

Water and Spirit Baptism of Jesus

A Baptismal service talk.

John 1v29-40:

²⁹The next day John saw Jesus coming to him, and said, "There is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" ³⁰This is the one I was talking about when I said, 'A man is coming after me, but he is greater than I am, because he existed before I was born.' ³¹I did not know who he would be, but I came baptizing with water in order to make him known to the people of Israel." ³²And John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and stay on him. ³³I still did not know that he was the one, but God, who sent me to baptize with water, had said to me, 'You will see the Spirit come down and stay on a man; he is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' ³⁴I have seen it," said John, "and I tell you that he is the Son of God."

³⁵The next day John was standing there again with two of his disciples, ³⁶when he saw Jesus walking by. "There is the Lamb of God!" he said. ³⁷The two disciples heard him say this and went with Jesus. ³⁸Jesus turned, saw them following him, and asked, "What are you looking for?" They answered, "Where do you live, Rabbi?" (This word means "Teacher.") ³⁹"Come and see," he answered. (It was then about four o'clock in the afternoon.) So they went with him and saw where he lived, and spent the rest of that day with him. ⁴⁰One of them was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹At once he found his brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah." (This word means "Christ.") ⁴²Then he took Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "Your name is Simon son of John, but you will be called Cephas." (This is the same as Peter and means "a rock.")

Baptism

A young man is getting baptised and the Pastor asks him if he has properly prepared for the baptism service. He replies, yeah it's sorted – we have a friend whose a caterer so she'll most of the food, but my wives baking some cup cakes. The Pastor shakes his head, no you miss understand, I'm talking about - **matters of the Spirit**. He replies, oh sorry Pastor – my mistake, yes of course that's what you meant, well on the front it has been a little more difficult, but I've had to make some changes and some tough decisions, but I think I'm there on Spirit side of things – I've decided whiskey for the men, and vodka for the girls!

Baptism can be misunderstood. It is so linked with becoming a Christian, believe and be baptised, that some people mistakenly roll it into one. But of course being baptised itself does not save you or make you a Christian, that happens by accepting Jesus Christ as your own personal saviour and Lord, by asking him for his forgiveness, and deciding to turn away from those old aspects of your life that you know are just wrong. The Bible calls this repentance. But also there are some who follow Jesus and have the promise of eternal life, who have not been baptised. The thief on the cross next to Jesus who was told he would be with Jesus in paradise, for one, did not get baptised. It would have been difficult for him if it had been a necessity!

So what is it and why do we do it? First, Baptism is a profession of faith, it is a **public declaration** that your life has changed, that you have had an encounter with Jesus and decided to follow him. You are no secret believer. Jesus said 'don't put your light under a bowl, but put it on a lamp stand so that everyone can see it'. By making this profession you are boldly owning Jesus, you are celebrating the impact he has had on your life.

Baptism is also a **symbol of new life**. As you go down under the water it symbolic of you burying your own life. The water itself symbolises you being cleaned up of your wrong-doing, and as you come up out of the water it is symbolic of new life in Jesus. It is saying that you have been born again.

Baptism by full immersion is not an easy thing for many people to do, so in that sense there is a cost to doing it.

John the Baptist

The Gospel writer John, who sometimes called himself the beloved disciple, spoke of this other John, John the Baptist, who was as close to a celebrity as you got in those days.

His mother Elizabeth had been well past child bearing age. The angel Gabriel appeared to her priestly husband Zechariah when he was in the temple's Holy place, and said they would have a baby who would be filled with the Holy Spirit from Day 1 and they should call him John. Zechariah didn't believe Gabriel, so the angel struck him deaf

and dumb as a punishment for his lack of faith. When the baby was born, Zechariah was still mute. When the baby was a week old at the circumcision and naming ceremony, in front of a big crowd, Zechariah took a tablet to write on, and he wrote 'His name is John'. As he wrote John, his voice came back and he started praising God. Now that's drama. The news of this spread throughout Judea. They said 'What is this child going to become, for the Lords power is upon him?'

