

## **The Baptism of Our Lord**

(observed on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany)

Trinity Lutheran Church, Alamogordo

January 11, 2026

### **Romans 6:1-11**

**1** What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? **2** By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? **3** Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? **4** We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. **5** For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. **6** We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. **7** For one who has died has been set free from sin. **8** Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. **9** We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. **10** For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. **11** So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

### **In the Name of Jesus.**

Who needs Baptism?

John the Baptist, when he sees Jesus walking toward him, speaks of Baptism as something needed. Matthew 3:14:

**Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"**

Who needs Baptism? A sinner standing in front of Jesus needs Baptism.

Baptism, this act instituted not by the sinner. It is instituted by holy God *for* the sinner. Baptism: this act instituted by God whereby God uses common water, combines it with his Word, taking this water up into his use, to cleanse the sinner of all sin.

Who needs Baptism? Only the cross saves. Only the cross is the Holy One of God shedding innocent blood to redeem the sinner from all sin.

So who needs Baptism? The sinner needs it; for the sinner needs the cross. Romans 6:4:

**Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death.**

As we know, it is not possible for us to go back to the cross.

No sinner can do that, any more than we could go back and help Noah build the Ark. But God can bring the cross to us. And he does bring the cross to us, bringing the innocent death on the cross to us in Baptism, and uniting it to us. In this way, the cross belongs to us just as much as it does to Jesus. For we have been baptized in Jesus.

Who needs Baptism?

Anyone subject to death; anyone counting up their life and finding it lacking; anyone fearing the judgement; anyone needing the good news of the fulness of an eternal life secured by Christ and never to be taken from the sinner. Romans 6:5:

**We were buried therefore with [Christ] by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with [Christ] in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.**

Who needs Baptism?

Anyone needing to be clothed in the righteousness of Jesus. Anyone needing the washing of regeneration whereby the sinner is cleansed and given life.

So who doesn't need Baptism?

Anyone who doesn't want to free gift of the righteousness of Christ, but wants to stand on their own righteousness. Anyone who is not fearful of death, but wants to defeat death on his own. Anyone who has no guilt in the conscience, no shame to hide, but is fully confident of standing before holy, eternal God entirely on one's own.

Who doesn't need Baptism?

Anyone thinking Baptism is something the sinner does or decides; anyone thinking Baptism is the sinner trying to show off his own spirituality; anyone thinking that we sinners invented Baptism on our own as our own little ritual we can control.

But if you are a sinner, if you cannot stand before God in your own righteousness, if you are clothed in your own shame, if you stare at approaching death and see an abyss, then, it's Baptism! As the Apostle Paul gives it to us:

**Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.**

The work all belongs fully to God. For the sinner did not invent Baptism, rather, God gave it *for* the sinner.

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Then why was Jesus baptized? The holy One, the creator of life, he who himself knew no sin, why Baptism for him? Matthew 3:14:

**Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness."**

Why is Jesus baptized? To fulfill all righteousness.

All righteousness is the sinner declared righteous before the Father. All righteousness is the Servant of God, Jesus, being publicly set into the office of being the Lamb of God who bears the sin of every sinner. All righteousness is God in the flesh to bring salvation to the nations.

All righteousness is he who has no sin being clothed in the sin of every sinner, so that he is accounted the greatest sinner of all, not because of any sin of his own, but because of the sin of you and me, which, in his Baptism, he publicly took upon himself.

All righteousness, then, is Jesus baptized by John in the Jordan and now bearing the sin of the world, in order to put it all to death in his body on the cross.

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This is what you have been baptized into:

—a death into which Jesus has baptized you and me and our children.

—a death giving the blood which atones for our sin and justifies us before the Father.

—a death on the cross which belongs to you and me just as much as it belongs to Jesus because Jesus, in his grace, has baptized us into it, uniting us to himself.

In Baptism, our sinful flesh, our old Adam of sin, is daily put to death in the death on that cross. Romans 6:6:

**We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.**

Meanwhile, we still live in our body of death, in our sinful flesh of the old Adam. We are still tempted and afflicted. We still fall to sin in our old-Adam life, our life of the flesh.

But the new man of faith, the new Adam, the new self, does not look at the works of the flesh.

The new man of faith, the new Adam, the new self looks to Baptism—to being united to the cross and to the resurrection; to being clothed in the righteousness of Christ; to being given the new life where Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again, for death no longer has dominion over him, and now the life he lives he lives to God.

So we, along with all the baptized, here and throughout the world, and back through the generations, consider ourselves dead to sin as we daily put the old Adam of sin to death in repentance, and daily live to God in Christ Jesus, as daily the new Adam of faith stands up alive in the promise of Baptism.

**In the Name of Jesus.**