



USE THESE QUESTIONS AND RESOURCES TO HELP YOU PROCESS THE MESSAGE DURING YOUR STUDY TIME OR WITH YOUR GROUP.

Message Recap: At Jesus' baptism, we hear the voice of acceptance modeled by his Father before he did anything in ministry. Jesus knew that God loved and was pleased with him, apart from anything he accomplished. Grounded in this identity, he was willing to fulfill his purpose, even unto death. When we accept that we are God's beloved, we position ourselves in the cycle of grace. By agreeing with who God says we are, we reorient our lives to start receiving the input we need to live a healthy life.

» Main Points

- [The Cycle of Grace](#) - Trevor Hudson and Jerry P. Haas
- Believe you are beloved
- Be baptized
- Begin at the beginning

» Getting Started

- Would you describe yourself as a list-maker or a fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants-er?

» Observation

- Read and reflect on [Matthew 11:28-30](#); [Matthew 3:13-17](#)
- What are your initial reactions to these passages? What do you find challenging? Are you encouraged by any of these verses?

 reachout

- Who are the people you've been praying for, people you've been doing life with? Let them know that we will be doing [baptisms next week](#), and if they've ever thought about it, this would be a great opportunity.

 growdeep

- As you begin to think about the Cycle of Grace (Acceptance→Sustenance→Significance→Achievement) and the Cycle of Works (Achievement→Significance→Sustenance→Acceptance), which cycle are you living out? Where in that cycle do you think you are today?
- Reread [Matthew 11:28-30](#) in the Message paraphrase (MSG). In what ways can you relate to these words from Jesus? Do you feel challenged or comforted by these verses? Try to explain why.
- Read the account of Jesus' baptism in Matthew 3:13-17 again, paying close attention to [verse 17](#). How does this set the stage for Jesus' ministry to begin? How has God affirmed you as his child in Christ?

 partner
with families

- Too often, we recognize our kids for what they do instead of who they are. Take time each day this week to speak life into your kids by telling them the reasons you love them for the person they are, not what they have achieved.
Challenge: Every day until Valentine's Day, write on a paper heart a short description about what you love about your child's character, not their accomplishments, and tape it to their door so they see it every day.

» Next Steps and Prayer

- Philip Yancey wrote: *"Sociologists have a theory of the looking-glass self. You become what the most important person in your life (wife, father, boss, etc.) thinks you are. How would my life change if I truly believed the Bible's astounding words about God's love for me, if I looked in the mirror and saw what God sees?"* What might you become if you believed you were God's beloved?
- Close by praying this prayer: God - Help me to pause and believe that you accept me even before I achieve anything.