

The Baptism of Our Lord January 13, 2019

First Sunday after the Epiphany

Year C – the Gospel of Luke

Lutheran

Living the ^ Lectionary

*A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.
An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the rhythms of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.*

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<https://slideplayer.com/slide/3578834/>

If all four Gospels tell it, it's important!

Hymn of the Day

**Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 406/407 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) Not listed
“To Jordan came the Christ, our Lord”**

This hymn was written by Martin Luther. The Lutheran Service book notes that "In his catechism hymn on Baptism, Luther uses the biblical narrative concerning Christ's Baptism to teach the meaning of Baptism for our lives." As hymn 406, it has the tune, "Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn" written in 1524.

Hymn 407 uses a newer melody written by David Lee, who was born in 1956. His melody is called "*Elvet Banks*". Read his biography from hymnary.org and then the follow up article about Elvet Banks and see the connection.

“LEE, DAVID (b. 1956): B.Sc. Geology with Geophysics, University of Durham; M.Sc. Computing Science, University of Newcastle upon Tyne. Working life in I. T. Support in university and scientific research. He has been active in church music since his early teens. He is member of the Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland, and in 2007 was elected to serve on its executive committee. Hymn, song and anthem settings appear in (amongst others) *Singing the Faith*, RSCM (Royal School of Church Music) collections, *Lutheran Service Book* (LCMS), *Psalms for All Seasons.*, *In Melody and Songs*
David Lee(from *In Melody and Song*, Darcey Press, 2014, and previous (uncited) bio”

➤ https://hymnary.org/person/Lee_D

“...When it reaches the city of [Durham](#) the River Wear passes through a deep, wooded gorge, from which several springs emerge, historically used as sources of [potable water](#). A few coal seams are visible in the banks. Twisting sinuously in an incised [meander](#), the river has cut deeply into the "Cathedral Sandstone" bedrock. The high ground (bluffs) enclosed by this meander is known as the *Peninsula* , forming a defensive enclosure, at whose heart lies [Durham Castle](#) and [Durham Cathedral](#) and which developed around [the Bailey](#) into Durham city. That area is now a UN [World Heritage Site](#). Beneath [Elvet Bridge](#) are Brown's Boats (rowing boats for hire) and the mooring for the Prince Bishop, a pleasure cruiser... The river's banks also lend their name to a [hymn tune *Elvet Banks*](#) in the 2006 hymnbook of the [Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod](#), used (appropriately) for a [hymn](#) for [baptism](#)...”

➤ https://everipedia.org/wiki/lang_en/River_Wear/

“Elvet Banks is a modern [hymn tune](#), in the somewhat unusual [meter](#) of 87.87.87.87.7, set in the [Lutheran Service Book](#) (LSB) of 2006 for the hymns:
To Jordan came the Christ, our Lord , recommended for use in [Epiphany](#) ^[2] and set as an alternative to the sixteenth century [chorale](#) tune *Christ unser Herr ...*

The tune was selected for the LSB specifically to make some of these unsung hymns more accessible. ^[3]

The meter in this tune and its texts is also unusual in that most "8.7.8.7"-derived material (such as in [Blaenwern](#) and [Hyfrydol](#)) tends to have a strong, [trochaic](#) foot (consisting of a [stressed](#) syllable followed by an [unstressed](#) one, in English), whereas this has a gentler, [iambic](#) foot (a foot comprising an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable (as in above).”

➤ https://everipedia.org/wiki/lang_en/Elvet_Banks/

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d15T0Kv-j-Y> By Carl F. Schalk, from the organ book A Reformation Christmas: Organ Preludes on Sixteenth-Century Hymns, Concordia Publishing House to the tune of LSB 406, *Christ, unser Herr*.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6x1qlzhukCg> "Listening to Luther", Concordia Publishing House to the tune of LSB 406, *Christ, unser Herr*.

Commentaries have been chosen because the author has written in a way that compliments the reading. Not all of the commentaries are from Lutheran sources. They have been edited for length and in some cases for additional content that is not in keeping with a Lutheran understanding of Scripture. Links are provided for those who wish to read the entire commentary.

The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001 by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

Isaiah 43: 1-7; Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) the same reading, (Next week: Isaiah 62:1-5; RCL, the same reading)

"But now" -- hear the jarring declaration of reversal (43:1). Whatever has gone before is now swept away.

