

Christian MONTHLY

DEDICATED TO THE PROCLAMATION
OF THE WORD OF GOD

for Children



Psalm 119:105
Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path.

Summer 2017

John, the Messenger is Born

Luke, chapter 1

Zechariah and Elizabeth were an old couple with no children. This was considered shameful in those days, and Zechariah and Elizabeth were sad because of it.

Z ECHARIAH WAS A PRIEST. The priests took turns serving in the temple, so, when it was his turn, Zechariah traveled from the hill country of Judah to Jerusalem. While he was burning incense in the temple, the angel Gabriel appeared, saying: "Do not fear, Zechariah! Your prayer is heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy, and many people will rejoice when he is born. He will be great in the sight of the Lord, and he will be filled with the Spirit before he is born. He will prepare the way of the Lord."

Zechariah asked the angel, "How do I know that this will happen? I am old, and my wife is old, too."

The angel said, "I am Gabriel, and I stand in the presence of God. I was sent to bring you this good news. Because you didn't believe my word, you will be unable to speak until these things happen as I have said."

The people waited outside, wondering why Zechariah was taking so long in the temple. When he came out, he couldn't talk, and the people realized that Zechariah had seen a vision. He motioned to them, but he could not speak at all.

When Zechariah's time of service in the temple was ended he returned home, and Elizabeth became pregnant, just as the angel had said. For five months, she hid herself from people, saying, "The Lord has done this for me, when He looked upon me, to take away my shame among the people."

The angel Gabriel also visited Mary, the mother of Jesus. He told Mary that she would have a baby and she would name Him Jesus. When Mary asked how this could happen since she didn't have a husband, Gabriel said the Holy Spirit would come upon her, and the power of the Most High would overshadow her, and the child would be called holy—the Son of God. Gabriel also said that Mary's cousin Elizabeth was pregnant in her old age, because with God nothing shall be impossible.



The Vision of Zacharias James Tissot
Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

After the news from Gabriel, Mary hurried to visit her cousin. When Mary entered the house and said hello to Elizabeth, the baby inside Elizabeth leaped for joy! Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the baby in your womb! Why should the mother of my Lord come to me? When I heard the sound of your voice, the baby inside me leaped for joy! Blessed is she who believed that the Lord would fulfill those things that He spoke to her." Mary sang a song of praise to God, and she stayed with Elizabeth for about three months, and then Mary returned to her home.

When Elizabeth had a baby boy, her family and friends rejoiced. When it was time to name the baby, they wanted to call him Zechariah after his father, but Elizabeth said, "No! He will be named John." John wasn't a

family name, so they asked Zechariah what the child should be named. Zechariah motioned for a tablet and wrote: "His name is John." Immediately, Zechariah's mouth was opened, and he was able to speak, and he began to praise God. Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit, and he prophesied: "You, child, will be a prophet of the Highest, and you will go before the Lord to prepare His ways, to give the knowledge of salvation to His people by the forgiveness of their sins." The people were amazed and frightened, wondering what kind of child John would be, for the Lord was with him.

Toddlers

Through Three Years



God Knows You

Before you were born, God knew you. He formed your body with all its parts, and He made you grow. He knew what color your eyes would be, and He knew if you would be tall or short. He knew everything about you.

God knows you today. He knows when you go to sleep and when you wake up. He knows when you are sad and when you are happy.

Before you were born, God loved you. He loved you so much He made a way for you to be in heaven with Him someday. He sent Jesus to die for you, to save you from sin.

God loves you today. He loves you when you are sleeping or awake, and He loves you when you are sad or happy.

God's Own Child

God's own child, I gladly say it:
I am baptized into Christ!
He, because I could not pay it,
Gave my full redemption price.
Do I need earth's treasures many?
I have one worth more than any
That brought me salvation free,
Lasting to eternity!

Edmann Neumeister

Jesus loves you so very much that He gave His life for you. He paid the price for your sin, the price that required a blood sacrifice.

In baptism, He washed you cleaner than any bath ever could; He washed your sin away and gave you faith in His promises. He sent the Holy Spirit to comfort you and keep you.



