



### THE ULTIMATE INVITATION

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*Then John testified, "I saw the Holy Spirit descending like a dove from heaven and resting upon him." – John 1:32*

### THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

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READ MATTHEW 3:13-17; MARK 1:9-11; JOHN 1:29-34

Author Flavia Weedn wrote "Some people come into our lives and quickly go. Some stay for awhile, leave footprints on our heart, and we are never, ever the same." We all have friends who are there for a season, maybe because we're in a particular stage of life together or share a common interest. But if we're fortunate, we also have friends who are there for most of our lives: the kind of friends who know us as well as we know ourselves, the ones who can complete our sentences for us without even thinking about it. Jesus offers us this kind of friendship. And through a friendship with Jesus, we gain a deeper connection to God and his Spirit.

John the Baptist was a true friend of Jesus who carried out his mission to share Jesus with everyone. Because of that, God trusted him to be a part of his plan by allowing him the honor of baptizing Jesus Christ! And in inviting John to baptize Jesus, John was also able to witness something amazing: the coming of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove – the completion of the Trinity. This was a huge moment where the barrier between man and God was broken, and God allowed John to be a part of it. See, this moment could have easily come in the form of fire from Heaven or an announcement from angels. But instead, it came in an intimate exchange between Jesus and his close friend and relative, John the Baptist. God allowed John to be part of that moment – part of his plan.

When we choose to follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit permanently lives in us too! He's not the kind of friend who is just there for a season and then goes. He is there every moment to guide, encourage and comfort us. He's the kind of friend who never leaves. And we not only get the awesome benefit of his constant presence in our lives, we get to join him in his work. We get to be a part of accomplishing his plan here on Earth! We get to share the joy of daily life with Jesus with people who don't know him yet. How awesome it is to have Jesus and his Spirit as a friend for life!

### QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

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1. Think about the friendships in your life. Who were friends for a "season" and who are your "forever" friends? What can you do this week to thank those friends for their constant presence?
2. How do you experience the Holy Spirit's presence in your life? What actions can you take to be more aware of His presence?

3. In what areas is God calling you to be more involved in carrying out his plan? Ask him to guide you and give you boldness in these areas.