The Beginning of Something Beautiful
Scripture: Matthew 3:13-17

_____ would Jesus be _____?

John's baptism has a deep identification with _____ and _____.

Jesus' baptism was…

1. to _____ all righteousness. (vv13-15)
   - He is baptized to _____ with sinful Israel and sinful us, because in his identification with us, we will be brought to _____ through him.

2. to show that _____ and earth will no longer be _____ (v16)
   - Colossians 1:19-20

3. to proclaim _____ to captives, good news to the _____, and _____ for the lost. (v16)
   - Isaiah 61

4. to _____ us that there is _____ of God.
   - Isaiah 61:2
   - You aren't saved from _____.

5. to show that he is the _____ Son. (v17)
   - Psalm 2
   - Isaiah 42

TALK IT OVER

Start talking.

- Who in your group or community would you cast in the roles of ch 3 characters: Street preacher? Press secretary? Lunatic? Worst dressed?
- When you baptized, how much water did it take?

Start thinking.

- What do you think John the Baptist was like? Why would anyone go out of their way to hear this radical preacher (v7)? Who did they think he was?
- How would you paraphrase John the Baptist's message for people today?
- How do John and Jesus' ministries compare?
- Why did Jesus, who was without sin, come to John to be baptized? What "righteousness" did he fulfill?
- How does the pronouncement in v17 set the stage for Jesus' ministry to begin?

Start sharing.

- Who has been a "John the Baptist" in your life? How did he or she prepare you to meet Jesus?
- How is repentance linked to your experience of salvation?

Start praying. *Be bold and pray with power.*

God, I come to you understanding my need of your saving grace. Guide my heart to places that need to be repented, and guide me in obedience to live in a way that is in response to your salvation and holiness.

Start doing. *Commit to a step and live it out this week.*

- Pray daily for God to reveal Himself to you and one other person you choose to pray for.
- Start living obediently within a world that is consumed in the messiness of sin and selfishness, and allow God to use you to show others God's love.