God has given you a greater treasure than anything on earth! He has brought you to Himself and made you His own child. Thank Him for this wonderful blessing. Thank Him that your parents brought you to Holy Baptism. Thank Him that you have heard His Word and trusted in His promises. Thank Him for the Holy Spirit who lives inside you.

Tykes

Ages Seven-Ten

Have you ever snuggled under a blanket or comforter when you were cold? It's very warm and soft and comfortable. Jesus called the Holy Spirit a "Comforter" who will be with us forever.

The Holy Spirit Comforter

After Jesus rose again from the dead, He knew that He would be going back to heaven to be with His Father. He promised the disciples that He would ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit to teach them all things, and to remind them of everything that Jesus had said to them.

Ten days after Jesus had gone back to heaven, the disciples were together on a special day called Pentecost. Suddenly the house was filled with the sound of a mighty wind from heaven. Little flickering tongues like fire appeared and rested on each of them. The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, languages that they didn't even know how to speak! All the people who heard them were so surprised.

The Apostle Peter told the people about Jesus being crucified and how God had raised Him from the dead. He said that Jesus was now lifted up at the right hand of the Father, and had received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit. Peter said the people were seeing and hearing this Holy Spirit being poured out by God. *Three thousand* people received Peter's words and were baptized that day!

The Holy Spirit came to be with us and to comfort us. The Spirit teaches us and reminds us of the promises of Jesus. The Holy Spirit is our Comforter, who will be with us forever and warm our hearts when they are cold.



Tweens

Eleven-Twelve Years

The Holy Trinity

God is sometimes called a Trinity, one God in three Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Each Person is fully God. Each Person is present everywhere all the time, but sometimes the three Persons of God are mentioned directly in a single Bible account.

At creation, all three Persons of the Trinity were involved. The Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters, and the Father spoke the world into existence by His Son, also called the Word. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit were present and participating.

When Jesus was made flesh and came to earth, the Trinity was involved. The Holy Spirit came upon Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the power of the Most High God overshadowed her, and she conceived the holy Son of God, Jesus the Christ. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit were present and participating.

At the baptism of Jesus, all three Persons of the Trinity were involved. Jesus the Son—God in human flesh—was baptized by John. God the Father's voice was heard from heaven. God the Holy Spirit came down out of the sky in the shape of a dove and rested on Jesus.



God is Three in One, and has existed that way forever. The three Persons of God are mentioned many places in the Bible, but the word "trinity" isn't used in the Bible. We simply use that word to explain the concept of the "three in one" God. We worship one God in three distinct Persons, all fully God and equal in majesty.

Apostle Paul closes his second letter to the Corinthians with this beautiful Trinity benediction:

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.

Amen.

2 Corinthians 13:14

After His resurrection, Jesus gave His disciples a command. Jesus said to go out and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

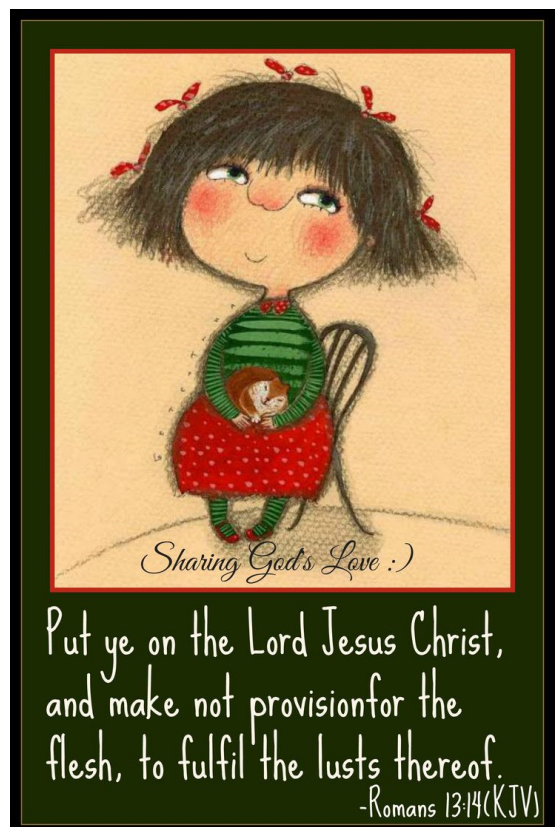
Teens

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

Holy Baptism is a Sacrament, a sacred act where God Himself is present both in the Word and in a physical element. In Baptism, God washes people with His Word and the water, and joins Himself to them. The water isn't just plain water because it is connected with God's Word, and in this way it becomes a gracious water of life. This is truly a great mystery!

