

Ready for the Christ of Christmas

Theme

John the Baptist prepares the way for Jesus.

Object

A bag of candy with a piece of candy for each child

Scripture

Matthew 3:1-12

Children's Sermon: Ready for the Christ of Christmas (Matthew 3:1-12)

(Make sure that by the end of the children's sermon, every child has a piece of candy.)

Today we're going to talk about what it means to be ready. To help us out, I have a bag of candy. When I ask, "Are you ready?" the kids who can show me what it means to be ready will get a piece of candy.

What does it look like when we're ready? (Allow kids to answer.)

That's right! Being ready means that we are patient, we wait, and we watch.

Okay, are you ready to start our lesson today? (Give a few kids who are ready a piece of candy and say things like, "I see you're ready because you are waiting patiently" or "I see you're ready because you are watching me.")

Are you ready for Christmas? (Give a few kids who are ready a piece of candy and affirm the way they're ready.)

You will hear that question many times over the next several weeks. Let's find out what people mean when they ask that question.

Raise your hand if your Christmas tree is up and your house is decorated.

Raise your hand if you've finished your Christmas shopping.

Raise your hand if you've been practicing for a Christmas program.

There's another question that we should be asking ourselves today. It's more important than "Are you ready for Christmas?" The more important question is "Are you ready for the Christ of Christmas?" (Give a few kids who are ready a piece of candy and affirm the way they're ready.)

Many years ago, a man named John the Baptist preached about what it means to be ready for Jesus. Are you ready to answer a question? (Give a few kids who are ready a piece of candy and affirm the way they're ready.)

What do you think it means to be ready for Jesus?

John the Baptist was a different kind of man. He wore clothes made of camel's hair with a belt around his waist. His diet was rather unusual as well. He ate a diet of locusts and wild honey. Do you know what a locust is? Many of us today might call it a grasshopper. I'm not sure I would want to eat grasshoppers and honey. How about you?

John the Baptist traveled throughout the wilderness of Judea. His message to the people was to get ready for Jesus. John would shout loudly, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

Are you ready for Jesus? (Give a few kids who are ready a piece of candy and affirm the way they're ready.)

Many people were ready for Jesus. So they came to John the Baptist. They confessed their sins to God and were baptized by John in the Jordan River.

After John baptized the people, he told them, "I baptize you with water for repentance. But there is one coming who is more powerful than I. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Are you ready for Jesus this Christmas? (Give a few kids who are ready a piece of candy and affirm the way they're ready.)

During this special season of the year as we get ready for Christmas, you and I need to make sure we're ready for the coming of the Christ of Christmas. We need to look into our hearts and ask God to make us clean so we can walk with Jesus each day of our life. Let's ask him to do that now.

Dear God, we want to be ready for the Christ of Christmas. Prepare our hearts for his coming. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Interactive Group Activities
by Carol Williams & Charles Kirkpatrick

Sermon Title: "Ready for the Christ of Christmas"

Scripture Reading: Matthew 3:1-12

READY, SET, GO: The children will run relay races together from one side of an open designated area to the other side. One time can be hopping, one time can be skipping, one time can be running, one time can be walking backward, etc. Tell children to be READY to listen to what command they'll be doing when the teacher says READY SET GO!

BE READY MUSICAL VARIETY: Have the children form two teams. Team one will stand in a circle facing in. The other team will form a circle facing out. When the teacher begins to play some upbeat Christmas music, the inner circle will walk clockwise and the outer circle of children will walk counter clockwise. When the music stops, the children will stop and face a partner and do as the teacher tells them to do, such as shake hands, say their names to each other, clap hands, or other ideas. Toward the end of the musical game, tell children that when the music stops, they will face a partner and remind their partner to BE READY and the outer circle will do whatever the inner circle partner does. Continue to play as time allows

BIBLE VERSE BELL or STAR: Have the children cut out a Christmas bell or a star and write words from today's Bible verse on it. Tape or glue the bell or star to a piece of construction paper and fold the bottom of the paper to form a card stand and stand the bells and stars around the bottom of the classroom Christmas tree.

CHRISTMAS HUNT: Before class time, the teacher will out pictures that depict the Christmas story such as a manger, angels, stars, wise men, shepherds, nativity, a Bible, praying hands, or a church. HIDE the pictures around a designated area and tell the children to run and find ONE picture and RUN back to the Christmas poster board and tape that picture on the board; then run and get another picture, with each child running back and forth at the same time to find pictures and taping them on the PREPARE FOR CHRISTMAS poster board that the teacher has taped to the wall. Tell children that these are all ways to be PREPARED for Christmas.

