



From EPIPHANY to the TRANSFIGURATION

SMALL GROUP WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL MATERIAL

Week 1
9 - 15 January 2022



Daily Bible readings, a memory verse and a prayer for individual contemplation
Weekly worship song, reflection and small group questions

2022 DEVOTIONAL MATERIAL:

Advent & Christmas (28 Nov 21 to 2 Jan 22)

Epiphany to Transfiguration (6 Jan – 5 March)

Ash Wednesday (2 March)

Lent (6 March -10 April) & Holy Week (11 April to 16 April)

Easter (17 April – 5 June: Pentecost)

Season after Pentecost (12 June: Trinity Sunday to Advent) Topic or Bible book-based devotions

Epiphany to Transfiguration (6 Jan – 5 March)

Week 1:	9 January	John the Baptist prepares the way
Week 2:	16 January	Jesus changes water into wine
Week 3:	23 January	Jesus rejected in Nazareth
Week 4:	30 January	Scripture is fulfilled
Week 5:	6 February	Jesus calls His first disciples
Week 6:	13 February	Blessings and woes
Week 7:	20 February	Love for enemies and judging others
Week 8:	27 February	The Transfiguration



Week 1

9 January

JOHN THE BAPTIST PREPARES THE WAY

Epiphany Year C	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
John the Baptist Prepares the way	Isaiah 43:1-7	Psalm 29	Acts 8:14-17	Luke 3:15-17, 21-22



GOSPEL - Luke 3:15-17

John the Baptist prepares the way ¹⁵ The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. ¹⁶ John answered them all, 'I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.'

The baptism and genealogy of Jesus ²¹ When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened ²² and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: 'You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.'

On the Scripture by: Rev Gavin Landers

John offers two images of the Messiah.

The first image is of a Messiah who will baptize with fire (3:16). Part of the nature of fire is to consume or to burn away. When the Messiah baptizes with fire then, we can expect the non-essentials and impurities to be burned away to produce a greater refinement or a more authentic person free from impurity.



Reflection

The second image of the Messiah John gives is as one who has his winnowing fork in his hand to separate the wheat from the chaff which is to be burnt in an unquenchable fire (3:17). Again, there is a separation of the valuable from the non-valuable and the getting rid of the non-essential to leave a pure product. God's spirit will necessarily burn away sin and empty us of the rubbish that clogs our lives. Further engagement with the Messiah will come, but one of our initial engagements will involve the emptying of all the dross and nonsense that we are so full of.

In Colossians 3, Paul speaks of this baptism with fire as putting the old self to death, and then goes on to mention some of the things God's Holy fire must consume - sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, greed idolatry, anger, rage, malice, slander, filthy language, deceitfulness. This is a decisive but ongoing act.

How are you doing in letting go of the old life; the life lived without knowing the reality of a Messiah alive and active in your day to day living? How often are you visited by the realities of sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, greed, idolatry, anger, rage, malice, slander, filthy language, deceitfulness? What do you do when they come knocking on your door looking for you to open your life up to accommodate them? Do you know / Have you an experience of setting your heart and mind not on these things, but on orientating your heart and mind – your essence, to a life lived with a Messiah who is making you into a refined and holy person?

QUESTIONS

Small Group Questions:

1. What did your "baptism with fire" engagement with the Messiah look like? When was this engagement? What needed to be consumed / What was the chaff that needed to be burned / What of the old self needed to be left behind?

2. How have you been refined? How have you been led into greater authenticity?
3. Who are you praying for to experience the One who baptizes with fire?



Daily Bible reading, memory verse and prayer:



MONDAY, January 10, 2022: [Psalm 106:1-12; Judges 4:1-16; Ephesians 6:10-17](#)

Memory Verse: *“Put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.”* (Ephesians 6:13).

Prayer: Lord, you are good, and your love endures forever. Thank you. In our sin, save us and make Your mighty power known. Amen.

TUESDAY, January 11, 2022: [Psalm 106:1-12; Judges 5:12-21; 1 John 5:13-21](#)

Memory Verse: *“We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God keeps them safe, and the evil one cannot harm them.”* (1 John 5:18).