So there was a great weight of expectation on John as he grew up. He was always destined to be a great prophet. He became that and more. Jesus once said of him, that no greater man had ever lived. John the Baptist cut a wild unmistakable figure, living in the desert near the Jordan valley, clothed in a camel-hair tunic in the desert region and living off locusts and wild honey. His popularity grew quickly, until everyone knew of him. The bible tells us that the **whole** of the Judean countryside and **all** the people of Jerusalem went out to him (Mark 1v5). Why did they go? To see miracles? No to confess their sins and to show they had started a new life, and they were baptised by John in the River Jordan – all sorts of people, the rich, the peasants and even Tax Collectors and Soldiers even came to him to be baptised and for advice on how to live their lives in ways which pleased God. [Luke 3v12-14].

At that time, the Jews were very expectant that the promised Messiah would come soon, and they wondered if this popular wild prophet could actually be the Messiah. But John answered them "I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" [Luke 3 v16].

So John baptised with water, and made it clear that this was a baptism of repentance. That is still true today. That is still an important element of baptism. We confess what we have done wrong, turn away from are destructive ways and live a more God-pleasing life.

John points out however that when Jesus comes, he will baptise with the Holy Spirit. Actually, he baptised in water much the same way as John did. In fact most of the time he got his disciples to do the baptising. If you watched those who came to Jesus to be baptised, you probably could not distinguish it between baptisms you saw and his disciples do. These of course were prophetic words that John spoke. He was foretelling the future. When he said those words Jesus had not even been baptised himself.

Two Baptisms for Jesus

Jesus did come to John for Baptism. John protested., and But John tried to talk him out of it. "I am the one who needs to be baptized by you," he said, "so why are you coming to me? [Matthew 3v14]. He was right to protest. Johns baptism was for repentance of sins, to turn away from your deeds. But Jesus had not done any so he had nothing to repent from. But Jesus said, "It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires." So John agreed to it. Then what happens if we look carefully at Matthews account is that Jesus gets baptised twice !

As Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens opened and the Spirit of God descended on him like a dove.

So he first gets baptised in water by John, which was probably just for our benefits, to set the example. But when he comes up out of the water, he then gets baptised in the Spirit by God. They did not happen at the same time, but happened sequentially.

So Jesus is the first to turn up for a baptism and be baptised in both water and the Spirit.

This was the only time that Jesus was baptised in water, but he must have been regularly filled with the Spirit. Jesus walked in obedience every day to his Father God, and spent much time in prayer. It was that close two way relationship with God the Father, that enable him to keep full of the Spirit, whilst giving out so much of the Spirit in all the miracles he performed.

John was told by God 'You will see the Spirit come down and stay on a man; he is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' [John 1v33]

[Luke 3 v16]. But It wasn't until after the death of both John the Baptist and Jesus, that we see other people being baptised with the Holy Spirit. Jesus has risen from the dead, and then after encouraging many of his disciples he ascends to heaven, and tells them to wait for the Spirit. Then as they are all gathered in an upper room on the day of

Pentecost, all heaven breaks loose. “They saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person there. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit” [Acts 2 v3-4a]

Matters of the Spirit

So in matters of the Spirit, we see the early church experiencing the Spirit in powerful ways, many of them carrying out miracles themselves.

In his book of Acts, Luke recalls an interesting account on one of Pauls journeys. (Acts 19 v1-7) While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples ² and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when^a you believed?” They answered, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” ³ So Paul asked, “Then what baptism did you receive?”. “John’s baptism,” they replied. ⁴ Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” ⁵ On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues^b and prophesied. ⁷ There were about twelve men in all.

The expectation of Paul was that disciples of Jesus would have also been baptised in the Holy Spirit, when they are baptised in water.

