

1. Why was Jesus baptized (vs. 9-11)? Jesus, who was without sin, came to John to be baptized. (Compare Matt. 3:13-17 and Luke 3:21-22; and see Phil. 2:6-8 and 2 Cor. 5:21.) What does Jesus' baptism reveal about his identity and his willingness to identify himself with humanity? What do the Father's words, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased" (vs. 11), tell us about Jesus?
2. What is the significance of the Spirit descending upon Jesus like a dove immediately following his baptism (vs. 10)? Why do you think the presence of the Holy Spirit is significant as Jesus begins his public earthly ministry? (See Isa. 11:1-2; 42:1; Luke 4:16-21; and John 1:32-34.) What does this verse reveal about God and about the relationship between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?
3. In verses 12-13, we read that "the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness" (vs. 12-13). Note who it is that drives Jesus out there! Why do you think that the Spirit does this? And why does Jesus' temptation follow immediately after his baptism and affirmation by the Father? (Compare Matt. 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13; and see Heb. 4:15 and Jam. 1:2-4.) What does this teach us about the relationship between spiritual blessing and spiritual testing?
4. Jesus entered the wilderness for forty days, recalling the testing both of Israel in the wilderness for forty years and of Adam in the Garden of Eden. What contrasts do you see between Jesus' obedience and the failures of Adam and Israel? (See Gen. 3:1-6; Deut. 8:2-5; Matt. 4:1-11; and Rom. 5:18-19.) What does Jesus' victory over temptation tell us about him as the faithful Son and Savior (Heb. 3:1-6; 4:14-16; and 1 John 3:8b).