

First Baptist Church SF

January 14, 2018 (Baptism of Jesus)

Scripture Readings: Luke 3:15-18 & 21-22

15 ¶ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, 16 John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." 18 So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people. 21 ¶ Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, 22 and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Worship in Song:

Congregational Prayer: "Our Father"

Our Father, Which Art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom Come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory. Forever and ever. AMEN

Message: "In Whom I Am Well Pleased"

INTRODUCTION:

- He grew up a "preacher's boy" in the mountains of North Carolina.

Being the son of an evangelist didn't impress him much. As a youngster

he was attracted not to the gospel, but to guns and motorcycles,

cigarettes and alcohol. He says he tried marijuana (just once). He was

thrown out of high school and college. He says: "I wanted to be a hell

raiser that lived my own life." He said. "And if it made people mad, tough. If it disappointed people, tough. It's my life, I'm going to live it the way I want to live it, and if you don't like it, get out of my way. That was kind of my attitude... and it was rebellion against God," he said. "I wanted to be free and I wanted to have fun." Finally, at age 22, his father gave him a choice: "He looked at me, and he said, '... your mother and I sense that there is a struggle for the soul of your life. And there's no halfway. Either you're going to have to accept Jesus Christ and what he says and obey him and follow him, or you'll have to reject him. There's no middle ground.'. So at age 22, after a period of rebellion and travelling the world, Franklin Graham, son of Billy Graham, committed his life to Jesus Christ while alone in a hotel room in Jerusalem after reading the Gospel of John in the Bible.

- Someone once made it clear that we don't do anything FOR God, we do things WITH God. As I looked over this passage of Jesus and His baptism, His step into pastoral ministry and how Jesus was essentially ordained for His ministry through His Baptism, I am reminded of my own call to ministry, and the truth that we are all called by God.
- What of your call? This passage from the Gospel of Luke tells us of the call of Jesus, as He begins His ministry at His baptism. In it, we can see

how Jesus was (1) recognized by others (2) set apart (3) recognized by God. This too should be in your life, in your call.

Step (1) Recognized by Others:

- Jesus had a forerunner, John the Baptizer, a man who was also called by God to perform specific roles in the Kingdom of God. John was called by God to Baptize Jews, to turn the attention of the Jewish people back to God by proclaiming the coming Messiah, and then to recognize Jesus as the Messiah
- There have been many people like John in my life - people who have been called by God to perform specific roles, and one of the roles was to encourage a young man toward the ministry.
- We are all given a calling in the ministry of God. Some are called to be Pastoral ministers, others teachers, others followers of God and His Church leaders, others labourers, others are called to sing, or to pray. And there are others who are given differing roles, such as missionary work around the world. God has called us all.
- Look around you. In what ways can you, using your calling from God, using your God-given gifts and talents, using your role, how can you use your call from God to do His work? How can you use your calling to be an encouragement to others around you who are called to serve God?

- Jesus came to the Jordan river, and was Baptized by John who recognized Him as the Messiah. The recognition of God's call in someone else's life is vitally important - it builds confidence and acts as a link to God because the recognition confirms one's call.

- Is your call recognized by others, as was the call of Jesus by John?

Step (2) Set Apart

- Not only was Jesus recognized by others as being called to God's Holy Work, but Jesus was set apart
- In His Baptism, we read (Luke 3:22) that as Jesus came out of the water, the heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit came upon Him in the form of a dove. Then a voice spoke.
- And Jesus was suddenly, rather dramatically, set apart. No one else received that same reception at their Baptism. God singled out Jesus, and everyone knew that Jesus was called by God to do His work.
- In a sense, it was the Baptism of Jesus which was his ordination. To Ordain, according to the Oxford Dictionary means "...to confer holy powers, to destine, enact, appoint..." How powerful a demonstration of God setting Jesus apart was the Holy Spirit descended upon Him.
- We are all set apart - all those who have given their heart to Jesus - to each of us, we are all ordained to use our gift, skills and talents for the

Kingdom of God. Think about the many familiar names in the Bible - people who did so much for God. Think about what would have happened if they would have refused to use their gifts for God. Think about the those people whom God ordained or destined with the Holy Spirit's power and how they used their gifts for God in mighty ways.

- All of us have so many gifts from God, and many of us have one outstanding gift which God has bestowed on us for His kingdom. It is up to you to prayerfully consider how you have been set apart, and therefore what God wants you to do with your gifts and talents.

Step (3) Recognized by God

- So we have seen in this passage about the calling of Jesus that Jesus was recognized by others, and that He was set apart, in His calling. Finally, we see that He is (3) recognized by God
- What a feeling Jesus must have had that day. As He was still wet from the Baptism, and God speaks to Him and to then people around Him. "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased (v. 22)."
- We all want to belong. The most fulfilling words that we can hear is to be included, to hear someone say that we are accepted as being a part of something. It is wonderful to be called my wife's husband, by siblings brother, my congregation's pastor and for my children to say, "That's

my dad."

- The words that Jesus heard that day as He emerged from the waters of Baptism was God recognizing Jesus as His Own beloved Son.
- I want to encourage you with these words today. When was the last time you turned to your children and recognized them as being a part of you, and then said that you were pleased, even well pleased with them? It's never too late to tell your children that you love them and are proud of them.
- Let me also use these words from God which were given to Jesus to help you to set your own goal. May your life be a working testimony to your love of God. Let your life be an attempt to use your gifts for God's Kingdom to the best of your ability. And may your goal constantly be to hear these same words from God when you come before Him when your time on earth is done, "You are my Own, my Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

CONCLUSION:

- Did you know that an angel touched Isaiah's was mouth with coals from the alter to give him God's word; that Ezekiel was told to eat a scroll to receive God's words; that Jeremiah's mouth was touched by the Lord as he received God's word? Each of these people thought they were not

gifted enough to accept God's call, but God gave them the ability to do His work. In fact, if you read the first chapter of the book of Jeremiah you will see that the prophet Jeremiah was told that God knew him before he was born, that God knew him in the womb, and had a plan for him even before his birth day.

- God knows you too, and has called all of us to work for His kingdom
- As we see from the call of Jesus, your call will be (1) recognized by others. (2) you are set apart. You are set apart with your particular gifts and talents to do the work God has given to you. And finally, your call is (3) recognized by God, it is God given.
- Your life is to be a working testimony of your love of God. Your life must be an attempt to use your gifts for God's kingdom to the best of your ability. Your goal is to use your calling to hear the voice of God saying to you, "*You are my own, my Beloved; with you I am well pleased.*"