Today we combine the baptism of John, with the baptism of Jesus. So as we dunk in water, we baptise in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and pray that the Holy Spirit will fill you. Now whilst everyone’s experience of Baptism is different (as you would expect because God has purposefully made us different), some will physically experience the Spirit when being prayed for after coming up out of the waters, but even when you don’t the spirit is beginning a new work in your life. The presence of God is no less real than it was 2000 years ago. The Holy Spirit can demonstrate the same power today through you as he did back then through Jesus.

The first to follow Jesus.

The gospel tells us that the day after John has baptised Jesus, he is standing with two of his disciples. One of them is Andrew. Some commentators find reasons to speculate that the other is Thomas, though we don’t really know. When John the Baptist sees Jesus walking past, he declares to these two disciples “**There is the lamb of God**” – a reference to the Messiah. This is no throw away comment, oh look who it is over there, it’s the son of God”. He was recommending Jesus to them as a better teacher than himself. It was the norm for a teacher to take on disciples, train him up over several years, and then they would go off and train others. What John did, in recommending his disciples to a greater teacher was very rare. It required great humility and a strong confidence in the superiority of the other Rabbi (or teacher).

Now these two disciples have got one of the most enviable roles in Israel at the time. They are not just disciples to any Rabbi, which in itself would have been very prestigious, and only straight A students in the Hebrew scriptures can apply, but they were disciples to the one and only John the Baptist, who was the first recognised prophet for hundreds of years. They had top jobs. This wild prophet was the closest thing to a superstar that the common people had, and these disciples were his top dogs, perhaps even his inner circle, because it is just the two of them that have the close company of John on this day. They currently held a position that was the envy of many men and women. Why on earth would they even think of giving that up?

But the Gospel says that on hearing this John’s two disciples, leave him and go over to Jesus. They are not just going over for a closer look. Their intention is clear, they want to leave the famous John and join this unknown carpenter called Jesus from Nazareth. Jesus’ birth was not widely heralded like John. Apart from his close family, no-one had any expectations on him, like they did of John. At that time Jesus had no reputation, he was just the new boy on the block.

So why did they go after him? Because John said, he is the Lamb of God, because John says he is the real deal, because John said that he himself was not even fit to tie up the laces on Jesus’ sandals. They trusted John. That’s why. John the Baptist was great, but according to John, Jesus was greater. Andrew and the other disciple understood straight away. They should follow Jesus .

The truth is, that no matter how much **others** offer you, Jesus give you more.

The truth is, that no matter how exciting your life is with **others**, Jesus can excite you more.

The truth is, that no matter how much others love you, Jesus loves you more.

Jesus says - Come with me and see

³⁸ Jesus turned, saw them following him, and asked, "What are you looking for?" They answered, "Where do you live, Rabbi?" ³⁹ "Come with me and see," he answered.

It may have been with some trepidation that they set out after Jesus, not knowing him at all. But he doesn't make it difficult for them, but politely engages them in conversation first. "What is it that you chaps are wanting?". Too come out directly with what they wanted, which was to be his disciples, would have felt awkward. Instead they ask him an indirect question which was characteristic of ancient politeness and hospitality. "Where do you live, Rabbi" they ask, But by calling him Rabbi, they show their intent to be taught by him. Jesus gives the invitation, "Come with me and see" he says. He has his first disciples, with those simple words "Come with me and see".

They didn't care where he was going, where he lived, or how long it would take. They wanted to be with Jesus now, and he wanted them to go with him. It is a simple invite 'Come with me and see' but it is a monumental decision to do so.

As his first disciples, leave the Baptist, and follow Jesus. It is a good picture of his newest disciples, leaving the waters of baptism, and following Jesus. The call is the same. Come with me and see. It is a life-changer.

Don't stay in the water

We commit our lives to Jesus, and he decide to get baptised to proclaim and profess the decision we have made to invite Jesus into our lives. And in he comes. Jesus says "Here's the deal:

I'll leave my place.

