

**Encountering Jesus**  
**Week 5: John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1-17)**

1. What is the setting for the encounter between John the Baptist and Jesus? Why are they both there?
2. What has been your own experience with baptism? What questions does baptism raise for you?
3. John the Baptist models holiness and humility, two characteristics that Jesus will model in a perfect way. How would you describe the two? Which of the two come easier to you? Why? What is a concrete challenge you are facing in either area? What do you need right now? An audience for confession, a spurring on, encouragement, a reminder of who you are in Christ?
4. What does it mean to *repent*? How do you respond to the challenge to *repent*? Which of the following best describes you?
  - That's something I did a long time ago.
  - That sounds so churchy and judgmental.
  - I can see my desires starting to change.
  - I keep trying. Maybe some day I'll get there.
  - I'm learning more and more what it means to truly follow Jesus and give up my other allegiances.
5. Read **Romans 6:4**. What does "walking in the newness of life" look like for you right now? What fruit, what changes, are you praying for this week? This year?
6. How does this encounter with Jesus challenge or encourage you today?