

Marinating in God's Word: Matthew 3:13-17

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is good news, but not good news you can fully receive without some preparation. Thus, the ministry of John the Baptist, preparing us to hear.

For further reflection on your own or in a small group, consider these questions:

- If you've been baptized, what do you remember about that day – or if you were a baby, what have you been told? What does your baptism mean to you?
- Check out what John the Baptist had been teaching (v. 11-12). What sort of Messiah was he expecting? How did Jesus present himself differently?
- Repentance was the main symbolic meaning of John the Baptist's ritual of baptism. Since Jesus didn't sin, he didn't need to repent. So why do you suppose Jesus wanted John to baptize him?
- At Pentecost the Holy Spirit came upon the church as wind and fire (Acts 2). But here he came upon Jesus as a dove. What is the symbolic distinction? How might the Spirit come upon us in both such ways?
- This story has all three persons of the Trinity. Where? How do they interact?
- This story is familiar to many of us, but how do you suppose it surprised John the Baptist and others? What has surprised you about following Jesus?

Next week we will focus on Matthew 4:12-17.