Reinforces the lesson that your child learned in Sunday School.
- **Cross-Reference Passage** – Points to another passage that reinforces the central truth of each week's lesson.
- **Christ-Centered Passage** – Connects each week's lesson to Jesus Christ and to the gospel.
- **Explain** – Communicates the truth of each day to the parent's heart and mind to prepare them to lead their child through the passage.
- **Ask** – Foster greater interaction between parent and children whether they're 3 years old or 11 years old.
- **Discuss** – Enable the conversation about the truth to progress to a deeper level.

## Additional Resources

Use these additional resources to help support your lessons and to knit together the church and the home, ensuring that what is taught on Sunday matches what is learned throughout the week.

- **Coloring Book**
- **Craft Book**
- **Activity Book**
- **Student Journal**
- **Teacher Book**

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# SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON

## WEEK 1

### John prepares the way for the Lord

Matthew 3:1-12



## DAY 1

Repent to enter Christ's kingdom • Matthew 3:1-4

### READ

Matthew 3:1-12

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Matthew 3:1-4

Have you ever been on a broken and bumpy road? Is a road like that fit for a king to travel on? In the time of John the Baptist, roads would be repaired and cleaned to get ready for a king. In fact, that was John's job, except he was preparing hearts, not roads. He said, "Get ready," because the kingdom is "near" (Matt 3:2). But if it was near so long ago, why are we still waiting? We are waiting because Christ's kingdom on earth was delayed. It would have come quickly if the Jews had accepted John the Baptist as the coming Elijah. He was not the literal, resurrected Elijah (John 1:21), but he was the Elijah that Malachi had predicted (Luke 1:17; Mal 3:1; 4:5-6). Jesus explained, "If you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come" (Matt 11:14). But the Jews were not willing to accept John or his message, so the kingdom was delayed. So we are still waiting for an Elijah to come prepare the way for Christ's second coming. At that time, the kingdom will finally arrive.

### ASK

1. Who was the special messenger who prepared the way for Jesus?  
*John the Baptist.*
2. What was John the Baptist sent to do?  
*Prepare the hearts of Israel for the coming kingdom.*
3. What did John say was coming very soon?  
*The kingdom of heaven.*
4. Why was the kingdom of heaven delayed?  
*The Jews were not willing to accept John or his message.*

### DISCUSS

1. What are some things you do in order to prepare to receive a special guest into your home?
2. If Jesus returned today, would He find in you a heart willing to receive Him? How should you prepare your heart to receive Jesus?



## DAY 2

Repent by turning away from sin • Matthew 3:5–10

### READ

Matthew 3:1–12

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Matthew 3:5–10

Don't miss John's message: to get into the kingdom, you must repent. **Repentance** means to turn away from sin and toward God (Isa 55:7). It means changing your mind, emotions, and will. First, change your mind by confessing your sin, like the Jews did by being baptized (1 John 1:9; Matt 3:6). **Confessing** sin means agreeing with God about your sin. Second, your emotions change when you are sad about your sin (Jas 4:9–10), which John's humble clothing illustrated (Matt 3:4). Third, change your will by firmly rejecting sin and choosing to do what is right (Isa 1:16–17). If you do, your behavior will be consistent with your repentant heart (Matt 3:8). Good behavior does not make up for sin or earn forgiveness. Rather, it is evidence that you really have changed the inside (Jas 2:14–26). Because a changed heart always produces a changed life, John rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees for not truly changing (Matt 3:7–10). They thought they were ok because they were descendants of Abraham, but people are saved by repenting, not by being born to the right parents (John 1:12–13).

### ASK

1. What did John the Baptist tell people to do?  
*Repent.*
2. What does it mean to repent?  
*To turn away from sin and turn toward God.*
3. Besides confession and sadness, what else is part of repentance?  
*A desire and choice to turn from sin and do what is right. This is seen through changed behavior.*
4. What happens to those who do not repent?  
*Jesus sends them to be punished in the lake of fire forever.*

### DISCUSS

1. Point to your head, heart, and hand. Explain how each is included in biblical repentance (mind, emotions, will).
2. Genuine repentance always produces "fruit" (Matt 3:8; Jas 2:17). Can you identify any spiritual fruit in your life?

