



## UPPER ELEMENTARY

### WEEK 1- STARTER



#### Activity Name: Disciple Decoder

**What You Need:**  Disciple Decoder activity pages  Pencils

#### What You Do:

- Give each kid a “Disciple Decoder” Activity Page and a pencil.
- Explain that they are to decode the names of some of Jesus’ first followers. The word bank at the bottom is there to help if they get stuck.
- Let the kids work individually or with a partner to solve the puzzles.
- Once everyone is done, go over the answers together.

#### What You Say:

Nice work, detectives! You cracked the code. In today’s true story from the Bible, we’re going to hear about John the Baptist. His followers had to do some decoding of their own. John the Baptist gave his followers a major clue about Jesus, and it changed everything for them.

Let's go and hear about the clue that John the Baptist shared with his followers that pointed them to Jesus.

**Lead your group to the Large Group area.**

## UPPER ELEMENTARY

### WEEK 1- SMALL GROUP

### Discussion Questions:

- John’s followers were upset that people were leaving him to follow Jesus, but John was joyful. Why do you think John wasn’t jealous or upset—and what can that teach you about humility?
- John said, “He must become more important. I must become less important” (John 3:30 NIV). What do you think that means in your own life? How could you live in a way that points people to Jesus instead of to yourself?
- It can be easy to want attention, popularity, or praise. How can focusing on Jesus first help you deal with those feelings when they show up?
- John’s joy came from seeing Jesus’ work grow, even if his own influence shrank. When have you found joy in helping someone else succeed—or letting someone else shine?
- The story says that when we focus on Jesus more than ourselves, we find peace and hope. How might your thoughts, choices, or worries look different if you really believed that Jesus is bigger than any problem you face?



#### Bible Story

John the Baptist Is a Witness about Jesus •  
*John 3:22-36*

#### Conversation Starter

How can I show others that Jesus is better?

#### Bottom Line

Jesus must increase. I must decrease.

#### Monthly Memory Verse

*Don't do anything only to get ahead. Don't do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves.* •  
*Philippians 2:3 NIV*

## Activity Name: “Important Things” Bookmark

**What You Need:**  Bibles  Bookmarks  Coloring supplies

### What You Do:

- Give each kid a bookmark from the “Bible Bookmark” Activity Page and make coloring supplies available.
- Instruct the kids to make a list of things that are important to them on the back of the bookmark (e.g., family, friends, sports, video games, school, being popular)
- After a minute or two, encourage the kids to look at their list and circle the top 3 most important things.
- Then, instruct the kids to share their top 3 with a partner or the whole group.
- • Lead a discussion with these questions: •
  - Is it bad to have things that are important to us? (No!)
  - What happens when something on our list becomes MORE important than Jesus?
  - What did John the Baptist mean when he said: “He must become more important. I must become less important” (John 3:30 NIrV)?
  - What does it look like in real life to make Jesus more important than the other things on our lists?
- Read this month’s Memory Verse together, which is on the bookmark.
- Instruct the kids to decorate their bookmark, coloring in the words and designs.
- Suggest the kids take their bookmark home and put it in their Bible or a book they are reading as a reminder about humility.

### What You Say:

It’s good to have things that are important to us! God gives us family, friends, and fun things to enjoy. Today in our Bible Story, John the Baptist reminded us of a really important truth. He made less of himself—and he made a big deal of Jesus. John the Baptist wasn’t upset about losing followers; he was filled with joy because his purpose was being fulfilled! He was doing what he was made to do—to point people to Jesus!

Our verse is a powerful reminder of what humility looks like. It’s not about thinking less of yourself, it’s about thinking of yourself less. It’s about putting others first. John the Baptist lived out this verse perfectly—**[Bottom Line] Jesus must increase**. I must decrease. As you open your Bibles this week at home and see this bookmark, remember to live out this verse and point people to Jesus!

**KEEP GROUP TOGETHER UNTIL PICK UP**