

The Baptism of our Lord  
“Well Pleased in Jesus” Luke 3:21-22  
January 12, 2025  
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Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for the Baptism of our Lord is from our Gospel reading, Luke 3:21-22.

**“When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. 22 And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, “You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.”**

So far the text...

The heaven was opened. A message from heaven came to earth...from God Himself. When Jesus was born, God sent His angels to tell all humanity the message:

**“Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”**

And now, at this moment, 30 years later, at the start of Jesus public ministry, at His public taking up of His role as the Savior of all mankind, we hear the voice of the Father saying that all is going to plan.

**“You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.”**

Jesus heard this message. A direct answer to His prayer. Now is the time for you to be the Servant, My Servant, by offering Your life as a ransom for all. Now is the time for the Prince of Peace to begin His road to Golgotha and make His offering of peace for the sins of the world. Now is the time for Jesus to do His Father’s will, God’s good will toward men, by serving the world with His life.

All who were present at Jesus’ baptism heard the Father’s voice from heaven. Over 2000 years later, we hear this same message from heaven today.

Two questions need to be answered today: Why is this message that God is well-pleased with His Son good news for you? And, what is your response to this message? Are you pleased with it? Are you pleased with what God has done?

First, why is this message good news?

To understand how this is good for you and me, we hear Psalm 40 which is also quoted in Hebrews 10.

**“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me.  
6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure.  
7 Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me—To do Your will, O God.’ ”**

God’s good will was for Jesus to take on our flesh...become like us with a human body. Why? Because the sacrifices of animals God did not desire. In the burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin God had no pleasure. He was not well- pleased in them. Why? Because they could not take away sin. What they did was point the people to the coming Sacrifice – Jesus, who once and for all took away sin.

And as we hear in the next verses of Hebrews, this is Jesus’ response to His Father.

**“Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.” He takes away the first that He may establish the second. 10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**

The bottom line is this: Each of us want to be well-pleasing to God. And the truth is... we aren’t as Psalm 14 reminds us.

**They have all turned aside, They have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, No, not one.**

When did this corruption enter God’s perfect creation?

### **Genesis 3**

**6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.**

It was pleasant to the eyes. Sin was pleasant. It pleased Adam and Eve to disobey God and do what gave them pleasure. This sin continues throughout history. God's chosen people, the Israelites, were led out of Egypt to go to the promised land. God asked them to trust Him. Yet, what pleased the Israelites was a golden calf that they created to worship. God's response?

### **1 Corinthians 10:5**

**But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.**

There are two religions in this world: the doing it religion and the done it religion. The doing it religion teaches that sinful man can make up for his sins by trying to be good. The doing it religion believes that a man can make himself or herself worthy in God's eyes, well-pleased, by keeping the law. But that's impossible for man.

The done it religion is the Christian religion that says, "Jesus has done it". He became a true Man with a true body and once and for all did the will of God...what we couldn't do...and it was well-pleasing to God. In fact, listen to what the done it religion says in the next verses of Hebrews.

**7 then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." 18 Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.**

Does that sound like good news for you? Jesus didn't need to be baptized for He is perfect and sinless. But in His baptism, Jesus took on the sins of the world...yours and mine...that all righteousness be fulfilled as we hear in Matthew 3.

In Jesus' baptism, God not only gives us His Word to hear, but He gives us the visual of the Holy Spirit descending from heaven in the form of a dove. The Holy Spirit anointed Jesus according to His human nature to fulfill His role as the Savior. Listen to:

## **Colossians 1**

**8 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.**

**19 For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, 20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.**

God the Father was well pleased in His Son. He repeated this message at Jesus transfiguration right before Jesus would begin His passion and death on the cross.

Why would God punish His Son for the sins of the world?

## **Ezekiel 33:11**

**Say to them: ‘As I live,’ says the Lord God, ‘I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?’**

In Jesus there is life. He is the first born from the dead. He rose from the dead and showed that death no longer reigns. Sin has been buried. So what does that mean for you? Are you well pleased with what God has done for you? For many, this message that opened heaven has no meaning. It is foolishness.

## **1 Corinthians 1:21**

**For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.**

But what does it mean for you this day? Just remember your baptism today and always!

Our epistle reading from Romans 6 tells you that what Jesus did on the cross is yours in your baptism.

**“do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,**

Heaven opened for you in your baptism and the Holy Spirit made you a new creation. The Holy Spirit washed you of your sins and made you a child of God. As His child of God, therefore, we have this beautiful promise from our Old Testament reading in Isaiah 43.

**But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine. 2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you. 3 For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior;**

God the Father speaks to His church, Israel and promises to be with you, “Lo I am with you always to the end of the age.”

Why? Because God is well pleased with His Servant, His Son Jesus. And that is what the Father tells us in Isaiah 42, the previous chapter.

**“Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.**

Well pleased in Jesus and well pleased in His people, Jews and Gentiles alike who have Jesus’ righteousness through faith, sealed in our baptism. Justice for the Gentiles!

### **Titus 3**

**3 For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. 4 But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.**

**Amen. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)**