To proclaim the good news in this passage, the preacher must understand and convey the desolation that precedes it: God "gave up Jacob" (42:24). God poured out on God's chosen people the heat of divine judgment, burning them with the fire of war (42:25). Forsaken, brutalized, and conquered, God's people became prisoners in foreign lands, where no one, not even God, would claim them. No one would speak for them and say, "They are mine, give them back to me, free my people" (42:22). The new divine word -- "But now" -- breaks the devastating silence that haunted God's people through generations in exile. The new word announces an end to judgment and proclaims the promise of life from captivity and death.

Yet while God promises to speak to the nations and demand the return of God's own (43:6), the gulf, the hurt, and the silence between God and God's scattered and distant people demand that God speak first to Israel, in language that proclaims again and again the intimacy between them..."

- http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=494 Anathea Portier-Young Associate Professor of Old Testament, Duke Divinity School, Durham, North Carolina

Israel's Only Savior

43 But now thus says the **LORD**,
he who created you, O Jacob,

he who formed you, O Israel:

“Fear not, for **I** have redeemed you;

I have called you by name, you are **mine**.

²When you pass through the waters, **I** will be with you;

and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;

when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,

and the flame shall not consume you.
³ For ***I am*** the **LORD** your **God**,
 the Holy One of Israel, your **Savior**.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
 Cush and Seba in exchange for you.
⁴ Because you are precious in **my** eyes,
 and honored, and **I** love you,
I give men in return for you,
 peoples in exchange for your life.
⁵ Fear not, for ***I am*** with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
 and from the west **I** will gather you.
⁶ **I** will say to the north, Give up,
 and to the south, Do not withhold;
 bring **my** sons from afar
 and **my** daughters from the end of the earth,
⁷ everyone who is called by **my** name,
 whom **I** created for **my** glory,
 whom **I** formed and made.”

“...In their original context, the words in this passage helped motivate Judean exiles to embrace their faith and return to Jerusalem to rebuild. The wise and brilliant prophet evoked images of divine love and care to speak to the exiles who tentatively considered whether to leave the stability of life in Babylon to return to the rubble of their former home (or the home of their parents).

His first words contain multiple meanings. By using the verbs “create” and “form,” Il Isaiah recalls the creation stories in Genesis. The verb “create” contains the same root as Genesis 1:1 used for the creation of heaven and earth. The verb “form” contains the root for God forming the human from the dust of the earth (Genesis 2:7). God created heaven and earth, as well as shaping the human into life.

These verbs also speak to the formation of Israel and Judah as a people, a community. God took them from servitude to become God’s people. God has a claim on the people, but also a commitment to them, emphasized by the verbs in the second half of the verse: “redeemed” and “called.” The verb “redeem” alludes to a family member who frees one from debt or slavery. The relationship is deep, but also comes at a cost. “Called” refers to God’s choice of the people for God’s purposes...

We read the prophet on the Sunday celebrating the baptism of Jesus. Just as the prophet reminded the people of God’s call on them, baptism establishes God’s claim on the church. The words of God at Jesus’ baptism in Luke confirm the relationship between God and the Son. The prophet speaks of the tender relationship between God and God’s people, including the church of the baptized. This passage enables the preacher to flesh out the relationship between God and the church on the Sunday when we focus on Jesus’ baptism...”

- http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3943 Charles L. Aaron, Jr. Associate Professor of Supervised Ministry, Perkins School of Theology, Dallas, Texas

Psalm 29; RCL, (Psalm 128; RCL, Psalm 36:5-10)

“...While the Bible often speaks about the mighty acts of God in history (Deuteronomy 26; Psalms 105, 106), in Psalm 29 the focus is on the mighty acts of God in nature. The mood is somewhat eerie, with no human beings on the scene until one hears the word of praise, “Glory” from the congregation gathered in the temple (v. 9). One is reminded of the eeriness on the first day of creation when the earth is “formless and void” (tohu va vohu) before God begins to speak and create (Genesis 1:1-5)...

This is the Sunday observing the baptism of Jesus. Once again, we hear about a voice from heaven; in fact, Mark (Luke) allows us to hear what the voice says. This time there is no rolling thunder or flashing lightning, though the heavens are “torn apart.” This time the voice (Greek, phone) from heaven is the voice of the heavenly Father addressing Jesus as a beloved Son, affirming him as he begins his mission...”

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2296
James Limburg Professor Emeritus of Old Testament, Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minn.

Ascribe to the LORD Glory A Psalm of David.