## DAY 3

Repent because Christ is great • Matthew 3:11–12

### READ

Matthew 3:1–12

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Matthew 3:10–12

Real repentance is hard! Is it really worth it? Yes, because Jesus is worth it. He is the great King. He is the "Lord" (Matt 3:3), which means He is God (Isa 40:3). He shows this by baptizing with a baptism much greater than John's (3:11). First, Jesus **baptizes** believers by immersing them in the Holy Spirit. This is such a blessing, because the Holy Spirit unites

believers to Jesus (1 Cor 12:13) and causes them to be full of "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Gal 5:22–23). Second, Jesus will baptize unbelievers in fire, which means that those who refuse to repent will suffer forever in the lake of fire (Matt 3:12; Rev 20:15; 21:8). So repent quickly and bow before Jesus the King. God delayed the kingdom on purpose to provide a way for you to be forgiven through Jesus' death (Isa 53:3–5; Dan 9:26), so do not miss your chance to repent and be saved (Rom 11:11; 2 Pet 3:9). It is worth it because Jesus is worth it.

DAY 3 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

**ASK** 

1. What did John say about Jesus' sandals?  
*John said he wasn't worthy to carry Jesus' sandals. Since that was a job for the lowest slave, that shows how great Jesus is.*
2. Who does Jesus baptize with the Holy Spirit?  
*Believers.*
3. Who does Jesus baptize with fire?  
*Unbelievers.*

**DISCUSS** 

1. Why is it dangerous to wait before repenting (Isa 55:6-7)?
2. What would you give in order to get buried treasure (Matt 13:44-46)? What would you give in order to be with Jesus in His kingdom?

**DAY 4***What is the "kingdom of heaven"? • Matthew 3:2***READ** 

Matthew 3:1-12

**EXPLAIN** **The truth of Matthew 3:2**

What is a kingdom? It is the place where a king rules. So what is the "**kingdom of heaven**" (Matt 3:2)? It is the realm of God's rule. It is identical to the "kingdom of God" (Matt 19:23-24). This kingdom exists now among believers, because they have accepted God's rule over their hearts (Luke 17:21). However, one day the kingdom of heaven will be established in a literal earthly kingdom (Rev 20:4-6). From the beginning God designed mankind to rule over the earth (Gen 1:28). But Adam failed (Gen 3), so some future human king still needs to do the job. This king is a human descendant of Abraham (Gen 17:6), Judah (49:10), and David (2 Sam 7:13-16). But He is also God (Zech 14:9) and the Son of God (Ps 2). He will rule from Jerusalem (Zech 14:8), but His reign will be over the whole earth (Dan 2:35, 44). His kingdom will be a time of peace and righteousness (Isa 9:6-7), joy and prosperity (65:17-25). It will be both spiritual and physical, when Israel is cleansed from sin and restored to her land forever (Ezek 37:21-28).

**ASK** 

1. What is the "kingdom of heaven"?  
*The reign of God over those who belong to him.*
2. Who is part of this kingdom exist now?  
*Believers: they have accepted God's rule over their hearts.*
3. Is part of this kingdom still future?  
*Yes, one day the kingdom of heaven will come be God's kingdom on earth (Matt 6:10).*

**DISCUSS** 

1. Can you see God's kingdom right now? How can you know it's real (2 Pet 1:16-19)?
2. Think of your favorite things in this world. Now compare that with living in God's kingdom in the new world forever (Rev 21:3-4; 22:1-5). Which one is worth living for?



