



John Prepares People for Jesus' Coming

Luke 3:7-18

Third- and fourth-graders are learning about how to ask forgiveness. In a lot of ways, they're learning what it means to apologize with sincerity and are recognizing when they need to ask forgiveness. They're at a point where they want to avoid repeating their mistakes. Use this lesson to help kids understand the process of repentance and the way it can clean their hearts.



► Bible Point

Repenting prepares us for Jesus.

Key Verse

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will tell Jesus they're sorry for the things they've done wrong and commit to pleasing Jesus.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Be Prepared <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Form groups, and make lists of how to be prepared for certain events.	pens, paper Teacher Pack: "Scenario" cards 	Separate the "Scenario" cards.
2 Bible Exploration	How Do We Repent? <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Act out how scenarios from the poster can be handled differently. 	Bibles, scissors, tape Teacher Pack: "How Do We Repent?" poster, Bible Timeline	Cut along the dotted lines on the back of the poster to separate the illustrations. This will create flaps. Tape the poster to a wall with the title side showing.
	Dirty Hands/Clean Hands <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Learn the Key Verse, and discover how Jesus can make them clean when they confess their sins to him.	Bibles, 1 washable marker per child, basin of soapy water, paper towels, marshmallows	Have a basin of soapy water hidden away in an easily accessible place until you need it.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Living Lives That Please Jesus <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Think about ways Jesus can help people, and learn how to repent.	Bible Truth Sleuth, pens	Tear out the Lesson 3 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	Teacher Pack: "How Do We Repent?" poster 	

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*



Be Prepared Supplies

pens
paper
Teacher Pack
“Scenario” cards

Be Prepared Easy Prep

Separate the “Scenario”
cards.

1 GETTING STARTED

Be Prepared

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Have kids get into four groups.

Say: **I’m going to give each group a scenario. You’ll have five minutes to talk about what you need to do to prepare for what’s written on your card. Then you’ll make a list of everything you can think of that you’d need to do to prepare for your scenario. You’ll share your list with the rest of the group. Your goal is to not forget to list anything you’d need to do.**

Give each group one of the “Scenario” cards, a pen, and paper, and give the groups five minutes to prepare their lists.

Then have each group present its list, allowing time for the other kids to come up with things they might’ve missed.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

When everyone’s done, have kids answer the following questions in their groups. After each question, invite willing kids to share their answers with the entire group.

Ask:

- **What was easy or difficult about preparing for your scenario?**
- **Explain whether you think it’s important to prepare for things.**
- **What might happen in real life if you weren’t prepared for the scenario on your card?**

Say: **In today’s Bible passage, we’ll learn how John told people to prepare for Jesus. John said ► REPENTING PREPARES US FOR JESUS. In fact, we need to repent just as the people John talked to needed to repent.**

Ask:

- **What do you think *repent* means?**

Say: **Today we’ll learn more about repentance as we talk about someone who helped lots of people prepare for Jesus.**





2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

How Do We Repent?

What You'll Do

Show kids the “John Prepares People for Jesus’ Coming” picture on the Bible Timeline.

Say: **Today’s Bible passage is found in Luke 3:7-18. John told people about specific ways they could repent to prepare for Jesus. Let’s take a closer look at what those ways were.**

Have kids remain in their same four groups from the previous activity, and assign one scene from the poster to each group. Allow groups to come up and look more closely at their pictures, but don’t let them touch the flaps yet to reveal the scenes on the back of the poster.

Say: **After you’ve looked at your scene, discuss in your group what you think is happening in the scene and who in the picture needs to show repentance. You can talk about how you think the people on the poster might show repentance, too.**

Give groups five minutes to discuss the scenarios, and then have each group come up with a story to go with its picture. Each person who is willing will tell a section of the story.

Have groups take turns telling their stories to the entire group. After all the groups have told their stories, make sure kids all have a Bible and have them open to Luke 3:7-18. Ask for willing children to read the passage.

Say: **After reading this passage, how can you apply to your scenario what the Bible said?** Allow a minute for groups to talk, and then encourage them to share ideas.

Say: **Let’s take another look at our poster and see what John said these people needed to do to repent.**

Have kids fold the flaps over one at a time so each flap reveals the side with the Bible verse. Invite a willing child from each group to read aloud the verse at the bottom of the new scene.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What’s the most challenging thing about John’s suggested response?**
- **In what ways does repentance help people get ready for Jesus?**
- **Explain your typical attitude about repentance. Give an example.**



How Do We Repent? Supplies

Bibles
scissors
tape

Teacher Pack

“How Do We Repent?”
poster
Bible Timeline

How Do We Repent? Easy Prep

Cut along the dotted lines on the back of the poster to separate the illustrations. This will create flaps. Tape the poster to a wall with the title side showing.