29 Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings,^[a]
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

² Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.^[b]

³ The voice of the LORD is over the waters;
the God of glory thunders,
the LORD, over many waters.

⁴ The voice of the LORD is powerful;
the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.

⁵ The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

⁶ He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf,
and Sirion like a young wild ox.

⁷ The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.

⁸ The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

⁹ The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth^[c]
and strips the forests bare,
and in his temple all cry, “Glory!”

¹⁰ The LORD sits enthroned over the flood;
the LORD sits enthroned as king forever.

¹¹ May the LORD give strength to his people!
May the LORD bless^[d] his people with peace!

- a. [Psalm 29:1](#) Hebrew *sons of God, or sons of might*
- b. [Psalm 29:2](#) Or *in holy attire*
- c. [Psalm 29:9](#) Revocalization yields *makes the oaks to shake*
- d. [Psalm 29:11](#) Or *The Lord will give... The Lord will bless*

“...Psalm 29 is an ode to a thunderstorm. But this poem is not just that—the real aim of this Psalm is not to wow us with the kinds of facts above. No, the primary aim here is to move through the storm to the Lord of the storm, to the King of Creation, to the one, only true, sovereign God: Yahweh. As such, Psalm 29, for all its lyrical and poetic beauty, is actually a fairly feisty piece of polemic.

This psalm throws down the gauntlet of challenge to some of the other religions of the Ancient Near East—religions that claimed that the forces of nature are gods and goddesses in their own right. Psalm 29 reveals the falseness of those idolatrous claims by saying that the God of Israel is the One who *creates* all those wonders. More, he’s the one who is greater than them all. So in a way you could read this psalm as a rebuke to those who worshiped the creation instead of the Creator.

As such, Psalm 29 walks a fine line. This is the only Old Testament text that so extensively identifies God directly with what people today might call “natural phenomena.” The thunder simply *is* the voice of God, the lightning just *is* the strike of God’s voice, the wind *is* the effective speech of God that is so stunning, it twists even the mightiest of oaks the way a child might mold Play-Doh. This is indeed the treading of a fine line seeing as the Bible is always very careful to distinguish God the Creator from his creation.

But despite its close identification of God with the manifestations of a thunderstorm, Psalm 29 never blurs the boundary line between Creator and creation. Yahweh can be seen in, through, and by the thunderstorm, but he’s never just the same thing as the storm. The thunder, lightning, wind, and the very power of the storm are the effective presence of Yahweh...

To keep the ultimate focus on God, this psalm begins and ends with pairs of verses that direct us to think about Yahweh. Verses 1 and 2 open the psalm with a call to render Yahweh alone glory. Then in conclusion verses 10 and 11 redirect us to the heavenly court of Yahweh, where he rules as the supreme King. The psalmist is pulling back the curtain on reality to show us God, high and lifted up in glory...

But the real punch of (the) middle portion of Psalm 29 is not the tumultuous waves, the high-voltage lightning strikes, or the split oaks. More powerful than all of that is the conclusion of verse 9 when all who are in Yahweh’s temple cry, “Glory!” It is an amazing feat of faith to be

able to see a display like this one but even so not be distracted from the Creator God whose glory the storm reveals. The response of this psalmist to this powerful storm is not, “Wow!” or “Awesome!” or “Cool!” or even “Yikes! Let’s take shelter!” No, the response of the faithful is simply, “Glory to God in the highest! A sliver of God’s nature just got paraded before our eyes!”

In verse 11 we are told that Yahweh gives strength to his people and this, then, leads to peace. A psalm that shook the foundations of the earth, a psalm that rattled the panes of our stained glass windows, a psalm that split oaks and caused us to plug our ears and cover our eyes from the noise and brightness of it all—this very psalm ends in peace. But this is not just the calm after the storm. This is not a depiction of that moment when suddenly the sun peeks back out, and the only sound you can hear is the dripping of water from leaves.

No, the last Hebrew word of Psalm 29 is shalom. This is not “peace and quiet” but rather the peace that passes all understanding. This is the inner peace you get when you know that all is right with the world...That’s shalom. That’s the sense that all is well.

Shalom is the sense that things are as they ought to be. In this case, it’s the sense that things between you and the Almighty One of the cosmos are all right. And how do you get this peace, this sense that everything is in plumb and in proper alignment? You get it, verse 11 says, because Yahweh gives strength to his people...

