

8JAN12 Text: Mark 1:9-11 ***“In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opening and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. <sup>11</sup> And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”***

Three years ago, on January 20, 2009, Barack Obama was inaugurated as the first African American President of the United States of America. The outcome of this coming November’s election will determine whether or not the American citizens grant him a second term. Whoever is elected this coming November, their **inauguration** will take place in January of 2013. The inauguration of a president is a **public ceremony** that marks him as the **officially designated** and **properly elected leader** of our nation. With pomp and circumstance, the person elected this coming November will take a public oath and be sworn into the office of President of the United States of America.

There are many official designations that point to a person’s qualifications. College students **graduate** in a special ceremony at which they receive their diplomas that show they have successfully completed their course of study and are now **qualified** to enter their chosen field. Pastors are **ordained**; ordination is the public action of the Church by which pastors and believers put the seal of approval on a man who has studied the Word of God and been thoroughly trained in theology at the seminary, passing all of the tests and requirements. Medical doctors complete **medical school internships** and **hospital residency programs** so that they are thoroughly trained and ready to be entrusted with the health issues they face. Even some trades require a time of **apprenticeship**, after which that person is ready to take up their craft.

Our Gospel lesson this morning from the first chapter of Mark tells us about the baptism of our Lord, the **inauguration** of Jesus of Nazareth into His office as the promised Messiah. Jesus’ baptism was the **public declaration** by God that this Jesus of Nazareth, was the Messiah Yes, in the baptism of our Lord,

### **JESUS IS SHOWN TO BE THE SAVIOR**

1. **By the Father’s voice from heaven**, Jesus is publicly declared to be God’s Son.
2. **By the descent of the Holy Spirit**, Jesus’ human nature is anointed with the fullness of Gods power and grace for all that He would do as the Savior.
3. **Throughout His own ministry**, Jesus shows Himself to be the gentle Savior of all.

When you stop to think of all that is involved in being a modern President, it is a

wonder that the current slate of Republican candidates are even seeking that office! So many **qualifications** are necessary, not to mention the confidence of the people you are serving. In a far *greater* way, to be the Savior of the world there was **one qualification** and **one qualification alone**. *To be the Savior, One must truly be the Son of God!* The baptism of our Lord tells us this very thing.

In the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, we see One who is truly divine, One who is truly the Son of God. Jesus comes to be baptized in the Jordan River, not because He needed a baptism of repentance, for He was sinless, but rather here, at the very beginning of Jesus' ministry, He is not ashamed to be numbered with sinners and be in their presence, as He begins to fulfill all righteousness on their behalf. In this very public moment of Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River, God the Father speaks out and declares for all those gathered that day that this Jesus is truly His Son. *"You are My beloved Son; with You I am well pleased,"* God said **JESUS IS SHOWN TO BE THE SAVIOR**—the Father's voice bears witness and testifies to who Jesus really is.

This was not the first time in Jesus' life that He was called the Son of God! Remember when the angel Gabriel came to Mary informing her that she would become pregnant and give birth to a son to be named Jesus? Mary was told that her son would be great and *"will be called **the Son of the Most High**."* When Mary asked how such a thing could take place since she was a virgin, she was told by the angel Gabriel: *"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God"* (Luke 1:31, 34, 35) When the shepherds receive the unexpected announcement of the Savior's birth by the choir of angels on that first Christmas, they are told that *"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."* "Lord" was one of the Old Testament names for God. **The Savior who had just been born was the Lord God Himself!** We could go on and on with many other examples in the Gospels of Jesus being designated as the Son of God—even by the Roman centurion at Jesus' crucifixion, who declared after witnessing all that had taken place, *"Truly, He was the Son of God!"* (Matt. 27:54) Yes, at Jesus' baptism, at the very beginning of His ministry, the Father loudly and clearly declares Jesus to be His Son so that **JESUS IS SHOWN TO BE THE SAVIOR**.