I'll come to you place.

I'll take your place.

And then we'll go to my place.

When he comes into our place . He says to us I have a new place for you. A new life. A new character. A new way of seeing things. When we go with him, we don't get to his place immediately but we go on a journey with him to get there. This journey us an adventure that he has prepared for us.

Jesus reaches out his hand to **Andrew** and says Come with me and see. Come with me and see what I've got planned for you.

Andrew - One day in his presence

The two disciples spent the rest of the day with Jesus. That was enough for Andrew, so convinced was he that Jesus was the Messiah, that he goes and finds his brother Peter and tries to persuade him that they have indeed found the Messiah. One day in his presence was enough for Andrew to start that life-long journey with Jesus.

There is nothing like being in a place where you can feel the physical manifestation of the presence of God. When you are there in his presence, there is no-where else on earth that you would rather be at that moment.

King David knew this truth, when he wrote [Psalm 84v10], **Better is one day in your courts, than a thousand elsewhere.** One day in the presence of Jesus changed Andrews life for ever.

The average person at Jesus' time, never travelled more than 30 miles from where they were born. Men like Andrew and Peter would have planned their entire lives fishing in Lake Galilee, but when Jesus said to those first disciples "Come with me and see", he didn't just mean Come with me and see my home, or perhaps come regularly to my synagogue, he sent his disciples out to see the ends of the Earth.

Jesus took Andrew, Peter, Thomas and others with him and sailed **across** the Sea of Galilee to Gentile lands, they hiked the Mount of transfiguration, they went on long camping trips. Wherever they went they experienced miracles on a regular basis. They filleted the miraculous catch of fish and ate it, they drank the water that had been turned into wine. Andrew found the five loaves and two fish from which they then fed 5000 people. He probably hugged a warm blooded Lazarus, still in his grave clothes, just after he had been raised from the dead. You can not put a price on such experiences, but once you have had experiences like that, they define you, and they compel you.

At the very heart of the Gospel is Jesus inviting his disciples to step out of the waters of baptism, into a life-long adventure. Come with me and see.

Church history tells us that Andrew, this very first disciple, travelled perhfar and wide with the Gospel message, establishing churches on his way. He travelled far as the Black Sea and then on to Kiev in Ukraine, and further on to the Caspian Sea, back through Turkey and finally Greece where he was eventually martyred. He had great prominence with the early Christian Churches, and was even adopted as the patron saint of Scotland.

But that was **Andrews** Come with me and see adventure, you have your own adventure waiting for you.

Good works planned in advance

Paul tells the Church at Ephesus, "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do". (Eph 2 v10).

Paul is making reference here to a Middle Eastern custom that practiced back then when the King was planning a long journey. His servants would leave a few days before him, to make sure that his travel would be safe, sort out the preparations and make good any problems before he arrived. They went in secret, his advance team, to make sure that all would go well for the King on his journey. God flips this around for us. Instead of the servants going before the King, the King goes out before his servants and sets you up with what you need. He is in the business of strategically positioning us to be in the right place at the right time. Our part is to listen to his promptings in our mind, and take our cues.

Macedonia Testimony

This was well illustrated to me on a recent trip I took last month with my 16 year old lad for his half term holiday. A month before the holiday I am at a prayer meeting with my friends Jason and Richie and we are praying over a map of Macedonia which lay on the coffee table. Richie had been out a few times to support the Nigerian born evangelist Jimmy who had planted 27 churches in the country, but the rest of us knew nothing as we prayed that God would give us a word for one of the towns. Jason received a startling word for one town which turned out to be extremely accurate. I then got a sense of sadness and pain pervading over another town Delcevo, near the Eastern border, and prayed the Joy of the Lord to visit the town. A few days later I woke up suddenly in the middle of the night with a phrase ringing in my head ' Though there is pain in the night, joy comes in the morning'. Again and again the phrase repeated in my head, and I knew it was a direct word for the church in Delcevo. The following month I was actually stood in the same Macedonian church, sharing that word which I had later discovered to be in the fifth verse of Psalm 30.

