

Read: Matthew 3:13-17

God's Son Is Baptized

Matthew 3:16,17

After Jesus was baptized, he immediately went up out of the water. Suddenly, the heavens were opened for him! He saw the Spirit of God, descending like a dove and landing on him, and a voice out of the heavens said, "This is my Son, whom I love. I am well pleased with him."

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

How does it make you feel when a teacher praises the project you spent so much time on? How does it make you feel when a coach tells you how proud they are of your hard work? How does it make you feel when a parent tells you how pleased they are by your good behavior? It feels amazing, right?

Unfortunately, because of sin, God couldn't say those things to the people of this world. Adam and Eve disobeyed God and sinned against him. We have to admit that we have also disobeyed God and sinned against him.

God is holy. That means that he can't praise disobedience. He isn't proud of sinners. He'll never be pleased when people turn their backs and walk away from him.

When God's Son, Jesus, came to this world, he was just like us in so many ways. He had eyes and fingers and feet, just like us. He got hungry and tired and sad, just like us.

But Jesus was different from us in one very important way. He never disobeyed God. He never sinned against any of God's commands. Jesus was perfect and holy in every way.

That's why, when Jesus was baptized, God could praise Jesus and shout from heaven how proud he was of him: "This is my Son, whom I love. I am well pleased with him."

Well, that might be amazing for Jesus, but how does it help sinners like us? Here's some really good news. When you were baptized, you were connected personally to Jesus. His perfection became your perfection. His holiness became your holiness.

Imagine Jesus wearing a pure, white robe, without a single stain or spot on it. Then imagine him taking that robe and wrapping it snugly around you. That's what happened when you were baptized.

Now, when God the Father looks at you, he doesn't see any spots or stains or sins. He sees the perfect life of Jesus. That means that God can (and does) look at you now and say, "This is my son/daughter, whom I love. I am well pleased with him/her."

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Name three ways that Jesus was just like you. What are some ways he's different?
- How does it make you feel to know that God loves you?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- You were baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. How do you see all three persons of the Trinity) at work in today's Bible reading?
- Describe the trade that Jesus made with us. What did he take from us? What did he give to us?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Why do you think Jesus' baptism was accompanied by such miraculous sights and sounds?
- Discuss why your baptism (so long ago!) is still important for your life (today!).

Closing Prayer:

Jesus, thank you for wrapping your holiness around me when I was baptized. Help me please you in everything I think, say, and do. Amen.