The God who roars and wheels his way through the thunderstorm uses his majestic power not to wipe us out but tenderly to give us shalom.”

- [https://cep.calvinseminary.edu/sermon-starters/epiphany-2c-2/?type=the lectionary psalms](https://cep.calvinseminary.edu/sermon-starters/epiphany-2c-2/?type=the%20lectionary%20psalms) Scott Hoezee

Romans 6:1-11; RCL, Acts 8:14-17(1 Corinthians 12:1-11 ; RCL, the same reading)

“...“This epistle,” wrote Martin Luther, “is really the chief part of the New Testament, and is truly the purest gospel.” Luther advised persons to learn it by heart and declared:

In this epistle we thus find most abundantly the things that a Christian ought to know, namely, what is law, gospel, sin, punishment, grace, faith, righteousness, Christ, God, good works, love, hope, and the cross; and also how we are to conduct ourselves toward everyone, be he righteous or sinner, strong or weak, friend or foe—and even toward our own selves....It appears that [Paul] wanted in this one epistle to sum up briefly the whole Christian and evangelical doctrine...”

- [http://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/content/pdfs/13-2 Literature/13-2 Hultgren.pdf](http://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/content/pdfs/13-2%20Literature/13-2%20Hultgren.pdf) ARLAND J. HULTGREN Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota

“The letter to Romans is a Pauline manual for Christians who wrestle with the human condition being vulnerable to the pressures of this world.

By appealing to Abraham and positing him as a model of ways through which God justifies human beings, Paul continues to move the discussion from Abraham to all human beings and helps them to see their condition of being separated from God because of sin.

Thus, Romans 6:1b-11 is about the purpose, function, and goal of the sacrament of baptism, in relation to all human beings who are held under the grip of sin and the reign of death. Through baptism, humanity can make the transition from sin into grace via the

sacrament of baptism, which Paul eloquently describes in Romans 5:6-16, Romans 6, and Philippians 3:10-16...”

➤ http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2052

[Israel Kamudzandu](#) Associate Professor of New Testament Studies, Saint Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, Mo.

Dead to Sin, Alive to God

6 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self^[a] was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who has died has been set free^[b] from sin. ⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

- a. [Romans 6:6](#) Greek *man*
- b. [Romans 6:7](#) Greek *has been justified*

“...[Romans 6:1-14](#) divides into three main segments. Verses 1 and 2 contain Paul’s question and a very concise answer. Verses 3-11 establish the basis for his answer. Verses 12-14 lay out the application to Paul’s teaching.

A Preposterous Possibility: Should a Saint Live in Sin? (6:1-2)

...Paul’s question in verse 1 suggests that there should be a response to what he has just taught in chapter 5. God gave the Law, not to defeat sin, and not even to reduce it, but to cause it to increase... Since grace always surpasses and exceeds sin, the greater sin is, the greater grace must be. Increasing sin through the giving of the Law served to increase the grace bestowed to rid God’s creation of sin.

There is a corollary to the principle that grace always outruns and exceeds sin, and it is this: **SIN ALWAYS SEEKS TO USE THAT WHICH IS GOOD TO PROMOTE EVIL.**

The question Paul raises in verse 1 is an illustration of this. Paul’s answer makes it clear this is not something he would suggest or promote, but that some do. Even Christians use grace as a pretext for practicing sin. And so Paul asks the question, “**Are we to continue in sin, that grace might increase?**” If God caused sin to increase by the giving of the Law, with the result that grace abounded all the more, why should His children not do likewise? What’s good enough for God should be good enough for His children, should it not?

“**May it never be!**” is Paul’s response, and as always, it is an expression of shock, horror, and disappointment. It is an expression of his dismay that someone could take a valid truth—grace always outruns sin—and make it an excuse for doing evil... For a Christian to continue in sin, because his sins are forgiven and because grace will abound, is an abominable thought to Paul—and it should be to us.

Paul spends more time spelling out the reasons for his answer because he wants his readers to be very clear about his response. ***Justification was not intended as a license to sin, but as liberation from sin. It is God’s provision not only to be declared righteous but to live righteously.*** In verses 3-11, Paul employs the rite of Christian baptism as the basis for his negative response to the question raised in verse 1.

Our Union With Christ Requires a Break With Sin (6:3-11)

In preparation for further study of the passage in greater detail, some general observations of this text should be made:

(1) Paul is speaking to Christians...

(2) In verses 3-11 Paul seeks to amplify and document his statement in verse 2 that we have “died to sin.” ...

