

Claimed and Called

Living the Liturgical Year

Luke 3:15-17

EXPLORING THE SERMON

- * What did you hear?
- * What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- * What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

KEY VERSES

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ 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.”

REFLECTION

Continuing our journey through the [liturgical year](#), each week we will focus on a gospel reading, taking us on a journey through the life of Jesus. **Though there’s no direct evidence of baptism in the Old Testament, discuss these “foreshadows” of baptism and what they can each mean for us:**

- 1) As the Hebrews pass through the Red Sea to escape the Egyptians, a new chapter begins.
- 2) Crossing the waters of the Jordan 40 years later, a new life awaits them in the promised land.
- 3) Priests are required to “purify themselves” with water before entering the temple.

Whether we have been officially baptized or not, baptism is a part of who we are. **Discuss how these two elements of the baptismal story are the keys to allowing transformation to take place:**

- 1) We are **claimed** by God
 - a. The words spoken to Jesus at his baptism are for **us** – we are his beloved.
 - b. Change comes about by knowing **who** we are, not in how we think others see us.
 - c. Being able to **receive** this truth makes the soil of change more fertile.
- 2) We are **called** by God
 - a. **Repentance** – to turn and move in a new direction.
 - b. We won’t get very far just knowing what we **don’t** want for ourselves in the new year.
 - c. Being open to true transformation and change requires **posturing** ourselves accordingly.

Pray this prayer daily this week. May it open our hearts to true change this year.

Lord, help me to see the world the way you see it. Let my heart break by what breaks your heart.

Help me not to duck. Amen. – Steve Hayner