After surviving a head on car crash in 2008 I had pledged to spend more time with my children and where possible use half term holidays for trips away with them. So 8 years later, only my youngest was still living at home, and we had arranged to visit friends in Lille, France. They cancelled on us, and in what to do instead I was drawn to a mountain resort in Macedonia called Berovo, particularly to a resort near its lake. My lad was well up for the adventure. Flights to the Macedonian capital meant a long drive to a London airport, but I discovered cheap flights to the Bulgarian capital which by road was a little closer, and I could fly from nearby Birmingham. I had originally been discouraged a bit from going as Jimmy was the only one I knew in Macedonia and he was away visiting the States. However It felt right, so we booked the flights, and a couple of hotels for 2 nights each in Berovo.

It was only after the flights and hotels had been booked, that I realised the route took us through Delcevo, and not only would be driving through on Sunday but would be there at the exact time for the Church service at 1pm. Richie from our prayer group, knew the pastor in Delcevo, and his daughter who not only spoke English well, but lived in Bulgaria, in the other town that we would be driving through on route to Berovo. She was contacted and she suggested we picked her up in Bulgaria and she would direct us to her Fathers church. That was the plan.

My lad and I arrived in Sofia at 1am and slept in the nearby Ibis hotel, but were up by 7am to sort out our hire car which the hotel had promised to arrange, but then let us down, so we had to go back to the airport and pay over the odds. A few papers and a plastic wallet were handed over with the keys but no instructions. It was the first time I had driven on the continent, and had a little trepidation as I set out through Bulgaria's capital on the start of a 3 hour journey. The rendez-vous however went well, and we met up with the 20 year old pastors daughter and her

younger brother at a big shopping mall on the outskirts of Blagdoevgrad. We set off for the border. Bulgarian side first and we caused quite a commotion as what we presented in terms of passports and driving license were not nearly enough for them, and they didn't speak English. With the pastors daughters help we found all the additional documents, with one important card, being in the small plastic wallet that I had completely forgot about until my teenage lad found it. The Macedonian border also wanted another selection of documents, but with our new friends help we got safely through.

We had lost some time, but another surprise to us was that there was a time zone change and we gained an hour back crossing into Macedonia, so arrived in Delchevo in time to meet our hosts for coffee. It was just as well as it was only then that I had knew I was expected to preach there that morning. I had enough time to gather my thoughts for what I would say, and started by sharing the scripture for them. Jimmy the evangelist had confirmed over Skype that this was an accurate word, and that there was pain and sorrow over the region, which included the loss of many of their young and educated people to other countries. I also learnt of some of the individual pain and sorrow that the church leaders had suffered because of their faith. We prayed the joy of the Lord into their lives, their church and their town. Everyone seemed very encouraged and lifted by the service.

It was my first overseas preach, and was left feeling incredibly humbled to see how King Jesus had gone before me put together the perfect plan for the day.

If we had done anything other than travelled via Birmingham and Bulgaria, we would have not travelled through Blagdoevgard and Delchevo. The service could have been on any work day evening or at any time of day at a weekend., but it was just at the time we would be travelling through Delcevo. If the pastors daughter had not lived in the only other big town that we travelled through on the Bulgarian side, then without her help we would probably not have crossed the border at all that day. It was wonderful. And it kept going as he lined up further unexpected encounters for us over the next few days.

But that was **part of my** Come with me and see adventure, you have your own adventure waiting for you.

Maps can be helpful, and Sat-navs sometimes work, although don't bet on them in Macedonia or Bulgaria. Our Sat-nav dumped us at some unfriendly military base rather than returning us to Sofia International airport, which we keyed in. What you really need when you go to a place you have never been before is a friendly guide.

