

# COURAGEOUS

## CHRISTIANS

### HOLIDAY CLUB

**John the Baptist:** Courage to recognise who Jesus is

‘Turn away from your sins!’ John called out. ‘Turn back to God! He loves you and forgives you! But you must repent and be baptised!’

John was an odd-looking character. He lived on the edge of the desert and often spent time alone when he was not teaching the people about God. He was dressed in a cloak of camel hair and wore a leather belt. He ate locusts and wild honey. But he loved God, and had a strong sense that God was going to do something amazing – and soon!

‘I have good news!’ he cried to all who would listen. ‘God said in the past that he would send a messenger ahead of the Special One, and the messenger would make a way for Him. We must all get ready! He will make the road back to God straight and He is coming soon!’

Many people listened to John and they admitted they had been lost and got things wrong. Then John baptised each of them in the River Jordan, dipping them under the water then bringing them up and out, clean and ready for a new life.

‘Listen. There is One coming after me,’ he said. ‘One much greater than me. He will baptise you with His Spirit. He is coming.’ John was talking about the One that the Bible promised would come to bring people back to God. But the people had been waiting for hundreds of years!

‘So how should we live now?’ the crowd asked John.

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'If you have two shirts, then give one to someone who doesn't even have one.' John replied.

'What about us?' asked the tax collectors - Jews, who worked for the Roman authorities.

'What shall we do?'

'Don't take from people more than you should,' replied John, looking them in the eye.

'Don't lie. Be content with what you've got.' People were very excited by John's message of hope. They had been waiting for the Special One for so long!

'Are you the One we've been waiting for?' they asked excitedly. 'The One the prophets of the past said was coming?'

'No, it's not me,' said John. 'The One coming after me is much greater! I'm not good enough even to wear his sandals!'

Just then, Jesus came down to the riverside. A hush fell on the crowd as they watched and waited to see what would happen. Would John baptise this new, popular teacher?

'I want to be baptised, John,' Jesus said.

John shook his head. The crowd held their breath! 'It should be you baptising me, not you coming to me!' he said, bowing his head.

'Let us do it this way for now,' Jesus answered. 'This is how God wants it.' So John led Jesus down into the water. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he came up out of the water. The crowd gasped as light suddenly broke through the clouds above them. They saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and resting on Jesus. Then a voice said from heaven, "This is my own dear Son; I love him and I am pleased with him."