

Sermon of the Week

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: "John said, 'Change your hearts and lives because the kingdom of heaven is coming soon.' " Matthew 3:2 (ICB)

(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."

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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.

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