## DAY 5

### Isaiah's Prophecy about John the Baptist • Isaiah 40:3–5

#### READ

Isaiah 40:1–11

#### EXPLAIN

##### The truth of Isaiah 40:3–5

Do you like patterns? If I say, “1, 2, 1, 2, 1,” you know “2” comes next because of the pattern. God often acts in patterns. Isaiah 40 was a message for the Jews who would be taken as captives to Babylon. Isaiah encouraged them that God would rescue them from captivity. Years later, God did rescue them (Ezra 1:1–3). But they still did not trust God to save them from their sins, so their return was not glorious (Isa 40:5). Yet that rescue from Babylon was a pattern of a greater rescue to come. So 700 years after Isaiah, John the Baptist fulfilled Isaiah’s prophecy about a messenger (Matt 3:3; Mark 1:2; Luke 3:4; John 1:23). John announced the coming of the King who would rescue in an even greater way. Jesus rescues from sin and death so that people can enter God’s glorious kingdom forever. Not only will He bring Israel back to God and to their land, but He will also save people from all nations (Isa 49:5–12), so that everyone sees God’s glory (52:10). So trust God, because the best is yet to come.

#### ASK

1. When was John the Baptist’s mission declared? *700 years before his birth.*
2. How do we know that John the Baptist was the messenger Isaiah wrote about? *All four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) identify John as Messiah’s forerunner.*
3. What does Israel’s rescue from Babylon show us about the future? *It shows God will one day rescue Israel—and people from all nations—from all sin and sadness, and bring Israel back to their land forever.*

#### DISCUSS

1. If you smashed your finger, would it hurt? How do you know? (Because that kind of thing has hurt in the past.)
2. How do God’s past actions show that God will one day rescue all of Israel and many others besides (Rom 11:15, 26–27)?

## NEXT WEEK

### John baptizes Jesus

Matthew 3:13–17



# SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON

## WEEK 2

### John baptizes Jesus

Matthew 3:13-17



## DAY 1

Jesus accepted His mission as the Messiah, Part 1 •  
Matthew 3:13-14

### READ

Matthew 3:13-17

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Matthew 3:13-14

Why did John the Baptist refuse to baptize Jesus at first? One reason is that John realized that Jesus was the King and he was only the messenger (3:2). But another reason is because of what baptism was for. The purpose of baptism was to repent of sin, but John realized that Jesus had no sin to repent of. John was Jesus' cousin, so he knew the prophecies and miracles surrounding Jesus' birth. Even though he wasn't yet sure that Jesus was the Messiah (John 1:31, 33), John's response shows that he knew of no sin that Jesus had to confess. Jesus was innocent and sinless (1 Pet 2:22). This is important, because only a sinless man can satisfy God's righteous law on behalf of mankind (Matt 5:17; Isa 53:9), and only a sinless man can die as an acceptable sacrifice for sin (Exod 12:5; Lev 1:3; 1 Pet 1:19). Because Jesus had no sin, He is the spotless Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). So you can confidently trust Him to be your Savior and King.

### ASK

1. What was John's baptism for?  
*It was for repenting of sin.*
2. Did John think Jesus needed to be baptized?  
*No.*
3. What is one reason John thought this?  
*Because Jesus was the King, someone much greater than John.*
4. What is another reason John thought this?  
*Because Jesus had no sin to repent of.*

### DISCUSS

1. When do you take a bath (or a shower)?  
When you are clean or dirty?
2. Have you seen someone get baptized?  
Did they explain why they were getting baptized?

## DAY 2

Jesus accepted His mission as the Messiah, Part 2 • Matthew 3:15

### READ

Matthew 3:13–17

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Matthew 3:15

So if Jesus was sinless, then why did He choose to be baptized? Jesus chose to be baptized in order “to fulfill all righteousness” (Matt 3:15). This phrase shows that Jesus was choosing to submit wholly to God’s plan (6:33). God’s plan was for the Messiah to be counted with sinners (Isa 53:12). And that’s what Jesus did when He was baptized. Jesus was not admitting any sin of His own; instead, He was identifying Himself with the sinners He came to save. By being baptized, Jesus was accepting His mission as the Messiah, even the part about dying for sins He never committed (Isa 53:5–6). The rest of Jesus’ life shows that He was true to His mission. That’s good news for us! Like the leopard unable to change his spots, we are completely powerless to change our sinful condition (Jer 13:23). Our only hope is for Jesus, our Messiah, to take our sins upon Himself and give us His own righteousness (2 Cor 5:21). Since He never wavered, you can trust Him as your Messiah and follow His example of humble obedience (1 Pet 2:21).

