



February 21, 2016 **Chapter 1**

Baptism & Temptation The Jordan River and the Wilderness

Goals

- Gain an understanding of the geography of the Holy Land.
- Comprehend the several meanings of baptism, including why Jesus was baptized by John.
- Remember and celebrate your own baptism.
- Develop a concept of wilderness - not only geographical but personal and societal.
- Acknowledge temptations in all of life and recognize the presence of God as a way of overcoming temptation.
- Celebrate each victory over temptation as evidence of God's presence in our lives.

Biblical Foundation

The story of Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River by John and the subsequent temptations in the wilderness is told in the following Gospel passages:

- Matthew 3:1 through 4:11
- Mark 1:1-13
- Luke 3:1-122 and 4:1-13

John's Gospel describes the baptism in John 1:19-34, but does not relate the temptation in the same ways as the synoptic Gospels.

Conversation Questions

- Jordan River - Is this the way you had pictured it in your mind's eye?
- Baptism of Jesus - God's way of identifying with sinners.
What does Jesus' baptism mean for us today? Does Jesus still identify with us as sinners?
- What is the meaning of baptism for an infant who has not yet sinned in ways that we are aware?
- In what ways is God affirming love for each person even before a person is aware of that love?
- What must we do to become God's beloved children?
- Can we lose our status as God's beloved children? How?

PALESTINE AT THE TIME OF JESUS

Chapter 1

