



Foundation for January 8– January 14, 2023

Sunday, we looked at the scriptures talking about Jesus' baptism and the significance of baptism. We also were given an opportunity to reaffirm our Baptismal vows. This week we will look closer at those vows. We will be challenged to live out those vows and proclaim the grace of God that claims us in our baptism. If you have not been baptized or joined the church as a member, I invite you to do so. Feel free to contact me to talk further. Stop by the office. Call the office 814-362-3564.

Email me: rnelson.fumc@gmail.com.

Call my cell or text: 814-730-6300.

~Pastor Rick

REPENTANCE

Mon.
1/9

[Luke 3:2b-3](#) – So John's baptism was about repentance. We talk a lot about repentance, but I often wonder if folks really know what it means. Seems like many folks understand repentance as being sorry for their sin. While that is part of repentance there is a lot more. The New Living Translation uses these words in verse 3 instead of the word repentance "show that they had turned from their sins and turned to God to be forgiven". That is a lot more than just being sorry. That involves changing your life. In this passage it is clear that for John baptism was a sign that you have changed, or at least in the midst of changing, your life. Baptism then becomes a public statement of that change.

When was the last time you made a public statement about your faith and intent to follow Christ? Are you living up to that statement? Spend some time in prayer and repentance today asking God to help you live that change.

A START

Tue.
1/10

Luke 3:16- In this passage we see reference to two different types of baptism. One with water and one with the Holy Spirit. John says he has baptized with water but the one with the Holy Spirit is yet to come. This reminds me that when we baptize in the church with water it is a start to a journey not an end. That water baptism is a statement that the person has changed and is changing but is not where God wants them to be yet. That start is also one of the reasons we baptize infants. We the church and the family make a statement that we are starting this child out in the way of God to be claimed and used by God. Rather as an adult or infant, our water baptism puts us in a place that God can use us, and we can grow in our faith and trust in God. We still have a long way to go in that faith and trust.

How have you grown in your faith and trust in God? Take time today to reflect on that growth and the growth that is yet to come. Then ask God to guide you in that growth.

OBEDIENCE

Wed.
1/11

Luke 3:21-22 - One perplexing question about baptism is why did Jesus seek to be baptized? Jesus was without sin. He didn't need to repent. Then why go to John who was practicing a baptism of repentance? We see some answers to those questions in these verses. Jesus goes to John to put himself in a position to fulfill God's purpose and be claimed by God. Jesus makes the statement in his actions that he is now changing the direction of his life. He is now seeking not just to live as he has for the past years but to live on the path God has set for him. Jesus comes in obedience to God's call. By doing that he is rewarded by being claimed by God. That claiming is not just for his ears but for all to hear.

Have you been obedient to God? Take time today to review your relationship to God and where God is calling you.

FEAR

Thur.
1/12

[Isaiah 43:1](#)– One of the reasons we are not obedient to God's call is fear. Fear of the unknown. Fear of failure. Fear of others. Fear of missing out. Fear of not fully understanding. It can be overwhelming. The good news is that God knows our fears. God also gives us power to overcome our fear. This passage from Isaiah is just one of many in the Bible that is a message from God that tells us not to fear. It also reminds us of the reason not to fear, God is on our side. When we truly come to God as in baptism and give ourselves to God, we, like Jesus, are claimed by God. In that claiming we are changed and empowered by God. Not to live in fear but to live in confidence of God's power and love.

Take time today to list your fears. Now go in prayer to God giving those fears to God and claiming God's power to overcome those fears.

NOT ALONE

Fri.
1/13

[Isaiah 43:2-3a](#)– I remember as a child and youth often practicing the buddy system. The idea was that you didn't go anywhere alone. Wherever you went and whatever you did you went and did it with a buddy. The reason for that buddy was that if you got in trouble the buddy could help you. The buddy was there for safety but also for companionship. There were even times when that buddy prevented me from doing foolish things. In this passage we hear from God that we are not alone we have a buddy. A buddy that is with us through thick and thin. A buddy that loves us and won't abandon us. Now if that isn't Good News, I don't know what is.

Take time today to look back over your life and see where God was with you. Not just in the good but also in the not so good. Now spend time thanking God for being with you.

