

January 8th, 2012 “What does it mean to be called beloved?”
Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11

Notes:

Christmas – gone already? Decorations and tree are gone

Epiphany – done; what is it? Jesus revealed to the world; magi visit baby Jesus w/gifts – didn't happen all at once at the manger!

And now, suddenly, Jesus is an adult and we have the story of his baptism

Gospel of Mark – things happen quickly – tells the story to get things done

“Immediately” – used over 40 times in this gospel

Jesus' baptism – amazing story w/interesting ties to what happens to him by end of gospel

Heavens “torn open” – (skizo – Greek) violent action, dramatic – hear that word again at his death when the temple curtain is torn (skizo) in Mark 15:38

Jesus' baptism – Jesus hears the voice of God: “You are my Son, the Beloved, with you I am well pleased.”

Jesus' death – the Centurion says: “Truly this man is the Son of God.” Isn't it amazing that despite all of what came in –between those 2 events, it took that moment for him to make that statement!

God's beloved – Jesus – with all that he experienced and did; Jesus is God's beloved one

Even though words heard only by Jesus at his baptism; b/c of his life and death and his command for us to go and baptize in name of father, son and holy spirit – we become God's beloved ones; the sons and daughters of the Most High

What does it mean to be beloved? How do we know we are loved?

Examples:

Pets: Our new pet in our household and experience; pets know they're loved when given food, water, walks, attention, affection; when you return to them at the end of the day

People: Our relationships are bit more complicated, a bit messier, not as easy (probably why some people would rather deal w/an animal than another person!) It may take different things for each of us to know we're loved. Love Languages book – use as example w/pre-marriage care for couples; usually show love to another person the way we want them to show love to us! Acts of service is how I know I'm loved, yet I find myself doing that for my husband when his is quality time and physical touch. We actually need to work at it – make sure that we know how to show someone that we love them!

God: How about w/God? How do you know that you're God's beloved one? Look at this gift in Jesus that God has given to us and reaches out to us! We celebrate God's love for us in the gift of Jesus born as a baby. We celebrate God's love for us in the waters of baptism where we

soak up, like a sponge, the grace and love poured over us in the words of God. God reaches out to us through the waters of baptism.

Theologian Paul Tilich: Faith was accepting acceptance.

Is being God's beloved believable to you? Despite the messiness of our lives and our failures, God reaches out to us and calls us beloved.

What does it mean to you to know that YOU are God's beloved one?