

Pastor Jordan Gades 1.10.21 Mark 1: 4-11

Grace and Peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ Amen

Good morning! What a day to be talking about baptism. What a day to be talking about new life and renewal. What a day to be talking about new beginnings! What's even more funny is this is the beginning, for Mark our Gospel author anyway. Jesus' Story begins right here at the water. Mark isn't worried about little baby Jesus, Mark may not even care about little baby Jesus. Mark is trying to get out the message about what was important about Jesus so that all could know and be saved and know that their savior died for them, so that they could live a blessed and whole life, so that they could know peace. What a place to start that story. Right here at the water.

And from this water we dare not stray too far. From these holy, life giving waters, which quench our deep thirst for hope, we will not lose sight of. We come back to the water day after day to be refreshed. To be refilled, to be reborn. In these waters is life from our God.

When we feel those waters upon our brows we feel the cooling of our anger and hatred, the bathing of that gnawing burning that tells us to strike out against our neighbors. We feel how smooth we become, all that roughness and irritations wiped away. We feel the waters of renewal cleanse us. We feel these mighty waters eating away at the walls around our hearts and minds.

With those waters anointing us we rise awoken to the voice that is calling us, guiding us into this world. We are energized with our minds clarified on the mission that we share with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Today is the day that the lord has made and we shall rejoice and be glad in it.

Every day we rise in our baptism, Every day we rise in the strength and might and love and joy of our Lord, Every day we dip our fingers into those holy waters remember what we are and whose we are.

I hope you will do that, my sister, my brothers. I hope that every day you rise and take the water and make the sign of the sealing cross on your forehead and know, KNOW, in whose care you are in, who has adopted you into their family, who loves you without prejudice and without end. I hope that you start each day in that solemn and perfect hope that comes from the grace of our God.

To our 2 young men who today are affirming their baptisms, I hope you can carry this knowledge with you as you continue your faith journey. Every day is a new day, every day you rise as Christ's disciples, every day you are accepted in love. You two are 2 amazing young men. Getting to be a part of your faith education has been a joy, for the most part, because I can see

God at work with in you. I know that you both have hearts that are so incredibly strong and you both are always looking for ways to use the gifts God has given you to change this world for the better. I have seen it. I know it. It goes far beyond those faith projects you both did a great job on. I've seen you with your friends, I've seen you with your family, I've seen you with your church family. You have a strong start on your faith journey with your God.

The journey of our faith begins at baptism, continues as we affirm that baptism and all it means every day and we follow our God's example into tomorrow.

There is a reason God calls down from heaven and names Jesus, The Beloved. We know that we are all loved by God but only one receives that title, The Beloved. The one who is closest to God's heart and mind. The one who would show us the way. The one who would listen and follow the path that was set before him.

And that is ultimately why we always return to Jesus As our savior and our baptism as our connection to our God. Our God did everything that was ever asked of him for our sake. Our God has kept every promise to his people. Jesus Never let us, his beloved, down.

Our friends, our family, our neighbors, our governments, all will fail us at some point, But not our God. And so, we rise every day renewed, refreshed, and strengthened by the eternal connection and bond in baptism that we have with our Savior and redeemer Jesus Christ, who will never abandon us or fail us, who calls us sister, brother, beloved, forever. Amen