

## CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR

# 'Tell John what you have seen'

By Janaan Manternach  
NC News Service

John the Baptist sat silently in his prison cell. Herod put John in prison because John spoke out against him.

"I wonder about Jesus," John was thinking. "I hear he is doing great things. My friends say he is a prophet. They say he even cures sick people. They say crowds go out to listen to him."

Two of John's followers came to visit him. They had more news about Jesus.

"I wonder if Jesus is the Messiah, the one God promised to send to free his people," John said to them. "What do you think?"

"More and more people are saying that," the two told John.

John thought for a moment. Then he sent his two friends to visit Jesus. "Go to Jesus," John told them. "Tell him I sent you. Ask him if he is the Messiah."

The two left the prison. It did not take them long to find Jesus.

It seemed everyone knew where Jesus was. People were always looking for him to hear his words and to bring sick people to him.

John's followers waited until Jesus stopped teaching the crowds. Then the two men went up to Jesus.

"We are followers of John the Baptizer," they told Jesus. "He sent us to you with a question. Are you the Messiah God promised to send, or should we look for someone else?"

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Jesus was glad to have news about John. He was worried about him in Herod's prison. But Jesus didn't answer their question immediately. He had them look around at the crowd.

Then he answered their question. "Go back to John and tell him what you have seen and heard. Blind people can see again. Cripples walk. Lepers are cured of their skin disease. Deaf people now hear. Dead men are

raised to life. And the poor have the good news of God's love preached to them."

The two looked puzzled, wondering how this answered John's question.

They went back to Herod's prison, to John's cell. "What did Jesus say?" John asked eagerly.

The two hesitated because they did not understand Jesus' answer. Then they told John about the people in the crowd who had been sick but were now well.

"Here is Jesus' answer," they said to John. Then they repeated what Jesus told them to say.

John sat silently for a minute. Then he smiled. But he did not say anything.

"The prophet Isaiah said that's just what would happen when the Messiah came," he thought. "The one God promised to send would show signs of God's power and love."



"Jesus must be the one God promised to send to save us all."

(Ms. Manternach is the author of catechetical works, scripture stories and original stories for children.)

## What's the difference?



There are at least eight small differences between the drawing on the left and the one on the right. See how many you can find. Then color the drawings.

## HOW ABOUT YOU?

□ Why do you think Christians think it is important to help people who are hungry, or lonely, or homeless?

### Children's Reading Corner

"World, World, What Can I Do," by Barbara Shook Hazen. This is a book for children and adults to read together. In it a child looks at different elements of his own world and asks them what can be done to care for them, to protect them, to be thankful for them. The book's catchy rhymes include this one about a playground: "Park where I play, what can I do? How can I help take care of you?" The park responds: "Go carefully on my slides and swings, and don't be a litterbug with your things." When you finish the book, it might be fun to create some rhymes yourself about caring for others. (Abingdon Press, 201 Eighth Ave., Nashville, Tenn. 37202. Hardback. \$5.95.)



## Love

Making the warmth of God's love manifest to terminally ill patients is important to the ministry of Sister Rosella Molitor, D.C. With funding from the Catholic Church Extension Society she serves the spiritual needs of those living in eastern Oklahoma's home mission territory.

Sister Molitor is one of a team of home missionaries who, in partnership with Extension, pursue the vital and urgent task of evangelization here in the United States. But the team is too small to do its job without help. It

needs new members. It needs you.

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