As important as the Father's testimony was as Jesus was publicly and officially designated to be the Son of God, another very important event took place at Jesus' baptism: **the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon His human nature, as Jesus was anointed with grace and power for His work as Messiah.** The Hebrew word

“Messiah” and the Greek word “Christ” both mean the same thing: “The Anointed One.” JESUS WAS SHOWN TO BE THE SAVIOR, because He was the One anointed with the Holy Spirit (according to His human nature) for the work of being the Messiah. Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan River fulfills what the prophet Isaiah that we spoke in our Introit this morning: *“Here is My Servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put My Spirit on Him.”* (Is. 42:1) As Jesus was coming up out of the water, heaven opened and the Spirit descended upon Jesus like a dove, anointing Jesus. For Jesus to be the Savior of the world, He must truly be the Anointed One of God! The baptism of our Lord tells us that Jesus is **the promised Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One of God.**

Just like the inauguration of the President speaks of the important office he will hold, so also Jesus’ anointing in the Jordan River with Holy Spirit speaks of the important office He would hold, the three-fold office of the Christ, the Messiah. As the promised Messiah, as the Christ, Jesus held the three-fold office of Prophet, Priest and King. Jesus showed Himself to be true **Prophet** as He taught about God the Father in a fresh, new ways so that the crowds were amazed at His teaching, because He spoke as One who had authority and not as their scribes. As Prophet, He was the very Word of God made flesh who revealed the Father to us. This Jesus clearly tells us when we read in Luke 10: *“All things have been committed to me by My Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”* (Luke 10:22) There were many who did not accept Jesus as the promised Prophet, so Jesus said, *“When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am [the one I claim to be] and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me.”* (John 8:28) Jesus also shows Himself to be true **Priest** as He prayed on behalf of His disciples (John 17) before the Father. But as **Priest**, Jesus the Christ accomplished His greatest work, the work of our salvation. Jesus offered the sacrifice that no other priest could ever offer: His sinless life for the sins of the world. The writer of the book of Hebrews says it this way, *“Such a high priest meets our need—one who is **holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted** above the heavens. Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. **He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself.**”* (Heb. 7:26,27) Jesus also shows Himself to be true King as after His resurrection He again takes up the full usage of His divine majesty and power as the Messiah who had accomplished all that had been entrusted to Him by the Father. All authority in heaven and on earth is given to Him (Matt. 28:18) as the victorious King of kings. He ascends to the right hand of God to rule all things and to rule in our hearts by His grace.

Finally, JESUS WAS INDEED SHOWN TO BE OUR SAVIOR as throughout His own ministry, **Jesus showed Himself to be the Savior of all.** He was the fulfillment of everything the Law and the Prophets of the Old Testament said about the coming Messiah . While we know so well that His birth fulfilled those passages we heard again this past Christmas, His death also fulfilled other prophecies about the Messiah. One of my favorite is the passage in which Isaiah the prophet looks forward in time and see the Messiah and describes His ministry of gentle care: Isaiah writes: *“He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.”* (Is. 42:2) **Here is perhaps where each of us can best relate to Jesus as our Savior: as He touches our lives with His gentle love and with His tender care. He comes to us again and again to bind up our faith when bruised, to fan our faith back into flame when we feel as if we are nothing more than a smoking wick.** Knowing Jesus as such a caring Savior is important because life will continue to send its share of bumps and knocks our way. There are indeed times when we feel as if our faith is bruised and our faith nothing more than a smoldering wick. While it is important for us to know and be confident of the fact that Jesus is truly the Son of God and Jesus was anointed to the three-fold office of Messiah, **it is truly important that each of us personally knows Jesus as the gentle Savior who longs to help us each and every day so that our bruised faith is healed and our sputtering faith is rekindled.** I pray that each of us knows Jesus as the One who tenderly loves us more than we can even imagine, One whose love led Him to die and rise again on our behalf. Because of Jesus’ tender ministry in your life and mine, we now have grace and peace in abundance—*His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.* (2 Pet. 1:2,3) Not only that, Jesus Himself **continues to touch our lives with His saving presence** as He is doing now in His Word and as He will do once again in a few minutes as He comes to us in the Sacrament with His very body given and blood shed on the cross to assure us of His love and forgiveness.

**What a Savior we have!** At His baptism, Jesus was declared to be the very Son of God and anointed with the Holy Spirit for the work of being the Messiah, our Prophet, Priest and King. Thank God that Jesus continues to show Himself as our compassionate and gentle Savior. Our Lord will indeed continue to bind up our broken lives and He will continue to rekindle our faith when it is nothing more than a flickering flame and sputtering wick about to go out. Thank You, Jesus! Amen.

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