**I Love to Tell the Story: Days 16-20**

You can find days 1-15 online at <http://www.woosterumc.org/i-love-to-tell-the-story-a-year-with-jesus-bible-study/> or use your barcode reader on your phone to be directed. Go at your own pace and in a year you will know every story of Jesus in the four Gospels.

**Day 16: Matt 3:13-17, Mark 1: 9-11, Luke 3: 21-22 The Baptism of Jesus**

This is the story of Jesus being baptized by John. Matthew gives us this question: why Jesus needed to be baptized – was he identifying with us as sinners? He, who knew no sin, did not need to be “cleansed”. I believe this was Jesus’ time of identifying himself as the Son of God. The next few days we will look at Jesus as fully human.

Guided reflections:

1. In Matthew, the voice of God says “ THIS is my beloved son…” in the other two

versions, the voice of God says “YOU are my beloved son”. Do you know that this is God’s opinion of you? Do you know you are “beloved”?

2. Do you see the three parts of the trinity listed here – Father, Son, Holy Spirit? Where?

Guided Prayer:

*“O God, we want to hear your voice say that we are your beloved. Help us as we struggle to know our identity in you. In Jesus’ Name we pray, Amen!”*

**Day 17: Matt 4: 1-11, Mark 1: 12-13, Luke 4: 1-13 Temptation of Jesus**

Matthew and Luke give us more of the details of Jesus’ temptation. This was part of Jesus’ wrestling with what it would mean to be the Son of the Living God… was it going to be all about “him”… or about doing God’s will?

Guided reflection:

1. Notice “the spirit led him into the wilderness”… do you think sometimes it is in your best interest to do some wrestling with the enemy?
2. Make a list of the kinds of things Jesus was tempted by – can you relate to any of these?
3. Notice, Jesus used scripture to counter the enemy… you should feel more empowered to read God’s word for your own “victory!”

Guided Prayer:

*“Loving God, we know there are times when circumstances force us to face ourselves when we have to make decisions about what will be most important in our lives. Forgive us for the times we have not chosen well… and grant us courage to keep growing! Amen!”*

**Day 18: Matt 4: 12-17, Mark 1:14-15, Luke 4: 14,15 1st Preaching in Galilee**

Now that he has completed his time of temptation, he jumps right in and gets started with his mission. Luke states that he returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee. Jesus is empowered and ready to go! And, he is “glorified by all” – talk about making a good first impression!

Guided reflection:

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Guided reflection:

1. His cousin, John, has been arrested and Jesus takes over the call to repent. Repentance is often the beginning of our relationship with Jesus: we face ourselves and then we decide
2. if we want to stay the way we are or if we want to have a new beginning. Where are you today? How might you commit to a “new beginning?”
3. What would be the report of others about the way you live your life? Would their opinion match God’s?
4. Are you empowered by the Spirit? What empowers you?

Guided prayer:

*“God of wonder, grant us the courage to just get on with our calling instead of waiting until another day. Empower us with your spirit. Amen”*

**Day 19 : Luke 4: 16-30, Matt 13: 54-58, Mark 6: 1-1a. Rejection at Nazareth**

One of my favorite scriptures is the Luke portion of our reading today.

Guided reflection:

1. What was it that Jesus read to the people from the scriptures in his home town?
2. What is included in the list of things the Spirit had anointed Him to do?
3. Since we are the hands and feet of Jesus, are these still our “to do list”?
4. How did the people respond? Why? Ever felt limited because you were considered “less than?”

Guider Prayer:

*“O God, you have anointed us to preach good news, to release the oppressed, heal the brokenhearted… but we hold back and choose not to get involved because we might get the same response Jesus received: “Who do you think you are?” We forget that WE ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE LIVING GOD! Amen!”*

**Day 20: Matt 4: 18-22, Mark 1: 16-20 Calling the 1st Disciples**

Only Matthew and Mark tell about the calling of Peter, Andrew, James and John.

Jesus has started his preaching ministry, now he must begin his leadership development and mentoring of disciples. He is already succession planning.

1. What were these four doing when Jesus called them? How did Jesus relate what they knew to what He wanted them to do as his disciples?
2. I love Mark – everything is done “immediately”…. Watch for that word as we read Mark. Notice, no hesitation on following Jesus – “immediately they left their boats and their father…. Totally changed their focus. What “nets” might you need to drop so you can follow your call?

Guided Prayer:

*“I hear your voice calling me, but if I really pay attention I know that I will have to drop some things out of my life so I can focus on you. (What might those be? Do you have the courage to name those places?) Keep calling me, Lord. Don’t give up on me! Amen”*

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