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# Start with a Clean Slate!

## Children's Sermon on Luke 3:15-17; 21-22

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There are times in our lives (maybe a lot of times) that we will make mistakes. We often find ourselves needing to start fresh, and we can do that every day with God's help. We can't clean up our sins and mistakes, but the blood of Jesus washes our sins and makes us new. This message uses cleaning products as an example of how we can wipe away old messes and begin anew in Christ. Baptism reminds us that our sins are washed away, and we can come to God again and again for forgiveness.



**Law/Gospel Theme:** Before beginning His earthly ministry, Jesus was baptized by His cousin John. Although Jesus committed no sin, His baptism was an example for us, and an opportunity to demonstrate who He was and is as God's son. For us, baptism is a reminder that Christ's blood has cleansed us from sin. We still make mistakes, but God will always grant us the opportunity to start over, provided we sincerely repent and trust His mercy.

**Optional Materials:** Something messy or dirty; special cleaning products that will "redeem" the object(s). This could be dry erase cleanser, a magic eraser, Windex, etc., depending on the dirty item chosen.

**Bible Passage:** Luke 3:15-17; 21-22

### More Teaching Ideas

- Watch the video teaching example of this [children's sermon](#) and related [Bible crafts](#)
- Compare another [Sunday School lesson on Luke 3:15-17; 21-22](#)
- Compare a free [children's sermon on Jesus' baptism from rFour.org](#)

**Message Note:** As with most messages, the details of how you choose to communicate this are adaptable and should cater to timing as well as to your audience and student needs.

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## Start with a Clean Slate (Luke 3:15-17; 21-22)

### Children's Sermon Lesson

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*Greet children and discuss what happens when we make mistakes...*

Hello, children of God! Have you ever made mistakes? I know I make mistakes sometimes. Sometimes it feels like I do things that I can't change or take back. We all do. For instance, recently, I got this really dirty (*demonstrate dirty object of your choosing. This might be a dry erase board full of markings, a toy with crayon scribbled on it, or perhaps a mirror that's been smudged. Anything that needs "extra help" to get clean will do. For the sake of this example, we'll use the dry-erase board*). I have this special board that I can mark on, but I got way too many marks on it. In fact, now I am not sure I'll be able to use it again. These marks have been here so long it doesn't seem like I can erase them that easily. Let me try (*attempt to take away the marks with regular paper towel or tissue*). It's just not working? I need something more. I can't get this clean by myself. (*Pull out cleaning fluid*). Let me try using some of this...it says it will clear things off. Maybe this will help! (*Squirt cleaning fluid on the board, and wipe it off*). Wow, what do you know? It works! I couldn't get rid of these marks on my own, but with the special liquid, now my board is good as new. I can start fresh with a totally clean slate!

This reminds me a little bit of our lives as Christians. We make a lot of mistakes, and we can't fix them on our own. We need something more than just us to make things better. What do we need? That's right, we need the blood of Christ! We need God's help to take away all of those mistake markings and give us a clean slate to start over. This makes me think of baptism...Being baptized reminds us that we get to start fresh through Jesus. It reminds us that we can die to our sins and have new life. Did you know that even Jesus was baptized? His cousin John baptized Him in a river. This might seem strange, because of course Jesus never sinned. However, it sets an example for us. At His baptism, a voice from Heaven came and told everyone "You are my beloved son, with whom I am well pleased." Jesus truly is the son of God, and God Himself in human flesh (which is a bit confusing, but that's another conversation...). The baptism of Jesus started off His earthly ministry. Our baptism gives us a new start.

No matter when or how you are baptized, though, we will continue to make mistakes. God forgives us once and for all, but we'll still do things we shouldn't. The good news is that we can always come back to God when that happens. He promises to let us start over again! We can wipe that slate clean and know that God always covers us in grace. We can't do it on our own. But we can clear away those messes knowing that we are clothed in the righteousness of Jesus. We can always come to God in prayer and ask for His help. He will clean away those mistakes every time, and give us a clean slate! God's grace is pretty awesome and powerful, because He loves us so much!

Let's pray and thank God for grace and new chances...

**Prayer:**

(Have kids repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for giving us Jesus

Thank you that He died in our place and takes away our sins

Thank you for letting us start fresh

And "clean up" again and again

We know we make mistakes,

But you always forgive!

Thank you for your love

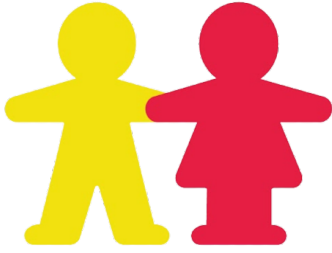
We love you, God!

In Jesus name, Amen!

**Bible Verses/story to Reference:**

*As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, 16 John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."*

*21 Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, 22 and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." [-Luke 3:15-17; 21-22](#)*



# SUNDAY SCHOOL .WORKS



Thank you for downloading these free materials. Our team is grateful for your trust and pray that God will bless your ministry.

This resource was prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#) (pictured right). She serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO. She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.

Every week she writes new [Sunday School lessons](#), [Bible crafts](#), and [children's sermons](#).

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May 2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

My name is Tony Kummer (pictured below). I started Ministry-To-Children.com in 2007 as a free resource for anyone sharing Jesus with kids. It is my personal honor to share these resources with churches around the world.



[Reader donations](#) and your support at [The Sunday School Store](#) fund these free materials. Please keep us in mind when you are choosing your next children's ministry curriculum.

If you enjoy our material, be sure to [sign-up for my free email newsletter](#) called "Sunday School Works!" Every Tuesday, I send the latest new lessons, crafts, and coloring pages in print-friendly format to make your lesson planning easy.

May God continue to bless your ministry!

*Tony Kummer*