

Speak, Lord, your servant is listening

Week 14: On the last Sunday of the Christmas season, we celebrate the baptism of Jesus. This year we listen to Matthew's account of Jesus' baptism. What do we hear?

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

Matthew 3:13-17

*a voice from
heaven said.*

*"This is my
Son..."*

Choose the reflective questions that suit your family:

Listen to the voice from heaven. It says, "This is my Son, the Beloved—" Whose voice is this? The voice calls Jesus "the Beloved." Be. Loved. The One I Love. When we get baptized, does the voice say this about us? Does it say, "This is my child, the One I Love"? We are Beloved, too!

Ages 5-6

Listen to John the Baptist. He says he needs baptism. Why? Other people come to be baptized to remove their sins. To be made clean. When John the Baptist feels not clean and sinful, Jesus does not get angry. Jesus comes to him. How does Jesus come to us when we feel sinful and not clean?

Ages 6-9

Listen to Jesus. He wants John to baptize him "to fulfill all righteousness," to be fully in right-relationship with God. John baptizes sinners. Jesus puts himself in the place of the sinners. He shows whose team he wants to play on. What does Jesus do to our team full of sinners? Does that make him play worse or us play better? How?

Ages 9-12

Listen to that voice from heaven. What does it do for Jesus who comes up from the water? What can it mean for him? What does the voice do for all those who stand around listening? What can it mean for them? And what does the voice do for us?

Teenagers

Read the scripture.

Ask questions.

Listen to each other's answers.

Then pray the prayer together on page 2.

Listen Prayer

One person leads and everyone else responds (R.)

Lord, our God,

We praise you for the wisdom of your will that unfolds all around us. We desire to enter more profoundly into this mystery, to root ourselves firmly in your will, to listen ever more deeply to you.

R. Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.

Teach us to listen closely to your Word—to the words on the page and the meaning they invoke, to the human author and to the divine, to the spaces between the letters where your Spirit dwells.



R. Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.

Teach us to listen attentively to Creation—to the voice of the earth, to the whispering of wind and waves, to the silence of the rocks and soil and swarms of voiceless creatures.



R. Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.

Teach us to listen respectfully to the culture that surrounds us—to its wisdom and its folly, to the loud voices and the quiet, to that which can teach us and form us and expand our thinking.



R. Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.

And teach us, Lord, to listen deeply to one another—to what we speak aloud and to what we leave unsaid, to our needs and to our concerns, to the love and the longing and desires of our hearts.

**R. We come before you.
We make ourselves still.
We listen to understand.
Amen.**

