

Week 19 Family Letter

Jesus Is Our Substitute: Jesus' Baptism

(Matthew 3:13-16)

Where does water come from? God made water. He sends water down from the clouds in the sky. It rains! The rainwater flows into lakes and rivers. The water is cleaned and pumped into houses to use. Water is a gift from God! We drink water every day. Animals and plants drink water. We use water to wash us clean. We use water to clean other things too. It is fun to splash and play with water. Water is a gift from God!

God uses water in a special way. He connects His Word to water in Baptism. He washes away our sins because of Jesus, who died on the cross and came alive again. God is so good!

Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by His cousin John the Baptist. Jesus is perfect. He never sinned. He did not need to be baptized. But Jesus did all things right, showing us how to live as God's children. When Jesus was baptized, God the Father spoke from heaven, calling Jesus His Son. The Holy Spirit brings us faith and makes us children of God. Jesus comes to our hearts, forgiving us and helping us to live for God in what we say and do.

Bible Words

This is My beloved Son.

Matthew 3:17

Dear Family,

Have your child color the river water in the Bible picture, remembering that water is an important part of Baptism. But water alone is not enough; it is the Word of God that is the power in Baptism. It is the Word of God that brings us the Gospel message of Jesus, who takes away our sins.

Children love to play in water. Water has a very soothing effect on most children. Let your child help with water activities such as washing (unbreakable) dishes, washing the car or the dog, and watering plants. Caution: Never leave a child alone with any amount of water—in the tub or with even a few inches of water in a bucket.

Take a rain walk if there is no thunder or lightning. Or take a walk right after a rain. Enjoy the water-drenched world. Look at plants that have been watered by the rain. Put on boots and splash through puddles. Watch birds taking baths in puddles. Look for rainbows.

Remember that the most important use of water is in Holy Baptism, through which we are made God's children. Celebrate your child's baptismal birthday. Bake a cake. Sing a variation of "Happy Birthday to You," changing the words to "May Jesus bless you." Start your own traditions! If your child has not been baptized, talk to your child's teacher or the pastor of the church for more information. Read the story on page 297 of *The Story Bible* together.