Dirty Hands/Clean Hands Supplies

Bibles
1 washable marker per child
basin of soapy water
paper towels
marshmallows

! ALLERGY ALERT

Dirty Hands/Clean Hands Easy Prep

Have a basin of soapy water hidden away in an easily accessible place until you need it.

Say: **We all have sins for which we need to repent. To repent you must realize that you are doing something wrong—or sinning—and that to be forgiven for those sins, you need Jesus. Let's take a look at how ► REPENTING PREPARES US FOR JESUS.**

Dirty Hands/Clean Hands

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Our Key Verse today is 1 John 1:9.** Have kids find the verse in their Bibles, and ask a willing child to read aloud 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

Show kids the marshmallows and tell them the treat is for later. Give each child a washable marker.

Say: **Think of any sins you've committed, and write them on your palms and fingers. Write down everything you can think of.**

Give kids several minutes to think and to write as many sins as they can think of. When kids have finished writing, have them place the caps on the markers and set them aside. Set the marshmallows in front of the kids.

Ask kids to talk about what might happen if they were to touch the marshmallows with their hands being the way they are. Say: **The first thing you need to do to have clean hands is to admit that your hands are dirty.** Give kids who admit their hands are dirty a dry paper towel, and tell them to clean their hands off with it. Make sure it's clear to kids that you won't give them a marshmallow if you can see any signs of marker on their hands. Allow about a minute.

Ask kids to think of ways they can clean their hands enough so you'll give them the marshmallows. Allow kids to try out any ideas that won't be a problem, and if kids come up with soap and water, ask them why they think that'll work before you get out the basin of soapy water.

Say: **Admitting you have a problem is just the first step. We need Jesus to help us clean our sins, just as we need some help cleaning our hands.** Have kids wash their hands in soapy water, and allow them to dry their hands with paper towels.

Distribute the marshmallows to the kids, and let them eat and enjoy.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What might've happened to these marshmallows if you'd eaten them with the ink all over your hands?**
- **How's that like trying to live right for God when you know you've done wrong things?**





- In what ways was cleaning your hands with paper towels like or unlike trying to get rid of sin all by yourself?
- In what ways is Jesus like the soapy water?
- In what way do you need Jesus' help to clean out something in your life?

Say: *Repenting* means admitting when we've done something wrong and then not doing it anymore. John helped people realize that Jesus is always ready to forgive us and to make us clean, so no matter what we've done, when we repent we can move on and be new and fresh. ► **REPENTING PREPARES US FOR JESUS.**



3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Living Lives That Please Jesus

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Distribute pens and the Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids to turn to the "Living Lives That Please Jesus" activity. Have kids each find some space to sit alone. Encourage kids to look through the sections on their pages and fill in the lines with ways the people could let Jesus help them.

Allow about five minutes for kids to read and respond; then have kids form pairs.

Say: **In your pairs, talk about a way you might be able to let Jesus help you in your life.** Give kids a few minutes, and then ask them to pray for each other. Allow a few more minutes.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What's different about thinking of ways someone else could live to please Jesus and thinking about ways you can do the same?
- What changes when you repent for doing something wrong?
- What's one way you can start getting yourself ready for Jesus?

Say: John helped people know that they could repent. We can pray and tell Jesus that we know we've done wrong things and ask him to help us not do those things anymore. ► **REPENTING PREPARES US FOR JESUS.** When we repent, Jesus forgives us and helps us live lives that please him. When you prayed together with your partner, you already started off on that path. Let's choose Daily Challenges to help us keep our focus on Jesus and off of ourselves.

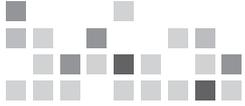
Living Lives That Please Jesus Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth pens

Living Lives That Please Jesus Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 3 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.





Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: Let's consider this week how ► **REPENTING PREPARES US FOR JESUS** as we do our Daily Challenges.

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Think of something you've done wrong. Write a letter to God about that thing, and then throw away the letter and thank him for forgiving you when you repent.**
- **Before going to sleep, ask God to show you things you need to ask forgiveness for from that day.**
- **Draw a heart on a piece of white paper. Write "Jesus gives me a clean heart" on it. Hang the heart somewhere you'll see it throughout the week, and pray when you see it.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **John** came to help people prepare their hearts for Jesus. He told them how ► **REPENTING PREPARES US FOR JESUS**. Let's prepare ourselves for Jesus by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.



Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about repentance. Kids can also do the activities in the “HomeConnect” section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.

Lay the “How Do We Repent?” poster on the ground, and gather kids around it. Kneel together and have kids each place a hand on the poster. Pray: **Dear Lord, thank you so much for forgiving us when we tell you we’re sorry for what we’ve done wrong. Help us repent from doing wrong things and live a life that is righteous.** Allow time for kids to pray silently, allowing any kids who want to pray aloud to do so. **In Jesus’ name, amen.**



Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

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Teacher Pack

“How Do We Repent?”
poster