Jesus reaches out his hand to me and to you and says Come with me and see. Come with me and see what I've got planned for you.

Why, go to all the trouble for me – to give us that experience, because he loves us, and wants to be with us.

Not Alone – He is with us

Jesus is alone as he strolls past John the Baptist and two of his closest disciples. This is like the day you subscribed to Facebook or opened up your first twitter account, you had no followers. This was the start. He welcomes Andrew and the other disciple to be **with** him. As far as we know Andrew set the pace, as the first follower of Jesus. Then he is the first evangelist in trying to persuade his brother Peter that Jesus was the Messiah, only the day after he had met him.

A Christian life is a shared life. We are called to be '**with**' and not alone. Right from the start God says "It is not good for man to be alone' (Gen 2:18). Part of our DNA is the need to be with others. We are more complete when we are with others. 'We' is better than 'me'. Life is miserable when it is all about me, myself and I. How do we share the gospel, not by speaking at people, but by doing life with them. That is the difference between feeling like friends and not like targets!

With – is not just a relational word, it is a God word. God himself is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is We.

Immanuel means God is with us. Jesus calls you first and foremost to be **with** him. "Come on" - , "come with me, Come with me and see"

Take up your Cross – Say Yes

The invite is to come, but the road w

e go along may not be an easy one. Jesus says the gate is narrow and the way is hard, so few go that way (Matthew 7v14). He also said to his disciples.....

"If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it". (Matthew 16v24-25).

This was prophetic of how he was to die. When the Romans crucified people, the upright was already in place, and the prisoners carried their own cross beam to the place of execution. Those walking that path with the cross beam often faced scorn and mockery from an assembled crowd.

To follow Jesus, is to go with him, whatever lies ahead of you on that road. If you don't go, and try to hold on to whatever you think is valuable, then you miss out on the adventure, the life he has planned for you. You tried to hold onto life, but end up losing it. There are no promises of any easy road, in fact quite the opposite, but journeying on that road is where you will find your true life, your adventure. The Holy Spirit equips you for that life, for that adventure.

Anna Tomaseck

Let me retell a story I read about Anna Tomaseck. She was born in America in 1900. At about 22 she was engaged to a medical student but her fiancée had no interest in evangelising the world, he wanted to hold onto his life not lose it in some foreign country. But one day Anna was inspired by an older woman who had put out a challenge to rescue abandoned and orphaned children on the border of Nepal and India. She broke off her engagement, knowing she may never marry. On arriving in India, she was told to "Forget Nepalese people, Nepal is a Hindu country and Christians cannot go there. You will never be able to reach them with the gospel." But Jesus was saying to her Come with me to the Nepalese border and see. She got a map of the railway system of the area. She picked the village on the rail line that was closest to the Nepali border, a place at the end of the world! She bought a one-way ticket to that village and upon arrival she rented a house as near to the border as she could possibly get.

She stayed there and learnt both the Indian and Nepalese languages. She translated tracts and gospel portions into those languages. The Nepalis would cross into India to buy their food. She would be in the marketplace passing out tracts and learning and speaking to them in their language. In Nepal sometimes when a baby is born into a poor family, the baby will be abandoned. They found out that this strange woman across the border would take those Nepali babies. She took them into her home. She loved them and fed them. She clothed them and sent them to school. She told them about Jesus, raised them as Christians. One little girl found by the rubbish tip with umbilical cord and placenta attached, was taken in by Anna, and later adopted by a rich family in New Delhi, who encouraged a musical talent she had. The girl kept in touch and at 27 years old sent Anna a photo of her giving a piano recital to the Royal family in Buckingham Palace.

Some of the boys she raised became the border guards in later life and let her freely move across the border into Nepal with no passport or visa. This enabled her to plant a string of churches in Southern Nepal, and great leaders were raised up in those churches.

