

“I am Baptized”

Romans 6:1-11

The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River is such an important event in the life of all of God’s people. The significance of Jesus’ Baptism is not magnified because of where it happened (there in the Jordan River) or because of who did the baptizing (as if the hand that applies the water or the mouth that speaks the words makes a difference). You being baptized by me, or Pastor Troxel, or Pastor Otto is no more or less than you being baptized by the nurse at the hospital.

For you and me, the Word of God joined with the water makes a Baptism. It is not about who speaks that Word. It is not about how much water gets applied. You were baptized into the death of Christ. You were crucified along with Him. Buried with Him. That is what happened at your Baptism.

But that is not all that happened. You were also raised to a new life. You died and you were raised from the dead, in Christ. Whenever you have any doubts about your place in the kingdom of God or your relationship with Christ our Lord, remind yourself, say to yourself, “I am baptized.” As we just sang, “God’s own child, I gladly say it: I am baptized into Christ.”

You have everything you need: forgiveness, life, salvation. Your Old Adam drowned and died in that water and the Word. You were raised to a new life. Think about this – if in your Baptism the Word of God has within it the power to kill you and raise you from the dead, how much more power was exchanged at Jesus' Baptism? Now Jesus did not have an Old Adam which needed to drown and die. He was the New Adam.

There would be dying and rising taking place during Jesus' time on earth, but that is not what happened at His Baptism. What happened at Jesus' Baptism is more important than simply the dying and rising of one sinner.

Jesus was without sin. He had no need for a Baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. But His Baptism was more noteworthy in the context of all of mankind than your Baptism, because at His Baptism, the path to salvation is laid out for everyone.

At your Baptism, you were washed clean of all of your sin, and the righteousness of Christ was placed upon you. At Jesus' Baptism, all the sin of the whole world was placed upon Him, and He who was without sin became sin for us. He would carry that sin, your sin and mine to the cross and the grave. You were buried with Him by Baptism into death.

This is the Gospel. This is the Good News. Jesus has done everything. Our question is, "How do we respond to this beautiful,

glorious exchange?” Last week in our Sunday morning Bible class, I made the comment that we tend to be too familiar with God and treat Him with contempt.

Our sinful tendency is to take this gift, the free grace received in Baptism and set it aside as something small and secondary. There is nothing more important for you today than the reality that you are a baptized child of God. The Word of God killed your Old Adam, and the New Adam took the guilt of your sin upon Himself and carried it to the cross and grave. That is the biggest news event of the day – of every day. The “headline” of the story of your life every morning: “I am Baptized.”

The problem is that our sinful self treats this news like other news. We get jaded. We get tired of hearing the same thing over and over again. Don't ever grow tired of hearing that you are washed clean of the guilt of your sin. Satan wants you to get tired of hearing this.

The difference between having faith and not having faith isn't knowing or believing that there is a God. Even the devil knows that there is a God. He has always known, but he rejected God's authority.

Having faith, for the children of Adam, means having faith in the forgiveness of your sins through Christ. Having faith is not simply knowledge of God or the simple understanding that He made this grand, loving gesture to save the world. Me, having

faith, means believing that the Eternal, Almighty, Living God sent His Son to take away **my** sin. I must first recognize **my** sin and my need for it to be taken away by Him, because I can't carry this burden. And I don't have to carry this burden: "I am baptized."

Satan likes to deceive you on one side or the other of the reality of sin and God's grace. Either, he wants you to see sin as being small, as being this casual, general issue that God has said He took care of, so I can live my life in the comfort of the knowledge of God, but sin, as a reality for me, is nothing I need to be too concerned about. So, hearing the Word of God to nurture the faith of my Baptism, being fed the body and blood of Christ doesn't need to be a priority when sin is viewed as being a small problem.

If that doesn't work, Satan would like you to see your sin as being so large that Jesus could not carry it to the cross. Satan loves to puff us up. It feeds into our Old Adam. "My sin, my burden is so great that not even Jesus could carry it. Oh, woe is me."

Not only can He carry it, but He already has – all the way to the cross and grave. It was buried with Him in Baptism. When you are troubled by your sin, don't say, "Woe is me." Say, "I am baptized." Amen.