

**Matthew 3:1–12;
Mark 1:1–8; Luke 3:1–20**

Matthew 11:11

"I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." Matthew 11:11

BIBLICAL PASSAGE

MEMORY VERSE

Do you recall the last time you watched a U.S. President give the "State of the Union" address? If so, you may recall seeing a man. Not just any man . . . we'll call him, *the man*. Before the President enters the House Chamber, *the man* walks into the room and shouts: "Ladies and Gentleman of Congress, I present to you, (brief pause) the President of the United States." And then *the man* walks through the crowd, clearing the aisle. The President enters and the focus shifts. *The man* is not seen again.

Read Matthew 3:1–12. In this passage about John the Baptist, we read the prophecy from the Book of Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the desert: 'Prepare the way

for the Lord; make straight the paths of our God.'" That voice was John the Baptist.

If Isaiah were writing about the American President, John would be *the man*—He stopped everyone in the midst of what they were doing and refocused their attention; he cleared the path so that the *real* Man could deliver His message, a message of hope and salvation.

John preached a message of repenting from sin and of living a life identified with God. As you go through this week, consider how you might model a godly lifestyle for your teenager.

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL TIME

Connect . . .

Imagine your family has received a notice that the President will be passing through town and will stop at your house for a visit. (*If you have some stationary available, create a mock letter from the President. Have someone in the family open it and read it aloud.*) Discuss: What would we as a family want to do to our house to prepare for a visit by the President? Have fun identifying all the things you would need to do to get ready for the visit.

Explore . . .

Read aloud the following passages: Matthew 3:1–12; Mark 1:1–8; Luke 3:1–20.

Read aloud: John was the messenger preparing the way for Jesus. He was a highly visible servant of God whose lifestyle was different than anyone around him. Like John, we are called to live visible lives as we serve our King. We are to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth (Matt. 5:13–16).

Discuss: How do your words and actions currently serve as the light of the world and the salt of the earth?

Transform . . .

Read aloud: John called for people to produce fruit that gave evidence of the change that had happened in their lives.

Discuss: What are ways we are "producing fruit" in our lives? What are some areas in which we could use some improvement?

Pray together that God will produce fruit in your life that calls people to repentance. Pray for opportunities to be a herald of God, to proclaim the way of the Lord and to make a clear path for Him.