(3) The lifestyle of the Christian is the issue addressed...

(4) The basis for Paul’s teaching is the gospel, specifically the cross of Christ...

(5) Paul assumes that a knowledge of the gospel is the basis for the Christian’s belief and behavior... (6) Paul bases his teaching on the fact that every believer in Christ has been united with Christ and His work on the cross.

(7) The imagery used by Paul is that of baptism.

(8) The emphasis here falls on the death of Christ and its implications for the believer...

Living in sin is entirely inconsistent with the work of Christ on the cross of Calvary. It is entirely inconsistent with who we are and what happened to us, in Christ. Our death to sin and aliveness toward God is a fact which we must reckon as true. Just as we must receive the atoning work of our Lord as His act accomplished for us, personally, so we must also accept His death to sin, resurrection, and life toward God personally. We must regard ourselves as dead to sin and alive toward God. To do so is to agree with Paul that to continue to live in sin is inconceivable, in the light of our death to sin and resurrection to life, in Christ...”

➤ <https://bible.org/seriespage/end-reign-death-romans-61-14>

“Robert L. (Bob) Deffinbaugh graduated from Dallas Theological Seminary with his Th.M. in 1971. Bob is a pastor/teacher and elder at Community Bible Chapel in Richardson, Texas”

Luke 3:15-22; RCL, Luke 3:15-17, 21-22 (John 2:1-11; RCL, the same reading)

“Today in the church year is the Baptism of Our Lord, which we always celebrate on this, the First Sunday after the Epiphany. The Baptism of Our Lord is that auspicious occasion when our Lord Jesus Christ, as he was about to start his public ministry, was baptized by John in the Jordan, and the Spirit descended on him like a dove, and a voice came from heaven, attesting to Jesus as God’s beloved Son, with whom he is well pleased. And so every year on this day the

Holy Gospel is the account of Christ's baptism, as we have it in either Matthew, Mark, or Luke, depending on the year. This year it's the account in St. Luke, reading especially these verses. "Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.'"

But notice that today's reading is prefaced with some words from John the Baptist about the Christ and what he will do, particularly these words: "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

So, taking these two sections together, what we find in our text is that Christ was baptized and that he will do some baptizing of his own—he will baptize us. Thus our theme this morning: "Christ the Baptized and Baptizer."

- <https://stmatthewbt.org/2013/01/12/christ-the-baptized-and-baptizer-luke-315-22/> Rev. Charles Henrickson

"The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 3rd Chapter"

¹⁵ As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, ¹⁶ John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. 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 barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

¹⁸ So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people. ¹⁹ But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reproved by him for Herodias, his brother's wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done, ²⁰ added this to them all, that he locked up John in prison.

²¹ Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son;^[a] with you I am well pleased."^[b]

- a. [Luke 3:22](#) Or my Son, my (or the) Beloved
- b. [Luke 3:22](#) Some manuscripts beloved Son; today I have begotten you

"...All four gospels have the same story. But the Gospel of John does not have Jesus' actual baptism. Look at the four texts carefully: John does not have Jesus' baptized and dunked into the water.

There are specific parallels in the stories: Spirit, dove, heavens opened, voice, beloved Son, well pleased.

The primary meaning is clear: the Spirit of God descended upon Jesus and Jesus was declared to be the Son of God by none other than God. Jesus Christ is designated the Son of God by God. There is no "wobble room" as to the true identity of Jesus.

The following Bible passage is a blending/harmonization of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John: **-In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.** The first three gospels tell us about Jesus' baptism in the Jordan. The Gospel of John does not. In John's gospel, Jesus is the sinless one

-John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. (only Matthew) Note Matthew's uniqueness: Jesus was baptized in order to "fulfill all righteousness;" in other words, to be a righteous person. Matthew persistently interprets the actions of Jesus as "fulfilling" Scripture. Since there was no baptism in the Old Testament, we cannot determine which Old Testament Scripture that Matthew used as a reference.

-And while he was praying, (only Luke). Note Luke's uniqueness: He inserts "praying" and the Spirit becomes the "Holy Spirit."

-Just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. The Spirit came down from heaven, directly from God.

-And the Spirit remained on him. (only John) Note John's uniqueness: The Spirit remained and John was an eyewitness. Twice the Spirit "remained" on Jesus. John seems to be emphasizing that the Spirit remained on Jesus throughout his whole lifetime and did not leave him. We are also aware that the Spirit of God can enter a person and take up *only temporary* residence in that person and then leave. But not with Jesus.

