



This is what John the Baptist proclaimed: “One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” It happened in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John. On coming up out of the water he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

**Introductory Prayer:** My heavenly Father, you made me out of your infinite love. Even though I have failed to love you as a good child should, still you send me gift upon gift. You sent your Son to redeem me and to make me one with you, in and through your Son. You and your only beloved Son sent your Spirit of Love and Truth, the Holy Spirit, to dwell in my heart, mind and body. I wish to open my heart and eyes to all that you have done for me and continue to do for me, and to love you in return, growing in generosity with you, your Church and all of your children.

**Petition:** Lord, bless me with authentic interior poverty.

**1. Humility, the Springboard to Heaven:** Christ lowered himself from heaven so we could see him. John said he was not worthy to stoop down and untie the sandals of Jesus. Because he was humble, John recognized who he was and who Jesus was. We, however, tend to raise ourselves above others in our minds and actions. Until we recognize Jesus for who he is, as John did, we will not be able to understand our Lord, who humbled himself and took on our lowly nature so that we might see the dignity of man and the holiness of God – who is humble.

**2. The Cleansing Power of Grace:** John poured the muddy Jordan water upon Christ's head. As it dripped down his sacred head and body, something happened to that water: the Spirit of God entered it. No longer would baptism consist merely of water poured over a body; now it would cleanse the soul and fill it with everlasting life. What was muddy is now the instrument of purity. Divinity enters humanity. Christ wants us to open our hearts and minds to him, to his grace, to his life, and to his mission. To do so we must experience our intense need for him, our own spiritual poverty and the unsurpassed wealth of the gifts Our Lord longs to pour into our souls. Am I deeply conscious of my need for God's grace in my soul? Am I able to turn to him and humbly ask for this?

**3. Lord, Strip Me of the Things of this World:** The heavens were torn asunder, and the voice of the Father thundered from the sky above. John stood in awe as he watched the Holy Spirit descend upon the Son of Man, the Son of God. He who was not fit to untie the Lord's sandal baptized him, and his eyes were opened. He saw that holiness is not of this world. The things of this world are of no value before almighty God. Our pride, vanity and disordered sensuality blind us from seeing the beauty of a meek and humble heart. If we are meek and humble of heart, we will hear God say, "You are my beloved child; with you I am well pleased."

**Conversation with Christ:** Lord Jesus, you know when I stand and when I fall. Help me to let go of the things of this world, so I will fall more madly in love with you. You are my strength and my hope; may you be my love.

**Resolution:** Today I will set aside an extra 10 to 15 minutes to pray with you, Lord Jesus, to speak to you heart-to-heart.