### ASK

1. Why did Jesus say he wanted to be baptized?  
*To fulfill all righteousness: to publicly accept God’s plan for Him to be the Messiah.*
2. What was the purpose of Jesus’ baptism?  
*To show that Jesus identified with sinners.*
3. How was Jesus’ baptism different from others?  
*Jesus was not confessing His own sin (He was sinless).*

### DISCUSS

1. How is our sin like the spots on a leopard?
2. When you see Jesus’ perfect obedience to His Father, how should you respond (1 Pet 2:21)?

## DAY 3

Heaven confirmed Jesus’ mission as the Messiah, Part 1 • Matthew 3:16

### READ

Matthew 3:13–17

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Matthew 3:16

Why did a dove land on Jesus? Actually, it wasn’t a dove. It was the Holy Spirit who appeared in a form that was similar to a dove. Well then, why did the Holy Spirit come on Jesus? There are three reasons. First, it shows that Jesus was the promised Messiah because the Old Testament prophesied that the Holy Spirit would come upon the chosen descendant of Jesse (Isa

11:1–2a). That’s how John the Baptist knew Jesus was the Messiah (John 1:33). Second, it shows that Jesus was the promised Messiah by anointing Him as king. Long ago, God selected David as king by anointing him with oil (1 Sam 16:13). But here God identifies Jesus as King by anointing Him with the Holy Spirit (Isa 61:1). Third, it shows Jesus was given power to be the Messiah. The Spirit filled Jesus with “wisdom and understanding,” “counsel and might,” “knowledge and the fear of the LORD” (Isa 11:2b). By the Spirit Jesus would overcome temptation (Matt 4:1), perform miracles (12:28), give His life (Heb 9:14), and rise from the dead (Rom 8:11).

DAY 3 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

**ASK** 

1. Who came down from heaven onto Jesus?  
*The Holy Spirit, like a dove.*
2. When John saw this, what did he realize?  
*He realized Jesus was the chosen one, the Messiah.*
3. How did the Holy Spirit show that Jesus is the Messiah?  
*He fulfilled the prophecy about the Messiah having the Spirit, He anointed Him as King, and He equipped Him with power.*

**DISCUSS** 

1. List some tools that different kinds of jobs need (doctors, firefighters, police officers, etc.). Would you trust any of them to help you if they had none of the tools their job requires?
2. Why can you trust Jesus to do His job as the Messiah? Do you trust Him?

**DAY 4***Heaven confirmed Jesus' mission as the Messiah, Part 2 • Matthew 3:1***READ** 

Matthew 3:13–17

**EXPLAIN** **The truth of Matthew 3:17**

Parents love it when their children obey, and God the Father does too. When Jesus chose to be baptized, Jesus showed that He shared the same purpose and the same love as the Father. No human father and son have ever been so close as God the Father and God the Son (John 10:30). So the Father showed His pleasure. He called Jesus His “beloved Son” and said He was “well pleased.” These words also identified who Jesus was. As the “beloved Son” (Matt 3:17a), Jesus was the promised Son who would reign as King over the earth (Ps 2:7–8). As the one the Father was “well pleased” with (Matt 3:17b), Jesus was the righteous Servant (Isa 42:1) who would suffer and die for sinners (53:5–9). So while some Jews thought there would be two Messiahs, one who would suffer and one who would rule, the Father spoke from heaven to show that Jesus would do both. He came once as the suffering Messiah to save the world (John 3:17). He will come again as the conquering Messiah to judge the world and reign as King forever (Matt 16:27).

