



JANUARY THEME

**ILLUMINATE
YOUR BRAIN**

BIBLE STORY

John 1:19-42

The Big Dipper | Jesus' Baptism & John calls Jesus Lamb of God
Spark Story Bible | Jesus' Baptism (p. 242-245) The Lamb of God (p. 246-247)

BOTTOM LINE

Discovering what God says helps you follow Jesus

MEMORY VERSE

"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."
Psalm 119:105, NIV

LIFE APP

Knowledge | learning something new so you can be better at whatever you do

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what

FOR LEADERS ONLY

GOD VIEW: the connection between **KNOWLEDGE** and God's character, as shown through God's big story

This WEEK: In **John 1:19-42**, we read John's account of Jesus' baptism. Jesus was about to start his public ministry. He shows up on the banks of the Jordan River where his cousin, John the Baptist, was baptizing people. John the Baptist recognized Jesus, not just as his cousin, but as God's promised Savior. John understood God's story and called out to the crowd, "Look! The Lamb of God! He takes away the sin of the world!" (*John 1:29, NIV*) That day, he pointed out to everyone who Jesus was and why they should know Jesus and start to follow him.

Bottom Line: **Discovering what God says helps you follow Jesus.** The more we read God's Word, the more we understand about who Jesus is and why he came to earth. God's Word gives us clarity for what it means to believe in Jesus and follow him with our lives.

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray that as kids learn more about Jesus, they'll be drawn to a relationship with him and have a desire to follow him. Ask God to guide you as you encourage your few in their relationships with Jesus. Pray that you would be able to model this for them in a real, authentic way.

•• EARLY ARRIVER IDEA

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Ask kids:
 - Can you share something you've learned this month?
 - What's the definition of knowledge?
 - Have you learned something new lately? What was it?
 - What new thing have you learned in school that you found interesting?
 - Do you remember what the most important thing to know is? (*what God says*)
 - Have you learned anything new about God this week?

•• SEARCHING FOR KNOWLEDGE

What You Need: "Knowledge Search Puzzle" activity pages, pens

What You Do:



- Give kids a “Knowledge Search Puzzle” and a pen.
- Give assistance if needed as kids work to find all the hidden words.
- Once everyone is pretty much finished, ask if anyone knows how the words are related. (*They’re all synonyms for or words related to knowledge.*) Ask if anyone has a favorite word to use instead of “knowledge.” Can anyone think of a word for knowledge that wasn’t on the word search?

What You Say: “You did a great job finding all the words. Knowledge is learning something new so you can be better at whatever you do. [Transition] **Today in Large Group Worship/WOW Family Worship we’ll hear/we heard how knowledge of what God says can certainly point you in the right direction.**”

[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Large Group Worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

●● PUZZLE STORY *(application activity/review the Bible story)*

What You Need: “Puzzle Story Pieces” activity pages

What You Do:

- Lay out the “Puzzle Story Pieces” on your small group table.
- Discuss with kids what part of the story each picture represents. (*You can use the discussion guide below or do your own thing. Allow kids to ask any questions they might have about the story.*)
- Let kids complete the puzzle and connect the pieces in the order of the story.

Sample Discussion:

1. A bug and a camel hair tunic: What do we know about John? (*He was Jesus’ cousin; he lived differently; he lived in a desert; he wore camel hair clothing and ate bugs*)
2. A “U” turn arrow: What do we know about what John preached? (*Turn away from your sins; repent; change your ways*)
3. A river: What do we know about a river in our story? (*John baptized people in the Jordan River; John baptized Jesus*) What did God tell John would happen when he baptized someone special? (*God’s Spirit would come down and remain on someone John would baptize*)
4. A dove: When John baptized Jesus, what do we know happened? (*The Spirit in a form of a dove landed on Jesus*)
5. A megaphone: What do we know God said when Jesus was baptized? (*This is my Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with him — Matthew 3:17 NIRV*)
6. A lamb: And what did John know after he baptized Jesus? (*Jesus was the Messiah, the Lamb of God*) As John started telling people Jesus was the Lamb of God, we know Andrew and Peter did what? (*followed Jesus*)
7. Lots of people: And we know the story didn’t just stop with Andrew and Peter. Lots of people chose to follow Jesus because of what God says.

What You Say: “God told John to be on the lookout for someone special. Because John listened to what God said, John knew Jesus was the Messiah. Like John, [Bottom Line] **discovering what God says helps you follow Jesus**—but the story doesn’t stop there. John shared what he learned from God about Jesus with Andrew and Peter, and then they started to follow Jesus. When you discover what God says, you, like John, can help others follow Jesus too. Why do you think the outline of our puzzle is an arrow? What does an arrow do? (*It points you in the direction you should go; shows you the way; etc.*) Just like God showed John who Jesus was—God’s Son—God



wants to point you to Jesus, too. God wants you to know Jesus; God wants you to follow Jesus. **[Bottom Line] Discovering what God says helps you follow Jesus.**"

•• **MOVIN' RIGHT ALONG** (*application activity*)

What You Need: "Movin' Right Along" activity cards, "Movin' Right Along" game board, beads

What You Do:

- Give everyone in your group a different colored bead.
- Set the game board and activity cards in the center of the table.
- Each kid will choose a card from the top of the pile and follow the instructions on the card, moving from number 1 to number 20 on the game board.
- For the "negative" cards (*i.e., cards where kids have to move backwards*), give the kid who picked that card a chance to flip the situation around. If he does this, let him move forward one space (*after he has moved back the correct amount of spaces*).
- The winner is whoever reaches the end of the game board first (*or whoever is the furthest along when you run out of cards*).

What You Say: "That was a really fun game! Those situations were sometimes funny or unrealistic, but they all were either something that would help us be more like Jesus or less like Jesus. In God's Word, God tells us how to be more like Jesus, because God knows that acting like Jesus is always the wise choice. If we aren't sure what Jesus would do, all we have to do is learn more about Him from the Bible. Everything God has told us in the Bible is important for us to know because **[Bottom Line] discovering what God says helps you follow Jesus.**"

•• **COLOR ME BRIGHT** (*memory verse activity*)

What You Need: "Color by Verse" activity pages, crayons

What You Do:

- Give each kid an activity page and set out the crayons.
- Read the verse together and then let kids color the activity page based on the color key.

What You Say: "When you guys were coloring the pictures you easily could have colored it a different way. You could have used blue where the instructions told you to use yellow. Or you could have used green when they told you to use orange. But your picture wouldn't have turned out as the artist intended. This is just like in our lives—we can do things differently than the Bible instructs us to, but we won't be living the way God intended.

"God has a plan for our lives and God wants only what's best for us. If we follow God's path and do as God asks, our lives will be as God intended them to be. And one of the things God wants most for us is to know and have a relationship with God's Son, Jesus. **[Bottom Line] Discovering what God says helps you follow Jesus**, so one of the ways you can follow Jesus is by reading God's Word and talking to friends and family who already follow God!"

PRAY AND SEND

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Pray with your group...

Gracious God, thank you for your Word and for sending Jesus to show us how to live. Help us to be more like Jesus. Help us to

