

January 9, 2022

The Baptism of Jesus

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Well, I ask for your patience and beg your forgiveness, as yet again I deviate from the prescribed lectionary. The sermon this morning is focused on the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan by John. We all should take a great interest in this passage of scripture since most of us have been baptized. There are so many topics and issues that arise from this passage. I will save them for another time.

I will preface this sermon with the idea that Jesus says and does the most shocking things. Not only does He do what He says, but what He does usually blows our minds. He far exceeds the expectations He sets for us. His baptism is no exception. Actually it is the beginning of many exceptions that will follow. Stay tuned and hold on to your seats.

The people are gathered around John on the banks of the Jordan River. Luke tells us that they are expecting something great to happen. It is no wonder, John has been preaching that Someone greater than he is going to appear. John was a very successful preacher and prophet. He had followers as far north as Greece and as far East as Iraq. John was well known and well liked. His ministry was huge. So, the One who is to follow him must be far greater. This is why the people gathered on the banks of the Jordan River that day. John has truly set the scene.

Then that faithful day arrived and those gathered on the Jordan's banks were not disappointed. They witnessed something truly amazing. I

suspect that most did not fully understand the magnitude of the event. Mathew records a small portion of a conversation between Jesus and John. That John actually objects to having to baptise Jesus. This is very understandable. To those watching, if John baptises Jesus it might send the wrong message. Jesus is not the One to follow him but just another person wanting baptism. Leave it to Jesus to say something shocking like, "Permit it to be so, now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Mathew 3:15

Good thing John submitted to Jesus's request. It is only after the actual baptism of Jesus does things get even more shocking. The first three gospel writers all mention the voice from Heaven and the Holy Spirit descending upon Jesus as He come up and out of the water. John's gospel talks about the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus after the fact. John is with his disciples and they watch Jesus walk by. John makes reference to the baptism by saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove and He remained upon Him." John 1:32. That is a strong testimony by the fellow who was there doing the baptism of Jesus.

Jesus says many shocking things in the Gospels. Then He backs them up by doing what He said. His actions are more shocking than His words. Next Sunday will be no different as Jesus clears out the temple with a whip. This morning's gospel was no different. I can only imagine the shock and wonder on the faces and in the minds of those on the banks of the Jordan. I would go as far to say that Jesus probably blew John's expectations away after He came out of the water. John may have submitted to Jesus's plan but he had no idea what to expect after that. Good thing John said yes to God's plan. The Virgin Mary did and look how things turned out for us. We got our Saviour. When it comes

to Jesus, all we can do is expect the unexpected. Most often it is good to say yes to the plan when it is presented before us.

Many times in life we miss or do not see the little miracles or God moments that happen daily. Many of them are there. Jesus shocks us out of our daily reality. These Jesus shocking moments pierce our daily reality. They are big because they need to be in order for us to take notice. Eternity cuts through our time and space here on earth. Everyone who was at the Jordan River that day got shocked. The Heavens opened up and a voice from the Heavens confirmed that Jesus is the Son of God. Then the Dove descended upon Him. That is two Heavenly testimonies that Jesus is the Son of God. Needless to say He is the One who is coming after John.

God bless, stay warm and safe, Pastor D