

Beloved of God

Matthew 3:13–17

At His baptism, Jesus is revealed as the Beloved Son, anointed by the Spirit. In baptism, we are named as God's children and empowered for His mission.

The Scene at the River

- Jesus comes to the Jordan willingly and without fanfare
 - He steps into the water alongside ordinary people seeking repentance
 - Though sinless, He chooses solidarity over separation
 - God's saving work begins in humility and obedience
 - Jesus shows us that faithfulness often looks quiet and ordinary
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God Speaks Before Jesus Acts

- Heaven opens as Jesus comes up from the water
- The Spirit descends visibly upon Him
- God speaks words of love and delight

What matters most is the timing:

- Jesus has not preached yet
- Jesus has not healed anyone
- Jesus has not called disciples
- Jesus has not proven Himself

God speaks first.

- Identity comes before mission
- Love comes before action
- Belonging comes before obedience

Jesus does not earn God's declaration.

He receives it.

What This Reveals About God

- God is not distant or silent
 - God names and claims
 - God delights in relationship
 - God speaks love before expectation
 - God anchors His people before the road becomes difficult
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What This Means for Us

Our baptism follows the same grace-filled pattern.

In baptism:

- We are named as God's children
- We are claimed by grace, not performance
- We belong before we understand everything
- We are loved before we are consistent

Baptism is:

- Not a reward for good behavior
 - Not a measure of spiritual maturity
 - A promise that does not fade
 - A truth that holds us when faith feels fragile
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Living From Being God's Children

Many of us live as though we must constantly earn God's approval.

Baptism reminds us:

- God's love does not rise and fall with our success
- Our worth is not tied to productivity or perfection
- We do not serve to earn love
- We serve because we are loved

When we live from this truth:

- We serve without fear
 - We risk compassion without needing control
 - We admit weakness without losing dignity
 - We rest in grace instead of striving
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Empowered for God's Mission

- The Spirit who descended on Jesus is given to God's people
- Baptism does not end with identity
- Baptism leads into purpose

We are:

- Not sent alone
- Not sent to prove ourselves
- Sent as people already held by grace

God's mission flows from:

- Love, not pressure
 - Belonging, not fear
 - Trust, not performance
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Reflection Questions

- Where do you struggle to believe God's love comes before effort?
 - How does remembering your baptism shape your sense of identity?
 - What might change if you lived this week knowing you belong to God?
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A Truth to Carry With You

- Before Jesus did anything remarkable, God called Him His Son
- Before we get everything right, God calls us His children
- We live, serve, and love from that truth