BE READY TUG OF WAR: Divide the children into two teams and each team can place themselves on either side of the large rope. Tell children to BE READY so when the teacher says .. PULL.. each team member will be READY by standing with legs apart and firm on the floor and hands in position to PULL!

PICK AND DRAW: Place strips of paper in a basket after writing words depicting the Christmas Story such as manger, angels, stars, shepherds, wise men, Mary, and Joseph. The children will then take turns drawing the word on the slip of paper that they chose. Provide children with construction paper and markers, glitter, and glue. Children will tape their picture on a long wall paper runner that is taped to the wall. Encourage the children to tape their picture in the proper spot so the picture will tell the story of keeping CHRIST in Christmas.

HEART ORNAMENTS: Give the children supplies to cut out red paper hearts and hang them on the classroom Christmas tree with red ribbon. Each heart should have words from today's lesson on it such as PREPARE, REPENT, BE READY, KING OF HEAVEN IS NEAR, or KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS. If there is no Christmas tree in the classroom, the teacher can cut out a large green poster board triangle and place on the wall for the children to hang their heart ornaments.

BE READY CHRISTMAS CARDS: Have the children cut out old Christmas cards and make a card of their own on folded construction paper, with words from today's lesson to BE READY FOR THE CHRIST of Christmas, or other ideas from the children. Have Christmas stickers available, as well as markers and glitter glue for decoration.

CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS BELLS: Give the children a bell that has been traced and cut out. Trim the bell with ribbon or yarn or Christmas string. Write words from today's Bible lesson to KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS. Hang the bells from the wall or the ceiling in the classroom.

SING A SONG: CLEANSE ME; COME, THOU LONG EXPECTED JESUS

SHARE A SNACK: Children can either be given a Christmas sugar cookie and some frosting to be placed on the cookie to decorate, OR each child can be given a red and white candy cane, to share the Christmas story of the shepherd's staff or as a "J" for Jesus.

Song: "Cleanse Me" Maori folk melody/Lyrics by J. Edwin Orr

Lead Sheet (PDF) - Verse Only

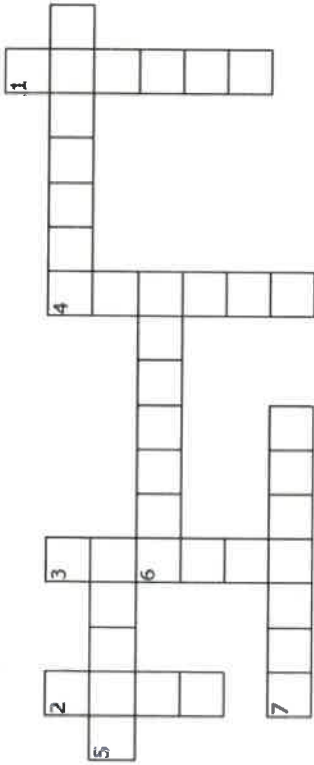
Piano Accompaniment (MP3) Right click and save to your computer.

Song: "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus " - Charles Wesley/Roland H. Prichard

Lead Sheet (PDF) - 1st Verse Only

Piano Accompaniment (MP3) Right click and save to your computer. (1X with 4 measure introduction.)

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- One who speaks for God, or tells what will happen in the future
- The sounds that are made when people speak or sing
- To get ready for something that is going to happen
- What John did to people in the Jordan River

DOWN

- An area where there is little rain and not many plants
- The man who preached that Jesus was coming
- To be sorry for something bad you have done and make a change
- To deliver a sermon

VOICE	PREPARE	DESERT	PROPHET
REPENT	JOHN	PREACH	BAPTIZE



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Children's Worship Bulletin

Are You Ready for Christmas?

Matthew 3:1-12

Word Search

W L U Z M H V J O J Q V Q S U
 I Y V S L O G N K M D B H A K
 K C T X T N M R H K Y T E X X
 C I X J T E Z Y J T A E S L E
 P N N Y Y A S L P P T R Z T
 R B M G J W I L D G S U E S Q
 E D A H D H A I R U X G P T C
 P Z O P Y O U S C E N U E R F
 A T O Q T W M O H I N J N A F
 R Z S G N I L O H L R L T I M
 E Z J N P O Z C P N E P Y G P
 E S P O A E A E H M N N Z H C
 L O R D H E M T A F T Q X T Y
 J W K K R N J C U Y C T Q T U
 I X E P F N M H L D Z D E N I

LORD	PREPARE	KINGDOM	JOHN	HAIR
BAPTIZE	STRAIGHT	PATHS	PREACHING	WILD
REPENT	LOCUSTS	HONEY	CAMEL	BELT

St. Christopher's Episcopal Church
Killeen, Texas

Decoder Puzzle

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.