The Apostle Paul wrote that whoever is baptized into Christ is baptized into Christ's death. We are joined in His death and we are buried with Him in baptism. And just like Christ was raised from death, we also will be raised from death. The glory of God the Father raised Jesus from death to life, and we also are raised to live a new life. We consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We who believe and have been baptized are joined to Christ and have put on Christ. We have become a part of His body. We have died with Christ, and yet we live a new forever life. We were buried with Him in our baptism, and we consider our old man (our sinful fleshly part) dead and buried. We live our new life in our old body, waiting for the day when the trumpet will sound and Jesus will return. Then we will have a new glorious body like His! While we wait, we live sanctified, holy lives, serving others and teaching them about Jesus. We bring our infants to be baptized for the washing of regeneration that God accomplishes in Holy Baptism.



John: the Messenger Grows Up

The prophet Isaiah spoke of John: *The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (Isaiah 40:3)* The voice of John would ring in the desert, preaching and preparing the way of the Lord.

The prophet Malachi spoke of John: *Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me. (Malachi 3:1)* John the Messenger would go before the Lord Jesus, preparing the hearts of the people for His coming.

John would be a mighty prophet of the Highest, bringing the knowledge of salvation to the people of Israel. Zechariah the priest prophesied of his infant son John:

And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. (Luke 1:76-79)

The child John grew up and became strong in spirit. He lived in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel. He was kind of a wild man: he wore scratchy clothes made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts (grasshopper-like insects) and wild honey.

John began to preach in the wilderness of Judea, a deserted place where no one lived. His message was simple: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near!" To *repent* means to have sorrow for sin (sadness about breaking God's holy Law), to have faith in the Gospel (trust the Good News that God has forgiven sin for Christ's sake), and to turn away from sin. John spoke harshly to the religious leaders who thought that because Abraham was their forefather, they didn't have any need to repent.



John: the Baptizer

Many people from Jerusalem and Judea, and the area around the Jordan River, went to hear John preach. They were baptized by John in the Jordan, confessing their sins. To the people who asked, John gave these instructions: "Whoever has two coats is to share with whoever has one, and whoever has food should do the same thing."

John said that he only baptized with water unto repentance, but that there was One coming after him who was mightier than John, who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire! John said he wasn't worthy to even carry that One's shoes. John the Baptist was talking about Jesus, the Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity. John called Jesus the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

One day as John was baptizing, he saw his cousin Jesus, who had come from Nazareth in Galilee to be baptized by John. Jesus did not need to be baptized because He was not a sinner. John knew this, so he said, "I need to be baptized by You, and yet You come to me to be baptized?!" But Jesus answered, "Let it be so now, because it is proper in this way for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then John agreed to baptize Jesus.

When Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water and immediately the skies were opened. John saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on Jesus. John heard a voice from heaven: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."



Word Links

Change COLD to WARM by replacing one letter on each line to make a new word.

