GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

* **What kind of journey did you expect when you committed your life to Jesus?**
* **What have you learned along the way on your journey with Jesus?**

**Main Point**

Jesus called those who follow Him to repent of sin and resist temptation that they might experience freedom in Him.

Have a volunteer read Luke 3:1-9.

John the Baptist received God’s message and proclaimed it to the people. He called for people to repent of sins in preparation for the Messiah’s appearance. Eventually, John’s public rebuke of a political ruler’s sinful behavior landed him in prison (vv. 19-20).

* **What message did John preach? What is the purpose of repentance? How would you explain your experience of repentance to an unbeliever?**
* **Why do Christians, though saved, need to live a lifestyle of ongoing repentance?**

Repentance means turning from sin and turning to God. Repentance expresses a sincere, inner reorientation of life away from sin and toward God. Spiritual transformation within a person becomes evident in that individual’s lifestyle and behavior. Once you have repented and been forgiven of sins, you become sensitive to areas of your life that are not in accordance with God’s will.

Have a volunteer read Luke 3:21-22.

* **How would you describe to someone the importance of Jesus' being both human and divine? What about His role as mediator between God and us?**
* **If we are in Christ, what are the implications for us that God said He was well pleased with Jesus?**

God’s plan of salvation was centered on Jesus, and the Father’s proclamation as well as the Holy Spirit’s descension in the form of a dove authenticate His deity and authority as God on earth. This is the first of three times in the Gospels when a voice from heaven spoke about Jesus. The other two were at the transfiguration and in the temple during Passion Week (Jn 12:28). This is a relatively rare scriptural passage in which all three persons of the Godhead are mentioned: (1) the Father who said, You are My beloved Son, (2) Jesus the Divine Son, who was being baptized, and (3) the Holy Spirit who was in physical appearance like a dove. The words “You are My beloved Son” echo Ps 2:7, while I take delight in You looks back to a key prophecy of the messianic Servant in Isa 42:1.

Have a volunteer read Luke 4:1-13.

* **Describe a personal wilderness experience from your life, if you feel comfortable sharing. What are the dangers of a wilderness experience? What are the potential blessings?**
* **How is knowing and obeying God’s Word an effective weapon against temptation?**

Jesus’ temptations recorded in Luke 4:1-13 follow His baptism and precede the beginning of His public ministry. Between the record of Jesus’ baptism and His temptations in the wilderness, Luke inserted a genealogy of Jesus (Luke 3:23-38). Matthew recorded the temptations immediately following Jesus’ baptism (Matt. 4:1-11). Significantly, Jesus’ temptations followed God’s strong affirmation of His Son at His baptism. Jesus’ responses to the temptations clarified how He would approach His public ministry. Satan’s temptations were directed at Jesus as the Son of God, a reminder of God’s affirmation: “This is My beloved Son” (Matt. 3:17). Since Jesus uniquely was fully human as well as fully divine, He was subject to the devil’s temptations.

**Application**

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

* **How would your relationship with God be different if He demanded perfection and repentance wasn’t an option?**
* **What are some specific ways you’ve seen God’s power at work in your life when you’ve faced temptations?**
* **Who do you know that needs to hear about the freedom available in Christ? What will you do to tell them?**

**Pray**

Spend time in prayer, giving your group members the opportunity to voice prayers of repentance for sin. After a few minutes, close with a prayer of thanks to God for the power He gives us to fight back against the enemy.