



For highlights of John's story, read Matthew 3:1-4:12; Luke 1:5-25, 57-80; John 1:15-37.

**Breakthrough!** John, how do you know Jesus?

**John:** Our moms are related, so we've known each other since we were kids. And when we were grown up, I baptized him before he started preaching.

**B:** Why were you baptizing people? Did anybody ask you to?

**John:** God did! I baptized people as a way to remind them to repent—to turn away from sin and toward God.

**B:** Where did you live before you started preaching and baptizing?

**John:** With a group of Jewish believers in the desert. I chose to live very simply so I could stay focused on my mission.

**B:** What was it like to baptize Jesus?

**John:** It was humbling! When he came to hear me preach, I knew I wasn't worthy to teach him anything, much less baptize him! But Jesus said it was part of God's plan. When he came out of the water, I saw the Spirit of God rest over him—I like a dove. All of us felt God's presence powerfully. I think it was then that Jesus knew it was time to begin his ministry.

**B:** So did you keep baptizing after Jesus started preaching?

**John:** No. I was sent by God to prepare the way for Jesus, to get people ready to hear his Word. Once he began his ministry, I stepped back.

**B:** That must have been hard to do—I mean, crowds of people came to hear you preach! Wasn't that a good thing?

**John:** It certainly was! I felt like I was on fire for God. I was overjoyed that so many people heard me preach his Word. But I knew that what happened afterward was in God's hands. My job was to say, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths" (Mark 1:3).

**B:** Sounds like that's still a good message today!