Re-sourced by God

Luke 3.15-17,21-22

John the Baptist promises that someone greater than him is coming who will baptize with the Spirit and with fire. Jesus himself is baptized, and his mission is affirmed by the presence of a dove and God's voice promising that he is dearly loved.

Now read Luke **3.15-17,21-22** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

John the Baptist's message may, understandably, bring some fear with talk of Jesus winnowing and burning. But, for followers of Jesus, this fire comes to purify so that we too may understand ourselves to be beloved of God.

Daily Prayer

Whenever you have a bath or shower this week, as you lather yourself, say sorry to God for wrong things you've thought, said or done, and things you have omitted to do. Try to be specific rather than vague and general. Remember that one aspect of baptism is cleansing. As the water pours over you to rinse away the soap, feel God's forgiveness and love washing your sins away. Thank God for forgiving you.

Give

Find a way to show God's love to someone this week. Perhaps by sending a 'God loves you' card to someone who is struggling. Or buying a teddy bear for a child who may not have experienced much love this Christmas. Or visit/phone someone who is lonely. Maybe step out of your comfort zone by enlisting with a charity that writes to prisoners. The possibilities are endless! Think together as a household how you might continue to support people in your locality throughout the year.

What experiences do you have of feeling loved by God? What is it that resources and refreshes you?

Indulge

Make time this week to indulge yourself with something you find relaxing and comforting – e.g. (but not limited to!) curling up with a teddy bear, watching a favourite film, reading a favourite story, drinking hot chocolate with sprinkles. You could do this together as a household. Ask God to bring you some restoration and refreshment as you do your thing. Think about how what you are doing might reveal an aspect or example of God's love. How can you show that love to others?

POSTER

Make a family/household poster on a large sheet of paper. In the centre, write: 'We are loved'. Then ask each person to draw a self-portrait around the words. Invite each person to say one thing they especially love about each of the others, and write or draw these under the portraits. Use the poster as a 'thank you' prayer. If you live alone, write 'I am loved' in the centre, and write promises of God (e.g. from Isaiah 43.1-7) around it to show how much God loves you.

LISTEN

Search the internet for Matt Redman's song, 'The Father's Song'. Listen to this, using the time to reflect and for meditation. For example, ask God to help you truly believe the words! Why not make up a dance or some actions to go with the flow of the music? Think about who else might need to hear these words this week. Is there someone you can share the song with? Write a reply to the words, telling God how you feel about him. Maybe you could write it to fit the same tune.

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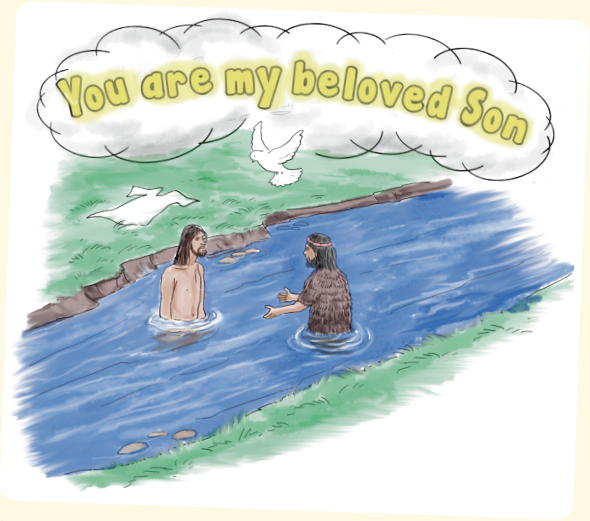
Re-sourced by God Luke 3.15-17,21-22

Choose a version of the passage to read. The first is the ROOTS version for children, the second is the NRSV text which may be suitable for older children, young people and adults.

Everyone was waiting for the Messiah to come to them. People wondered what he was going to be like. So when John the Baptist came among them, they saw what he did and heard what he said, and they wondered if he was the Messiah.

But when they asked John, he answered, 'I baptize you with water, but someone is coming who is much more powerful than me. He is so much greater than me that I'm not even good enough to untie the straps of his sandals! He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He will know who is good and who is bad, just like a farmer knows the difference between the wheat and the chaff. Like the farmer, he will gather the wheat into his storehouse, and he will burn up the chaff with fire.'

Then one day, after all the people had been baptized in the river Jordan by John, Jesus came and was baptized himself, just like them. While Jesus was praying, heaven opened up and the Holy Spirit came



down and settled on him like a dove. A voice came from heaven, saying, 'You are my beloved Son, and I am very pleased with you.'

Luke 3.15-17,21-22

Did you know?

- Messiah means the 'anointed one', someone chosen by God to save the Jewish people, a title also used for Jesus.
- Chaff is the outer coating of wheat that is thrown away.
- To be baptized is to be immersed in water as a sign of God's cleansing forgiveness and a fresh start.

Luke 3.15-17,21-22 (NRSV)

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah,* John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with* the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved;* with you I am well pleased.'

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