

Participants Homework

For the week of January 10-14, 2022

LOVE NEVER ENDS: BEING THE BODY OF CHRIST *WELL PLEASED*

GATHERING: GETTING TO KNOW YOU

We see in Luke 3:15 that 'the people were filled with expectation.' When was the last time you had exciting news to share? With whom did you share the news?"

GROWING: GOING DEEPER

Reflecting on the message: **Well Pleased** Tim shared with us.

Read Luke 3:15-17, 21-22.

What labels and/or titles have you been given (positive, negative, neutral)?

A voice from heaven declared Jesus as Beloved. "When I think that being God's beloved is the core of who I am, it makes me feel..."

Blessed – Ashamed – Guilty – Conflicted – Speechless - Other

Henri Nouwen wrote, "Self-rejection is the greatest enemy of the spiritual life because it contradicts the sacred voice that calls us the 'Beloved.' Being the Beloved expresses the core truth of our existence."ⁱⁱ

1. Do you agree or disagree with Nouwen's statement? Explain.
2. How is John the Baptist a model disciple? [Points to Jesus. Acknowledges Jesus' power.]
3. How does John the Baptist characterize the ministry of the "one coming" after him? [More powerful than John. One of judgment. The fire in this context is judgment more than refinement.]
4. Why is the phrase "and was praying" (in v. 21) important to what happens in the story? [Shows Jesus' practice of being in prayer, demonstrates Jesus' humanity and intimate relationship with the Father and that what happens next is the result of being faithful in baptism and in prayer.]

5. What does it mean to be a beloved child of God?

GOING: TAKING IT HOME

Our worship service included a “Remembering of Your Baptism” time, share your experience. How was this meaningful for you? Why is it important to remember your baptism?

Practice: Find a way to remind yourself that you are one of God’s beloved children. This might mean placing a sticky note with the word “beloved” on your bathroom mirror or a wallpaper on your computer or home screen of your cellphone that reminds you that you are beloved of God.

Memorization Verse

***And a voice from heaven said, “You are my dearly loved Son,
and you bring me great joy.”***

Luke 3:17b

Sending Prayer: Faithful God, we can find words of affirmation uncomfortable. Help us to be uncomfortable in hearing your affirmation declared over us and others. Remind us that we are one of the baptized. May our baptisms be a source of affirmation and a call to emulate Jesus by serving others. May others see in us that your love that never ends. Amen.

Prayer Requests:



Growth Group Community Service Project

We ask every group to take on at least one service project a year (the ideal is two) and to have at least one social gathering (potluck) per half a year. Please consider with your group members of what community service you’d like to participate in. There is a project list made by our church that you can join in and outside the church.

ⁱ Rev. Dr. Derek Weber, Love Never Ends: Well Pleased, Discipleship Ministries, Nashville

ⁱⁱ Henri J.M. Nouwen, Life of the Beloved: Spiritual Living in a Secular World.