

Sermon for A Year with the Catechism Baptism: What does this indicate?

Date: May 15, 2022

Location: St. John's Lutheran Church, Austin, MN

Old Testament: Hosea 2:14-20

Epistle Reading: Acts 2:37-41

Gospel Reading: Mark 1:9-11



Sermon Text: Mark 1:9-11

Sermon Title: Baptism: What does this indicate?

Introit: Psalm 25:8-11; Antiphon Psalm 25:12

Hymns:

LSB 600 – Mark How the Lamb of God's Self-
Offering

LSB 605 – Father Welcomes

LSB 604 – I Bind unto Myself Today

LSB 602 – The Gifts Christ Freely Gives

LSB 601 – All Who believe and Are Baptized

Songs:

Church (Take Me Back) - Cochren

Happy Day – Crowder

Sanctus (Holy Holy Holy)

Agnus Dei (Michael W Smith)

Sunday Sermons - Anne Wilson

Healing Begins - Tenth Avenue North

Liturgy:

Divine Service IV, p. 203

Liturgy:

Creative Worship



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Text: Mark 1:9-11

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opening and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

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Grace to you, and peace, in Jesus' name. Amen.

“I Baptize you in the name of the
Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.”

Those words were spoken to you, for most of you, within a few weeks after you were born. For some people it comes immediately after birth, where either a doctor, or the father will Baptize a child for whom there is some concern that they might not live long enough to get to church. For some people it comes to them as a teenager and still for other these words are spoken over them as an adult. Even people 80 or 90 years old and even older.

Regardless of how or when these words are spoken over you with water, they had the same affect. They crushed the head of Satan in you.¹ Through this Holy Baptism you have a new birth, a new life in Christ. That is awesome and incredible news! Sadly, so many reject that free gift. So many for whom it was given do not live like they've received it. It is so free and so full of blessings.

So why does the world, all those people outside of the Christian Church, and even so many in the Church say or act like this is all silliness? They sometimes even make fun of those who are Baptized into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. They treat such moments and such people with contempt.

I know a girl who at age 13 came to church to be instructed and then Baptized, and her family would not come to the service. Her father dropped her off at the door, and they made fun of her when she got home. Then some in the church helped her realize she was not welcome. Seeing such things perhaps it should not shock us to hear Jesus ask:

When the Son of Man comes,
will He find faith on earth?²

People outside the Church, and some who appear physically inside the Church, do that because they are blind to the blessings of God's grace through faith for all people. They are deaf to the gift found in Holy Baptism

1 **Genesis 3:15** – I will make you and the woman hostile toward each other. I will make your descendants and her descendant hostile toward each other. He will crush your head, and you will bruise his heel.”

2 **Luke 18:8**

through water and the Word. They are still filled with the old Adam. They are people who prefer the world and the devil's way. They say Baptism is nothing more than getting your head wet. I have had a pastor try to undermine my ministry for that very reason. Such people might even go so far as to say those who believe in such things are fools who believe in magic. They would say pastors are no different than the Mumford the Magician on Sesame Street. "Ala-Peanut butter sandwiches!!" Bloop! You're a Christian!! Whew Hoo!!



The problem is they don't know what they are seeing. They want to know how water, combined with a few words from God's Bible, can provide any benefit. After all, aren't people who get Baptized still dealing with the same troubles as everyone else? Don't they still have father's that abandon them, people that abuse them, gossip and lies spewed about them, and all sorts of troubles this world brings? What good is Baptism to them? It looks no more powerful than Mumford's peanut butter.

I know of a pastor who faithfully was baptized, and faithfully baptized people all the time. This pastor had a little child, and that child was born with all of her internal organs in all the wrong places. He's got neighbors that don't go to church, don't Baptize their children, and don't teach them about Jesus. His neighbors are living in better houses, driving better cars, getting paid a lot more money. It doesn't look like Baptism is doing that pastor, or his family, any good.

When he goes out and talks to his neighbor about things like going to church and Baptism they say, "Who needs all of that? Life for me is good. I don't need all that Jesus stuff. That's for weak people and failures. I'm already doing well on my own." He, and I, have also heard such things inside the Church. They reject the truth and in doing so reject Jesus.³

The truth is: purposeful defiance against God's Word and God's commands does have an affect on you. First it causes you to chase after things that promise peace but don't deliver on that promise. I've had the opportunity to talk to all sorts of very wealthy people. Many of them are not very happy. In fact most of them are constantly worrying about where the

3 **John 14:6** – Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

next check will come from. Most of them feel empty and that life is meaningless. Most of them. Even more importantly: purposeful defiance against God's Word and God's commands ultimately leads a person to Hell, and the eternal knowledge that they will never see Heaven.

You can't meet Jesus half way. You can't "git yourself a li'l Jesus." You are either all in, or you are all out. You are either Baptized into His death and resurrection and you are a child of grace giving grace, or you are an enemy of God whom He will condemn. Where do you stand? What do you believe? What has your Baptism done for you and to you?

When were you baptized? Now if you were really paying attention over the last two weeks you might know the answer. Are you trying to think of the date, or the age when water and the Word were placed on you, or are you giving the correct answer, "I am baptized." Remember it's a right-now-thing, not a past-thing. It's an everyday thing, not an 'it happened back in the day' thing.

Baptism is not just a symbol, a ceremony, or an act you're supposed to do if you're a good Lutheran and want to put on a good show. Baptism is a new birth and a new life. For those who have truly received this gift, it should display in them something that shows they are not living like everyone else. Baptism is where the Sovereign Almighty, the Holy living God of Creation, the Author of Life, touches you and marks you with His name. He makes you something new. You come to these waters an enemy of God. You leave these waters a child of God. You come to these waters with all of your filth, stain and soil. You leave these waters with all of Jesus' perfect, peace and righteousness. You are born in Holy Baptism to righteousness and life eternal.

In Holy Baptism you were entombed with Jesus. Then you left the tomb with Jesus to the new life. You are a new creature. The old Adam, the old creature is now drowned in Baptism through repentance and faith. As a new creature you rise to a new life.⁴

That is what Baptism indicates in your life. That is why we live a different kind of life. Not because we are trying to impress others or show our holiness

4 **2 Time 2:11-13** – The saying is trustworthy: If we have died with Him, we will also live with Him; if we endure, we will also reign with Him; if we deny Him, e also will deny us; if we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

like the Pharisees who went before us.⁵ We live a different kind of life. Not because we are trying to impress God, but because God has impressed us, by saving us while we were still His enemy.⁶

So when you think of your Baptism, something you should try to remember to do every day, think about what it has done to you. Think about why God has given you this gift and what this gift means for you. Think about what this gift means to others. Think about what this gift means to those who have not yet received it. Think about what it means to stand in the way of others receiving it.

This gift gives you access to Heaven. A place where sin, and all that sin does, will never touch us again. A heart in Christ cherishes such things and is eager to share this cherished and precious gift with many.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.

Proclaim God's Word,
Encourage one another in faith,
Witness to God's love and
Serve all people



5 **Matthew 6:5** – They love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

6 **Romans 5:8** – God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.