

Title: All That From A Little Water ... You know the story of Christ's baptism. John the Baptist was baptizing people in the River Jordan. People were flocking to hear him and responding to his invitation. Among those who came to John to be baptized was a young carpenter from Nazareth who happened to be John's cousin. John knew who Jesus was of course. He also knew that Jesus ought to be baptizing him. Jesus entered the Jordan River to be baptized by John not because he needed it, but because we need it. Baptism is a sign of God's grace. It is an initiation into the family of Christ. It is the beginning of a new life in him. This was a pivotal moment in Jesus' life and, if we understand the meaning of baptism, it should be a pivotal moment in ours.

Mark tells us the narrative in his typically succinct manner:

Mark ESV1:9-11. ⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; ^[d] with you I am well pleased."

- Notice what happened at Jesus' baptism: ¹⁰ *And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.*
- **First, the symbolism of the dove is profound.** Like a dove...Remember, this was the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, the Messiah who so many hoped would be a warrior-king.
- Yet the Holy Spirit, which is characterized as a mighty wind or tongues of flame in other parts of the Bible, came upon Jesus in the form of a dove, a symbol of peace and meekness.
- And then recall that it was a dove that Noah sent out to find signs that the water from the great flood was receding. When the dove returned in the evening, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf!
- Then Noah knew that the water had receded from the earth (

Genesis 8:11¹¹ This time the dove returned to him in the evening with a fresh olive leaf in its beak. Then Noah knew that the floodwaters were almost gone....

- The dove, then, was a symbol of hope and salvation.
- So, from the beginning Jesus gave every indication that he was a different kind of Messiah.
- He came not as conqueror but as a peace maker; not as a master, but as a servant; not as a judge, but as a Savior.
- The symbol of Christ is not that of an eagle or a hawk, but a dove.

Baptism is the announcement to the world that Jesus is united with the Father and Spirit as one **united God**

***** and BAPTISM TELLS US WHO WE ARE and tells the world who we are** And what does the Father say of Jesus? *Mark 1:¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son;...*

*****He says of us. Baptism is central to our lives. For It establishes our identity in Christ. It is an announcement to the world that we are part of the family of Christ. Sealed by the Holy Spirit and Children of the Father.**

It is the sign and seal that we are children of God It establishes us in our rightful place in the creation..

Eph 1:13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee^[d] of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it,^[e] to the praise of his glory.

*****But there is more....BAPTISM ALSO TELLS US WE HAVE God the Father's APPROVAL.** *Mark 1:11] with you I am well pleased."*

- At every baptism. **God The Father tells us of His approval.** So Let none of us call ourselves "anything less"
- Nor Let none of us count ourselves as creatures of little importance. Our Heavenly Father finds pleasure in us as His children...

NLT Eph 1: 5 God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.

However **Baptism doesn't mean you are perfect. Far from it. THE WATER SYMBOLIZES THE WASHING AWAY OF OUR SINS,**

This wasn't necessary for Jesus, but it certainly is for us.

1 John 2:12 I am writing to you who are God's **children** because your sins have been forgiven through Jesus.

But there is more...as a child of God.. you now also belong to his Kingdom as a citizen. two thousand plus years ago the King arrived, and His kingdom rein has begun...And what is the sign of our membership in the Kingdom....Baptism!!

We say of an expectant mother, "Her water broke." Just as there is water present at our physical birth, so the baptismal water represents a new life,

2 Corinthians 5:17 *This means that anyone who belongs to Christ **has** become a new person. **The old life is gone; a new life **has** begun!***

*****We now have a home a place of belonging...and a family to belong too..**

NLT 1CO 12:27 All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.

- **And our differences no longer separate us but become a wonderful addition to the benefit of all the other children!**

NLT 1 Corinthians 12: ¹² The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. ¹³ Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles,^[e] some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit.^[f]

- ***And as a child of God not only do we have rights as a family member we also have responsibility ...***

NLT EPH 2: ¹⁰ For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

- **When we grasp this... something changes in our lives...we begin to live carefully...we begin to have a hunger to know God...to know ourselves ...we start to get wise!**
- **The master has a plan for the masterpiece on this earth.....which the masterpiece has been formed to fit...**

This is all summed up in a story William Bausch tells about George Washington Carver. It is 1921 and Carver has been summoned to Washington, D.C. to appear before the House Ways and Means Committee to explain his work on peanuts . . . on its medicinal values as well as its commercial potential. Carver has waited all day for his turn. As the only African American in the room he is the last of a long list of speakers. All day he has felt the hostility of others toward him. He has felt by turns uneasy and terrified.

At last his turn comes and he is called forward. He rises and begins the long walk toward the front of the hall. As he walks down the aisle he is met with derisive and bigoted comments. One of the committee members yells out a crude and cutting remark. It hurts, but Carver ignores the remark and continues down the aisle. Another committee member leans back in his chair, places his feet up on the table and puts his hat over his face as if to go

to sleep. When the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee instructs the member to take off his hat, he responds with a loud, ugly racial slur.

At this point, Carver is ready to turn around and go home. He is afraid of the powerful men in the room--of their hostility and hate--and he wants to flee to safety. But he doesn't. Instead, he reminds himself of his baptism and of who he is. "Whatever they say of me, I know who I am: I am a child of God." By his baptism, he knows who he is, to whom he belongs and what he is about. It is an identity to give one courage.

Carver finally reaches the podium and is told that he has twenty minutes to speak. He opens his display case and starts to talk. So engaging is his presentation that those twenty minutes fly by. The Chairman rises and asks for an extension of time and no one opposes the request.

Carver is granted four additional extensions of time and, in the end, speaks for several hours to a rapt audience. At the conclusion of his presentation, the members of the House Ways and Means Committee stand and, to a man, they give George Washington Carver--scientist and former slave--a long round of applause.

What gave George Washington Carver courage that day long ago? The knowledge that he had been baptized.

By our baptism we know who we are and to whom we belong. Baptism is so much more than a cleansing from sin. Baptism represents our identification with Christ. Baptism is our initiation into the Body of Christ. Go forth with the knowledge that you have been baptized. You are not your own. You belong to God.

When you say, "I have been baptized," that means something quite significant. You are a difference maker in this generation!!!

Baptisms