COLD

WARM

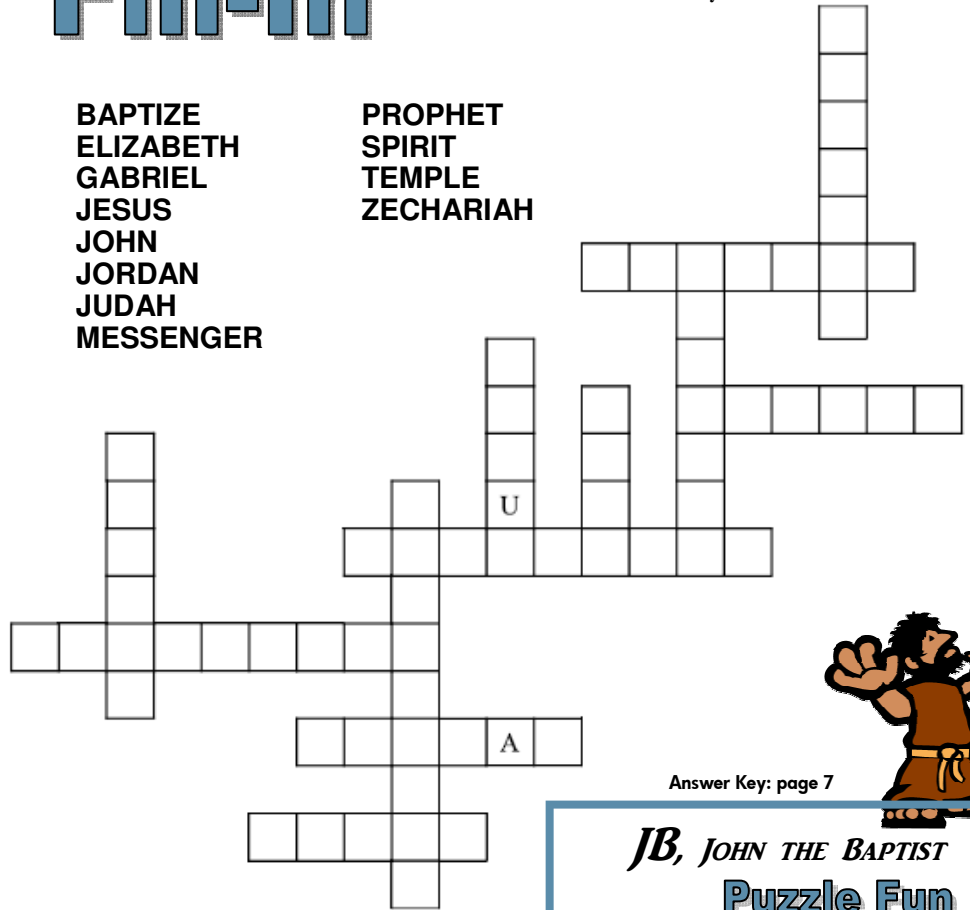
The love of God warms our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us.
Romans 5:5

Fill-In

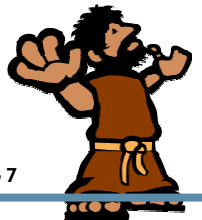
Can you place the words into the puzzle below?
Two letters have been filled in for you.

BAPTIZE
ELIZABETH
GABRIEL
JESUS
JOHN
JORDAN
JUDAH
MESSENGER

PROPHET
SPIRIT
TEMPLE
ZECHARIAH



Answer Key: page 7



JB, JOHN THE BAPTIST
Puzzle Fun

Who was JB??

JB prepared the way for the _____
Matthew 3:3

JB's father was _____

and mother was _____
Luke 1:13

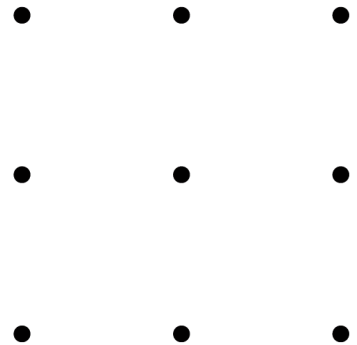
JB grew up in the _____
Luke 1:80

JB ate _____ and _____
Matthew 3:4

JB wore clothing made of _____
_____ and a belt of _____
Matthew 3:4

JB baptized in the River _____
Matthew 3:6

Draw as many
rectangles
as you can using the
grid at the right.
Hint: remember that
a square is a special
type of rectangle.



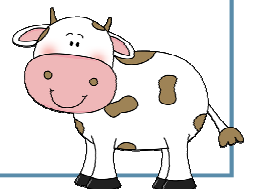
How Many Cows?

Eino and Toivo were having coffee one morning while they took a break from working on their farms.

Eino says, "You know, I was thinking. If you gave me one of your cows, then we would have the same number of cows."

Toivo replies, "Well, if you gave me one of your cows, then I would have twice as many as you!"

How many cows does Eino have and how many cows does Toivo have?





