

A Good Shepherd Story of Jesus

Are You the One?

Adapted by:
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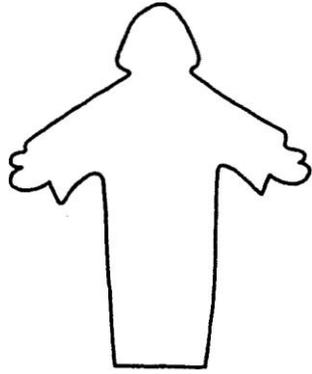
**Illustrations by:
Jennifer Schoeneberg**

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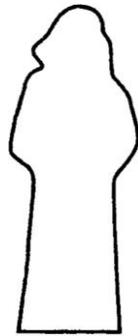
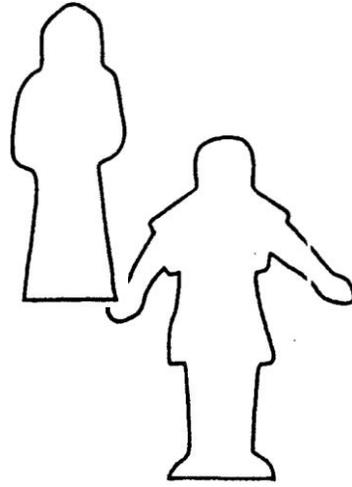
ARE YOU THE ONE? •• MATERIALS

- small wicker basket to hold:
 - wooden Jesus figure
 - wooden John the Baptizer figure
 - 2 wooden followers of John the Baptizer figures

John the Baptizer



Jesus



Followers

ARE YOU THE ONE? ••• MATTHEW 11:1-6

ACTIONS

After speaking, stand and get the story from its shelf. Return to the circle and sit down, placing the story basket next to you.

Gently stroke one or more of the wooden figures to center yourself and the children during the silence.

Place John the Baptizer at left center of the storytelling area.

Place the Jesus figure at right center of the storytelling area.

Remove John the Baptizer from the storytelling area and put the figure back in the basket.

Move Jesus to the center of the storytelling area.

Place the two followers of John the Baptizer at left center of the storytelling area.

Move the two followers of John the Baptizer to the right, close to Jesus.

Touch each of the followers of John the Baptizer as you speak.

Cover your eyes, briefly, with your hands, then "walk" two fingers of one hand across the floor.

WORDS

Watch carefully where I go to get this story so you will know where to find it if you choose to make this story your work today or another day.

All the words to this story are inside of me. If you will make silence with me I will find all the words to this story.

Before Jesus started preaching a man called John the Baptizer preached.

He told people Jesus was coming and that Jesus was the Messiah, the Savior.

But just a little while after Jesus started preaching, John the Baptizer was put in jail.

Jesus was teaching and preaching in the places where Jesus' disciples lived.

When John was in prison he heard what Jesus was doing. John sent his followers to ask Jesus a question.

The ones who followed John went to Jesus and said, "John wants to know if you are the one who God will send, or should we look for someone else?"

Jesus told them, "Go tell John what you have seen and heard from me."

"Tell him the blind people see and lame people walk. "

Stroke your left hand with your right hand and touch one hand to one ear.

Hold both hands out, palms up.

Gesture with one hand to include the whole circle, moving from left to right.

Move the two followers of John the Baptizer a distance to the left.

Carefully return all wooden figures to the basket, one at a time.

After speaking, stand and carry the basket back to the shelf. Then return to the circle and sit down.

Be certain each child has had an opportunity to choose their work before dismissing the children all together.

"Tell him lepers are healed and deaf people hear."

"Tell him the dead are raised and the poor have good news given to them. "

"And blessed are all those who accept what I do."

And the men who followed John the Baptizer went to tell John what they had seen and heard.

WONDERING QUESTIONS:

I wonder if people ever got Jesus and John the Baptizer mixed up?

I wonder why Jesus just didn't tell John the Baptizer's followers, "Yes, I'm the one"?

I wonder what the people who were healed told the followers of John the Baptizer?

I wonder why it's so hard to believe?

Watch carefully how I put these materials away so you will know how to handle them if you choose to make this story your work today or another day.

Watch carefully where I return this story so you will know where to find it if you choose to make it your work today or another day.

I wonder what you will make your work today? Let's go around the circle and decide what each of us will do.

ARE YOU THE ONE? ••• TEACHER HELPS

This story is a wonderful glimpse into the lives of both Jesus and John the Baptizer. John is lifted up so often as a man of incredible faith, which he was. But here we have a view of John questioning the one whose coming he had so determinedly proclaimed. Remember that the Messiah the Jews waited for was, in their minds, a military power and/or a religious power. They believed that the Messiah would take the throne in Jerusalem and restore power to the Jews by taking it away from the Romans. With that tradition as the basis for his understanding, it is no wonder that John questioned if Jesus was really the one they'd been waiting for. Jesus didn't fit the traditional role they had assigned the Messiah, nor did he seem interested in doing so.

So while John was in prison, unsure if he would ever be free again, John needed assurance from Jesus that his labors hadn't been in vain and that Jesus really WAS the Messiah. Jesus could have simply told John's followers, "Tell your teacher that the answer is 'yes'." But he didn't do that. Instead, Jesus referred to several things he'd done. He helped the disciples of John understand that those things he did; i.e., healing, preaching good news to the poor, etc. were the marks of the Messiah. In telling John those things, Jesus alluded to several Old Testament passages (Isaiah 29:18-19, 35:5-6, 61:1) that speak of the Messiah and what the Messiah will do. Though Jesus never claims to be the one fulfilling those prophecies, he knows the Baptizer will know those passages and that what he is doing will be proof enough for him. At least that's what he hopes. At the end Jesus expresses a hope that he will not offend John by his less than traditional fulfilling of the role of Messiah.

We begin our wondering by considering if people ever got John and Jesus mixed up. The children may feel a little relief that there's the possibility others may get Biblical people confused from time to time, because that certainly does happen. Others may be concerned that a mix-up like that could ever occur. Remind them that we don't know the answer, we just wonder about it. ~,

Next, we wonder why Jesus didn't just tell John's followers "yes". Again, we're not sure. Jesus needed the Baptizer and his followers to come to their own conclusion. Maybe he really wanted them to think. Maybe he needed to say those things so he, himself, was sure he was fulfilling the role he'd been given. This is a hard question for children. Some children will say that Jesus said what he did so the followers would have proof. They will insist that, otherwise, John wouldn't have believed Jesus. Others will need to store this question for another time.

Our third wondering question allows the children to contemplate what other people said about Jesus. They will think about the followers of John talking with a person who had been healed by Jesus. The children's responses will strongly reflect, that those people would believe that Jesus was the SOli of God, the Messiah, the Savior, or whatever title they choose to assign.

Our final wondering question is for all of us. Why is it so hard to believe? Be prepared for straightforward answers. Children will tell us that it's hard to believe when you can't see something or when somebody doesn't explain it all to you. Others will say that it's not hard for them to believe. For those children, it's not. That is not a flippant answer, but one that is so securely based in their experience with God that they believe completely in Jesus.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR OLDER CHILDREN:

Imagine two scenes: In the first, John the Baptizer is talking to his followers as he sends them to Jesus. In the second, he is talking to them when they return. What would the conversations be like? What would they have said to each other? At the end, was John convinced of the answers Jesus gave his followers?

If someone asks you why you are a Christian, what would you say?

What is the hardest thing for you to believe in your faith? What is the easiest?