**ASK** 

1. What did the Father call Jesus?  
*My beloved Son.*
2. How did the Father show that Jesus is the Messiah?  
*He identified Jesus as the Royal Son and as the Suffering Servant.*
3. What was the purpose of Jesus' first coming?  
*To save the world as the suffering Messiah.*
4. What will be the purpose of Jesus' second coming?  
*To judge the world and reign as King forever as the conquering Messiah.*

**DISCUSS** 

1. How do you and your parents show your love for each other?
2. The Father and Son love each other very much. What difference does that make for you (John 15:9; Rom 8:15–17)?

## DAY 5

All three members of the Trinity present at Jesus' baptism •  
Matthew 3:16–17

### READ

Matthew 3:13–17

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Matthew 3:16–17

It's almost as if heaven was holding its breath, watching eagerly for Jesus to appear on the world stage as the Messiah. Then, when the Son appeared in His baptism, heaven burst forth with approval, delighted in the Messiah and His mission. The approval of the Spirit and the Father was added to the Son's own testimony, so that the entire Trinity confirmed that Jesus is indeed the promised Savior and King. The **Trinity** is often described as one God in three persons. The triune God is based on three biblical truths. First, there is only one God (Deut 6:4; 1 Tim 2:5). Second, the Father (Eph 4:6), the Son (John 1:1; Rom 9:5; Heb 1:8), and the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3–4) are each God. Third, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are distinct from each other. Since all the members of the Trinity interacted together at Jesus' baptism, they cannot just be different roles that God takes on at different times. So Jesus' baptism shows us that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are distinct persons who are at the same time the one God.

### ASK

1. What does "Trinity" mean?  
*It means that God is three persons in one.*
2. How do you see it at Jesus' baptism?  
*Father, Son, and Holy Spirit acted together at Jesus' baptism.*
3. The triune God is based on three biblical truths. What are they?  
*There is only one God. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are each God. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are distinct from each other.*
3. How does Jesus' baptism show that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are distinct persons?  
*All the members of the trinity interacted together at Jesus' baptism.*

### DISCUSS

1. Why can we be absolutely certain that Jesus is the Messiah, the promised Savior and King?
2. How does the Trinity allow for God to be inherently loving and relational?

## NEXT WEEK

Jesus overcomes  
temptation

Luke 4:1–13





# SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON

## WEEK 3

### Jesus overcomes temptation

Luke 4:1–13



## DAY 1

God tested Jesus for 40 days • Luke 4:1–2

### READ

Luke 4:1–13

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Luke 4:1–2

The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted (Luke 4:1b). But how can this be, if God does not tempt anyone with evil (Jas 1:13)? The same trial is both a temptation from Satan and a test from God. God ordains it, and the devil carries it out, but they have opposite goals (Job 2:3–6). The devil tempted in order to destroy the Son's relationship with His Father and disqualify Him from being the Messiah. But God tested Jesus to prove that He was the faithful Son, qualified to be the Messiah. This temptation was necessary because we need a Messiah who succeeded where we failed. Both Adam and Israel were called the son of God (Luke 3:38; Exod 4:22), but both failed when they were tempted (Gen 2:16–17; 3:6; Deut 8:2; Ezek 36:20). No one, from Adam to Israel to you, has lived out God's purpose for mankind (Rom 3:10, 23). Thus the nation of Israel and all of Adam's race are destined to die (6:23)—unless a perfect son of Adam and a perfect Israelite can overcome Satan's temptations and live out God's purpose for mankind.

### ASK

1. Who led Jesus into the wilderness?  
*The Holy Spirit.*
2. Why did the Holy Spirit lead Jesus into the wilderness?  
*God was testing Jesus to prove that He was His faithful Son.*
3. Who tempted Jesus?  
*Satan tempted Jesus.*
4. Who else had Satan tempted? Did they resist?  
*Satan had tempted Adam and Israel. Both failed to resist Satan's temptations and sinned against God.*

### DISCUSS

1. How have you failed to live out God's purpose for your life (Mic 6:8)?
2. How can God's control over temptation help you overcome temptation (1 Cor 10:13)?