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# Jesus' Identity: "My Beloved Son"

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Free media and discipleship resources for pastors, leaders, and growing disciples.

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## Day 27

*When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:16-17)*

"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Jesus heard these words as a man when he was baptized in the Jordan River. He heard these words as a person who, as far as we know from Scripture, had done nothing noteworthy in life up to that point. He heard His Father's words before He had a single follower, taught a single lesson or did a single miracle.

Jesus was born in an animal shed to a poor, unmarried girl. Soon after His birth, His family had to flee as refugees to a foreign land because authorities were trying to kill Him. Jesus was a 30-year-old carpenter living in an insignificant, little town when His heavenly Father spoke over Him, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Despite worldly evidence to the contrary, Jesus believed those words; He knew them as His identity.

Immediately upon being baptized, the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted to do something to prove the identity just spoken by His Father, "This is My beloved Son." Satan tempted, "*If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.... If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down....*" (Matthew 4:3-6).

Adam and Eve had been similarly tested. They were created in God's image. God had said, "Let us make man in Our image, *according to Our likeness*" (Genesis 1:26). But Satan tempted: "In the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be *like God....*" (Genesis 4:5). Humankind already was like God; we were created *according to His likeness*.

But the serpent deceived: “Do this and make yourself better.” “Make yourself like God.” So the first couple did something they thought would make them become who (God had said) they already were. They ate the fruit ... and completely lost sight of their God-given identity.

Satan’s temptation is still the same today: “Prove yourself.” “Do something grand and eye-catching.” “What God says about you isn’t true.” “You aren’t enough.” Satan tempts us to do something God hasn’t asked of us—to step away from the Spirit’s leading and follow the leading of our independent soul.

Being believers doesn’t exempt us from this deception. Rather “the father of lies” (John 8:44) adds new twists. “Follow these Christian guidelines and improve yourself.” “You need to expand your ministry.” “Prove yourself by doing miracles.”

But trying to become prevents us from simply resting in who we already are. In Christ, there is no need to work *for* approval, rather, our good works *come from* the foundation of experiencing His approval.

Jesus didn’t try to prove Himself. He only did what His Father gave Him to do. He said, “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son and shows Him all things that He Himself does” (John 5:19-20). Jesus’ life flowed out of believing His Father’s words and knowing He was the beloved Son. At every step, He was led by the Spirit and walked in agreement with—in obedience to—His loving Father.

We were created to do the same—to be led by the Spirit and walk in obedience to the love of God. Jesus is our example. He isn’t an example we get to try to copy in our own strength; He is the supreme example we get to believe in! In His death, Jesus regained for us our God-given identity stolen in the fall. He made a way for us to be like Him.

You don’t need to do anything to prove your identity. As a beloved son/daughter, the works God chooses you to participate in flow out of your relationship with Him.

## **Ponder for a Moment**

Have you thought you needed to do something more to prove your identity in Christ? Explain your answer.

In Christ, you are accepted and adored. Write a sentence or recall a Scripture that reminds you personally of this truth.