A Picture to Color

*And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water:
and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove,
and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying,
This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

Matthew 3:16-17

The Song of Zechariah



**Now be the God of Israel blessed,
Who makes His truth appear;
His mighty hand fulfills His word,
And all the oaths he sware.**

**Now he bedews King David's root
With blessings from the skies;
He makes the Branch of Promise grow,
The promised Horn arise.**

**[John was the prophet of the Lord,
To go before His face;
The herald which our Savior God
Sent to prepare His ways.**

**He makes the great salvation known,
He speaks of pardoned sins;
While grace divine, and heav'nly love,
In its own glory shines.**

**"Behold the Lamb of God," he cries.
"That takes our guilt away;
I saw the Spirit o'er His head,
On His baptizing day.]**

**Be every vale exalted high,
Sink every mountain low;
The proud must stoop, and humble souls
Shall His salvation know.**

**The heathen realms with Israel's land,
Shall join in sweet accord;
And all that's born of man shall see
The glory of the Lord.**

**Behold the Morning Star arise,
Ye that in darkness sit!
He marks the path that leads to peace,
And guides our doubtful feet.**

Isaac Watts

*The song of Zacharias, and the Message of John the Baptist;
or, Light and salvation by Jesus Christ,
Luke 1:68-79 & John 1:29-32*

Holy God, Everlasting Three in One,

Thank You, Father, for Your mercy to us. Thank You, Jesus, for Your sacrifice for us. Thank You, Holy Spirit, for living within us; You are the Comforter who is poured out richly on all who believe.

Thank You for Zechariah and Elizabeth, and the wonderful miracle that You performed in giving them a son. Thank You for John the Baptist, the Messenger of Christ, who pointed to the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Thank You for the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. You join Yourself to us by water and the Word, and You bring us to faith in Your promises which never fail. We are grateful that we are buried with Christ and risen to a new life, that we are dead to sin and alive for Jesus' sake.

Let us live our new lives in service to others, shunning sin and evil desires, which war against the soul. Let us be honest with those who are outside the Christian faith, so that they will see our good works and glorify You.

We want to glorify You with the Apostle Paul, as he writes in Ephesians, chapter 3, verses 20-21:

*Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly
above all that we ask or think,
according to the power that worketh in us,
Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus
throughout all ages, world without end.*

Amen.

Puzzle Answer Key

Fill-In

Elmo has 5 cows and Toivo has 7 cows.

How Many Cows?

Rectangle	Number
1x1 square	4
2x1 and 1x2 rectangle	4
2x2 square	1
tilted square	1
TOTAL	10

Word Links

cold-cord-word-worm-warm

Who was JB?

Lord

Zechariah, Elizabeth

Deserts

Locusts, wild honey

Camel's hair, leather

Jordan

Rectangles

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For Parents:

Go. Teach. Baptize.

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Matthew 28:18-20

These verses are sometimes called the Great Commission: Jesus sent the apostles out to evangelize. They were to “Go. Teach. Baptize.” Go. Make disciples. Baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. By extrapolation, then, we hear the command of our Lord and we also are sent. We feel the weight of these words, and we may feel our failure in carrying out the commission in a far-away mission field.

But an archaic definition of **commission** is **the authority to perform a task or certain duties**. The word “therefore” is easily skipped over, and the onus is placed on us to fulfill the commission by our own strength. The words prior to “Go” are key to the fulfillment of the Great Commission. Jesus said, “All power is given unto **Me** in heaven and in earth. Therefore go!” The strength and ability are His. The Great Commission is HIS commission, not ours. The authority is His alone. He will do the work; we are only tools in His hand. We simply go, teach, and baptize; He will bring forth the fruit of His labors.

We do not minimize the sacrifice and efforts of missionaries and evangelists, but all Christians are not called to far-away places to spread the Gospel. Our homes, schools, and workplaces are mission fields. We live in this world (there’s the Go!) We share the Good News with our children, and we bring them to hear the Word of the Lord proclaimed (there’s the Teach!) And we bring our children to baptism, where the Lord joins Himself to them.

The Great Commission is not your “marching orders.” Rest in His power and rejoice in the opportunity to witness for our Lord in the raising of your children.

