



The Gospel of Luke – Baptism

Date: Sunday 8th July 2018

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Key Verses: Luke 3:15-22

Summary

Jesus' baptism is a tipping point in Jesus life. It marks the moment when Jesus passed from being a purely private figure to becoming a public preacher.

Jesus was without sin. He didn't need to be baptised by John for His sins to be forgiven. Jesus knew that people couldn't get right with God by their own effort.

Jesus came and identified with us. In sharing the same baptism as us, He has become the bridge between man and God. Everything that is needed to make us right with God is perfectly fulfilled in the life death and resurrection of Jesus.

So this is how Jesus starts His ministry and this is how His ministry concluded. Identifying with us and taking our place - When He laid down His life on the cross so that we might be forgiven.

"The Good news is that Jesus Christ came to earth, lived the life we should have lived and died the death we should have died"

So in the Christian Story our confidence or faith isn't centred on my life and my works. It's centred on Jesus life and Jesus works.

In this baptism story we see imagery and an announcement.

Whether you loved it or loathed Bishop Curry was right at Harry and Meghan's wedding recently, when he quoted the Bible - saying love is like a fire. "Love... is a raging flame, many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it." Song of Solomon 8:7

When we become a Christian, we receive the gift of God's Holy Spirit within us - we are all of us lit up by the fire of the Spirit. We get God's love in our lives as a gift we didn't earn. And baptism represents that new life we have from God.

Here we encounter another symbol in this Gospel reading. When the disciples encountered the Spirit of God at Pentecost, He felt like fire to them - they could see the tongues of fire on each other's heads in the Upper Room.

But when Jesus receives the Spirit at his baptism, Luke speaks of the Spirit coming upon Him like a dove. There's no parallel for this image in the Old Testament, but Matthew, Mark and Luke all mention it in their accounts of Jesus' baptism.

The image of the dove reminds us that the Holy Spirit can also bring calm to our souls. Peace with God and an inner peace in the storms of life.

Jesus' identity was not based on his activity. Before he preached a sermon or performed a miracle his father said. "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." It's the same for us. Our identity is not based on our activity. It's based on our faith in Jesus.

Galatians 3:26-27

"For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ."

Jesus is commissioned for His work, aware of his father's love and the presence of the Holy Spirit on his life. That's why in Luke 4 Jesus says:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

Small Group Questions

- Imagine you were watching the scene of John the Baptist at the Jordan. What would you have witnessed? See Luke 3:15 – 22.
- If you'd been a "news reporter" at the scene, what questions could you have asked John the Baptist and Jesus?
- If someone said to you that they've accepted Jesus and they're trying to walk with him but see no need to be baptized, how on earth would you answer them?!
- Within Luke's account of Jesus's baptism, Fire, Water and the Dove are mentioned. What could they represent?
- Which of those 3 would most enable you to love God, others and yourself right now?

To ponder or pray about this week...

Jesus is affirmed by His Father before He's done any miracles or ministry. What will help you to focus on **being** a beloved child not **working** for God's favour?