Prayer: Lord, you are good, and your love endures forever. Thank you. Lead us into your justice and guide us to do what is right. Amen.

WEDNESDAY, January 12, 2022: [Psalm 106:1-12; Numbers 27:1-11; Luke 11:33-36](#)

Memory Verse: *“Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are healthy, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are unhealthy, your body also is full of darkness.”* (Luke 11:34).

Prayer: Lord, you are good, and your love endures forever. Thank you. Save us from the hand of our foes that we may believe your promises and sing your praises. Amen

THURSDAY, January 13, 2022: [Psalm 36:5-10; Jeremiah 3:1-5; Acts 8:18-24](#)

Memory Verse: *“You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God.”* (Acts 8:21).

Prayer: Father forgive my ignorance when in the life You gave me, I play games and flirt with evil. Amen

FRIDAY, January 14, 2022: [Psalm 36:5-10; Jeremiah 3:19-25; 1 Corinthians 7:1-7](#)

Memory Verse: *“The wicked flatter themselves too much to detect or hate their sin.”* (Psalm 36:2).

Prayer: Father, our lostness and perversion of truth results in tears and barrenness. Save us from forgetting about you. Amen.

SATURDAY, January 15, 2022: [Psalm 36:5-10; Jeremiah 4:1-4; Luke 11:14-23](#)

Memory Verse: *“Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall.”* (Luke 11:17)

Prayer: Lord, lead me from waywardness and an interest and value on things above You. Lead me into your truth, justice and righteousness. Amen.



It is important for parents to take time to lead the conversations of family time and to be honest with their children in these conversations.

BY JENNY BLAKE – CHILDREN'S PASTOR
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Sunday 9 January Week 1

Pray daily: Set up family time for prayer and devotions and stick to this arrangement. All devotions should always begin by with a prayer. Ask a family member to pray or one of the children.



Scripture Reading: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Activity/Family Moment:

1. Have you and your children been baptized? If yes, tell your children why you wanted them baptized, tell them what you remember about their day, how did it feel as parents etc. If you have decided not to baptize your children discuss what your reasons are and why.

2. Have you ever watched a baptism? Can you remember what happens?

(Let the children give suggestions and then add in: At the beginning of a Baptism service all that is evil is renounced and a statement of belief in God is made. Just as Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, the Minister baptizes the person, dipping the person in water three times, or pouring over the person three times. The priest says, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." We are baptized with water as a symbol of purity and cleansing – the washing away of sins and a symbol of new life. Each person is then marked with the sign of a cross to show that they are a follower of Christ, a member of God's family. They are given a candle as a symbol of the light of Christ and to remind them to shine as a light in the world to the glory of God)

3. Baptism is one of our sacraments. Do you know what a sacrament is? *(It is an outward and visible sign of the inward and invisible action in which God works within us)*

4. Some people choose to rather be baptized when they are older. Does this then mean they are not members of God's family?

(No - Baptism is an outward sign to everyone that we choose to be a follower of Jesus, a member of His family, the Church. Some people choose to baptize their children when they are babies – these parents promise to bring their children up in the Christian faith and promise to bring them to Church. When the children are older, they are confirmed, meaning that they affirm the promises made by their parents and commit to continue to follow Jesus. Other parents prefer their children to be baptized only when they are old enough to understand the promise to follow Jesus. What is important to know is that Jesus loves us all, regardless of whether we have or have not been baptized.)

5. The Holy Spirit descended on Jesus like a dove. Do you think the Holy Spirit lives in us too?

(Yes -The Holy Spirit prompts us to do good and helps us to live as Jesus would like.)

6. **You may want to discuss the statements** "Have you been born again?" or "Are you saved?" To be "born again" or to be "saved" means to make a commitment to follow Jesus. Sometimes this commitment can be pinpointed to a specific moment when that choice is made, but sometimes this commitment is a lifelong journey as you grow into a deeper relationship with Jesus.