

The Pray More Lenten Retreat Study Guide

Our Deepest Identity

By Beth Davis

Reflective Questions

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him.

John tried to prevent him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?" Jesus said to him in reply, "Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed him. After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened [for him], and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove [and] coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

- Matthew 3:13 - 17

Here Matthew takes up the order of Jesus' ministry found in the gospel of Mark, beginning with the preparatory preaching of John the Baptist.

Unlike Luke, Matthew says nothing of the Baptist's origins and does not make him a relative of Jesus. The desert of Judea: the barren region west of the Dead Sea extending up the Jordan valley.

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

He fasted for forty days and forty nights,* and afterwards he was hungry.

The tempter approached and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread." He said in reply, "It is written: 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.'"

- Matthew 4:1-4

- Our deepest identity is as God's beloved sons and daughters. And yet, it's easy sometimes to take on other roles in our lives as though they are our deepest identity; as being a spouse, a parent, a friend, an employee or employer... How have you ignored your identity as God's beloved child?
- Like Beth mentioned, the enemy will often come to us in times when we are weak, tired or hungry -- times when we are most susceptible to

believing the doubts that he gives us. Has this happened to you before? What do you know now that can help you combat moments like these in the future?

- Jesus says, “One does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.” How can you immerse yourself into more of God’s word this Lent?
- Jesus chose to believe the word of God, and chose to believe who God said He was: the son of God. How can you work on choosing to believe this yourself?