-And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; Jesus is clearly called the Son of God by God the Father. This is clearly stated in all four gospels. We will hear the same voice of God make a similar declaration at the event of the Transfiguration e.g. "This is my beloved Son, my chosen, with whom I am well pleased." (Mark 2:7 and parallels. #161, p. 153.) There are several events in Jesus' life where Jesus was/is clearly declared to be the Son of God e.g. the virgin birth, baptism, transfiguration, and resurrection. In John's gospel, the voice is not the voice of God from heaven but the voice of John the Apostle who declares that Jesus is the Son of God.

-With you I am well pleased." God is well pleased with Jesus. One of the most important realities of life is to know that God is well pleased not only with Jesus, but with us as well. God delights in Jesus and also delights in us. God delights in our God given uniqueness, even though we are sinful by nature. To know that God is pleased with us transforms our lives. We are pleased when someone declares that they are pleased with us, and we assume that Jesus was pleased when he heard that God was pleased with him.

-I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God. (only John) In other words, John himself was an "eye witness" and gives us an eyewitness account. The other gospel authors never claim this for themselves. John, in I John 1:1-4, says the same thing, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life. The life was made manifest and we saw it and testify to it...that which we have seen and heard we proclaim to you...we are writing this that our joy may be complete." In other words, it is clear that John, the

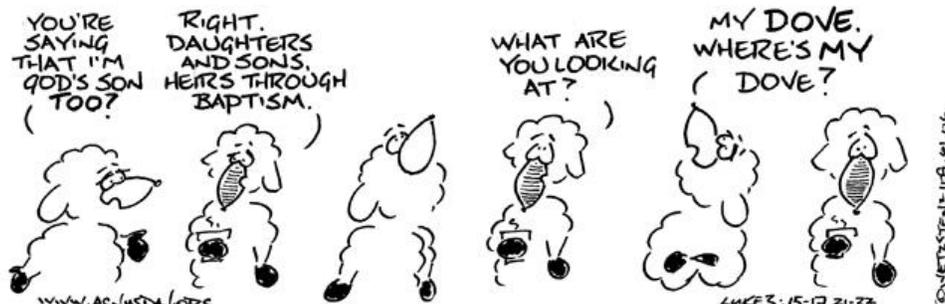
Apostle, was an eyewitness of the life of Christ. The Apostle John reports these words rather than the voice of God...

In our studies, we will discover that Jesus' disciples did baptize but Jesus himself did not. In our baptism, similar things happen to us as happened to Jesus when he was baptized:

- 1) The Spirit of God comes into us and remains in us.
- 2) We are declared to be a child of God.
- 3) We hear that God is well pleased with us..."

- http://www.sermonsfromseattle.com/series_b_baptism_of_jesus.htm Pastor Edward F. Markquart "this website is a "summa homiletica," a summation of sermons that Pastor Markquart wrote in earlier years but then recreated as he became an older servant of the Gospel. These sermons were first written in the early 1970s and 1980s but then reworked theologically and methodologically over twenty-five years."

"This is the Gospel of the Lord" "Praise to You, O Christ"



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"John," said Jesus, "baptize me." Without waiting for an assent, he closed his eyes, sank down and slipped under the water. His long hair lingered on the surface for a short while, then it, too, was pulled into the darkness and disappeared. These were swift, breathless events for John. So much raced through his mind, his family, his past, his fierce convictions, the future of his people, Israel.

The day and the weather and all events now tightened down to one small focus: this air, this round patch of river, flat and calm in the sunlight, and this sudden preternatural silence. Time seemed to collapse – and when John came to himself he could not remember how long Jesus had been lying in the river bed. In a quick panic he slapped the water with the flat of his hand and cried, "Child of the light and the kingdom to come, rise up!" There was a continued, shining silence – then Jesus, like a great fish, heaved from the water and immediately the heavens above them split asunder and there flew down a dove, a white dove, a blinding white dove which alighted on the shoulder of Jesus – white fire beside his face – and in that same instant a voice broke from heaven, saying: *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

Immediately Jesus began to move from John toward the eastern shore of the river. His expression was intense but unreadable... Jesus was withdrawing for the public with some fierce purpose."

"The Book of God, the Bible as a Novel" by Walter Wangerin, Jr. 1996, Zondervan Publishing House