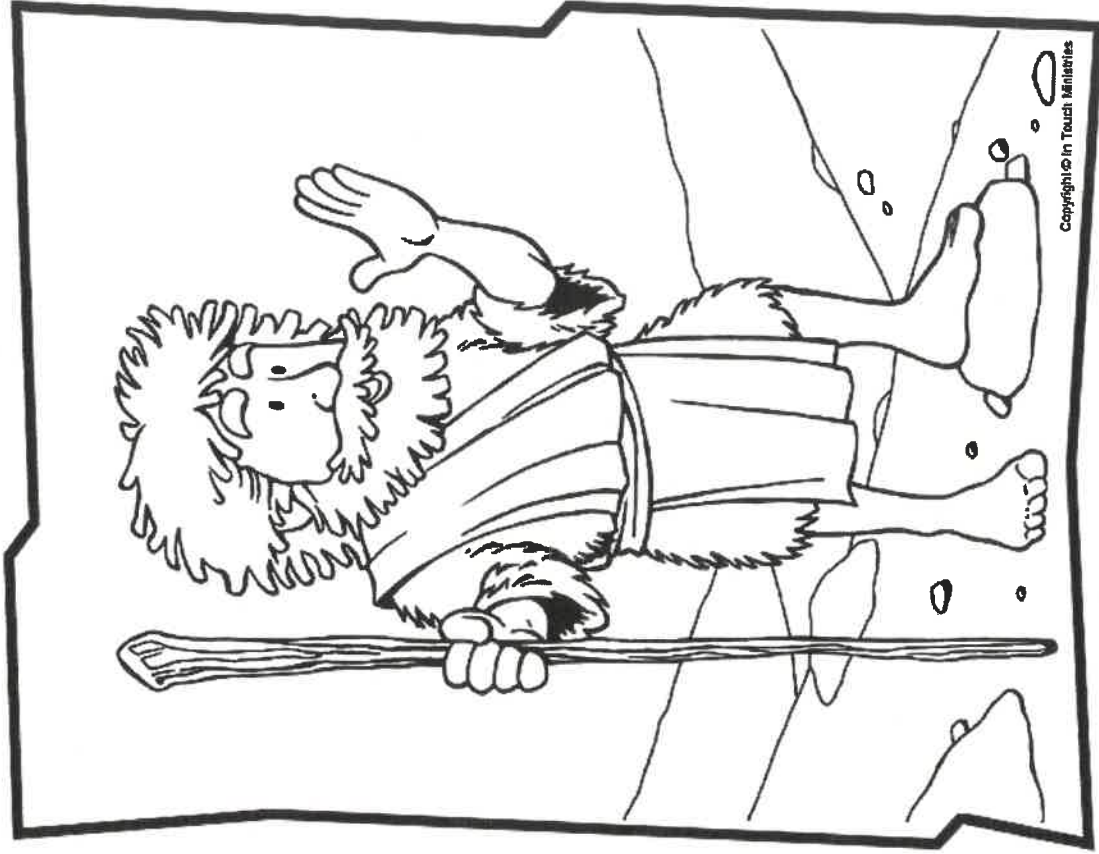
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

- 16-18-5-1-3-8 _____
- 2-1-16-20-9-26-5 _____
- 16-1-20-8-19 _____
- 4-5-19-5-18-20 _____
- 19-20-18-1-9-7-8-20 _____
- 12-15-3-21-19-20-19 _____
- 16-18-5-16-1-18-5 _____
- 8-15-14-5-25 _____

BAPTIZE	PREPARE	STRAIGHT	LOCUSTS
PATHS	HONEY	PREACH	DESERT



Color Me



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JOHN THE BAPTIST

Matthew 3:3, Mark 1:3, Luke 3:4

John the Baptist Coloring Page



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"And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins [...] And this was his message: 'After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'" (Mark 1:1-8)

John the Baptist Bible Coloring Page for ages 4-10



Oriental Trading
FREE-N-FUN

Christmas

orientaltrading.com/freefun

Name _____



Advent Coloring Page

MAKING SPIRITS BRIGHT