It was not an easy road to choose. One day as she walked out of her house onto her porch, a coiled king Cobra lept out at her, but her lap dogs sensing the danger pulled her back by the hem of her dressing gown out of danger just in time. Anna's life was not easy, and her love for Jesus was not just an add-on. The period between miracles were long and hard, as she poured her heart and life into children that other people had written off. There were disappointments that left her weary and diseases that left her weak. There were days of little food to share with the children, and nights of prayer vigils at the bedsides of sick babies. But that young lady Anna stayed in that remote mountain place for 52 years, and never did marry.

In the mid 70s she was at the back of a chapel in India, and the speaker said to her 'Anna if you would give 52 years to India and Jesus again, come down to the front. Suffering from the early stages of Elephantitis, with swollen legs and slippered feet, she shuffled down to the front and with tears streaming from her eyes, she softly said 'I'd do it a million times. I'd do it a million times. I'd do it a million times'.

But that was **Anna's** Come with me and see adventure, you have your own adventure waiting for you.

Conclusion

When we are baptised in water we make a public profession that we have been saved by God, and we have been transplanted from darkness into light. We declare that we have recognised our sins, turned from our old ways. We demonstrate by going in and out of the water that our sins have been forgiven, and washed away, and we have risen up into a new life, we are born again, a new creation. We are adopted into Gods family, and receive the privileges and blessings that come with as part of the family, including the promise of eternal life.

But it doesn't stop there. As Jesus came out of the water of baptism, he was baptised in the Holy Spirit, and invites us to do likewise. He stretches out his hand and says Come **with** me, Come with me and see.

Asking the Holy Spirit into your life, not just at your baptism, but again and again on your journey, is preparing yourself for the next stage of your adventure. You may have been stuck in one place for a long time having lost your way a bit, but now is the time to move on with Jesus.

We are saved because of what we believe, but it is not a once and for all happening. "She once believed, so she is saved", that is not the what the New Testament says. The tense (often hidden from us) is that **you go on** being saved, as **you go on** believing. Similarly where it says in Ephesians 'be filled with the Spirit, the tense is to go on being filled with the Spirit. Go –on being equipped for the next stage of your adventure.

The invite is there. The response Jesus is waiting for is Yes. He's a gentlemen, he invites you, but he won't force you. Part of the key to starting the adventure is listening to God, making time in prayer where the thoughts of Gods will for your life can come to you. Where is he asking you to go? What is he asking you to do? You may not get it right first time. But you can't claim to be a failure. Failure is an event, not a person. Well managed failures is the quickest route to success. Just like badly managed success is the quickest route to failure.

You say 'Look at me – I'm so weak, but God says No- look at me - I'm so powerful. He is **with** us. He will never leave us or forsake us. If God, is with us then we can make it through anything. If God is for us, it doesn't matter what comes against us. Without Him, we can do nothing. With him we can do all things. When we let God turn me into we, it is a life-altering decision, and a good adventure becomes a God adventure.

If you say YES to doing Gods will in Gods way, then the adventure can begin. All things are possible. Just like he said to his first disciples, he says to us today. Come with me. Come with me and see what good works I have prepared for you. Go on believing. Go on being filled with the Spirit. Go on the next leg of your adventure with Jesus.

The Irish have a greeting. 'May you live every day of your life'. As Jesus asks you today 'Come with me and see'. My prayer for you is that you will keep going, and that you will **live** everyday of your life **with** Jesus. Make that decision now to go with him. Amen.

Texts:

“I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire” [Luke 3 v16].

‘You will see the Spirit come down and stay on a man; he is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ [John 1v33]

“They saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person there. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit” [Acts 2 v3-4a]

While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples ² and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when^[a] you believed?” They answered, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” ³ So Paul asked, “Then what baptism did you receive?”. “John’s baptism,” they replied. ⁴ Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” ⁵ On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues^[b] and prophesied. ⁷ There were about twelve men in all (Acts 19 v1-7)