

## What are you Doing with your Baptism?

2019-01-13 - Year C - Epiphany 1 - The Rev. Christopher M. Klukas

Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 89:20-29; Acts 10:34-38; Luke 3:15-22

- There are so many people that achieve unbelievable amounts of success and fame at a very young age.
- Some people are singled out at a young age and groomed to be a gymnast, or an actor, or a computer programmer.
- In high school, we sometimes vote on which senior is most likely to succeed.
- I'm not sure Jesus would have won any of those awards locally, and he certainly hadn't attracted much fame in Palestine as a youth.
- We don't know very much about Jesus between his birth and his Baptism.
  - Fled to Egypt with Mary and Joseph
  - Eventually returned to Nazareth
  - Impressed the teachers in the temple courts when he was about 12.
- Nazareth was a small and somewhat out of the way town which is probably why Nathaniel says "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46).

### The Baptism of Jesus

- The Baptism of Jesus is recorded (or referred to) in all four Gospels.
- The account in Luke is very brief:
  - Jesus was baptized
  - The heavens opened
  - The Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove
  - A voice came from heaven "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."
- This is a declaration from God the Father of the true identity of Jesus.
  - This is why this feast is an important part of the season of Epiphany (manifestation).
- This is also a commissioning for Jesus to begin his ministry.

### Our Baptism

- The Baptism we participate in is different from Jesus' Baptism, but they are connected.
- John's Baptism was a Baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sin (Luke 3:3).
  - Jesus, of course, had no sin
  - Repentance is our part, cleansing and forgiveness is God's part
  - In Baptism Sin is washed away
- Adopted as God's children
  - The voice from heaven declares that Jesus is God's beloved son, this is already his identity and God the Father proclaims it for all to hear.
  - In Baptism, we too become God's children.
  - Anointed with Chrism, the same oil used at the coronation of a monarch

- Anointed with the Holy Spirit
  - In Baptism, God sends his Holy Spirit to live in us, sanctify us, and empower us for ministry.
- Why baptize babies? They can't express repentance or faith yet?
  - Parallel with circumcision by which Jewish boys were made a part of the covenant.
  - Acts 2:38-39 "Repent and be baptized..." "...for you and for your children..."
  - Parents and Godparents express faith along with their intention to raise the child to know and love the Lord.
    - This is also why the child is baptized not privately but among the fellow member of the church.
    - "Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support these persons in their life in Christ?" "We will."
  - The child still needs to express repentance and faith when they are older. This is why we have the sacrament of confirmation.

### **What are you Doing with your Baptism?**

- Imagine going on a vacation to somewhere beautiful, maybe Hawaii or the Rockies, and then sitting in your hotel room and watching TV the whole time.
  - You might wonder what the point of going to that place was.
- Dr. Leslie Thyberg was walking on a part of the El Camino de Santiago in Spain and she came across a rock with French graffiti on it. Translated, it said, "What are you doing with your Baptism?"
- When we witness the Baptism of a new Christian, we wonder about the things that God will call that person to do in the Kingdom and we rejoice!
  - It is also a good time to ask "What are you doing with your Baptism?"
- Baptism is not just a moment to look back on and say "oh, that was nice"
  - Baptism commissions us for a life of following Jesus!
- "Christian" means "follower" or "disciple of Christ"
  - The goal of a disciple of a rabbi was to become like the rabbi in every way
  - We too are to become like Christ in every way
- Acts 10:38 - "God anointed Jesus...with the Holy Spirit and with power."
  - "He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil..."
  - John 14:12 "greater works than these will he do..."
- Baptism is a gift from God to you.
  - It is for you, for your salvation, for your sanctification
  - It is also for those around you, your brothers and sisters in Christ, and the people around you who don't yet know Jesus.
  - Gen 12:3 - Abraham was blessed to be a blessing.
- I'm not saying this to make you feel guilty, I'm saying it to inspire you.
  - You are a child of God!
  - Isaiah 42:3 - A bruised reed, a faintly burning wick