

ST. Peter's Lessons and Discussion Questions
Epiphany 2 - The Baptism of Our Lord
January 10, 2021

Below are our lessons for Sunday as well as questions for you to ponder before we gather for Coffee Hour. Even though each of you will be discussing **only one** of the questions, my hope is that by providing you with all of the lessons and questions our time of sharing will be enhanced.

Old Testament

Genesis 1:1-5

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

The Psalm

Psalm 29

- 1 Ascribe to the Lord, you gods, *
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
- 2 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his Name; *
worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.
- 3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters;
the God of glory thunders; *
the Lord is upon the mighty waters.
- 4 The voice of the Lord is a powerful voice; *
the voice of the Lord is a voice of splendor.
- 5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees; *
the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;
- 6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, *
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.
- 7 The voice of the Lord splits the flames of fire;
the voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; *
the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
- 8 The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe *

and strips the forests bare.

9 And in the temple of the Lord *

all are crying, "Glory!"

10 The Lord sits enthroned above the flood; *

the Lord sits enthroned as King for evermore.

11 The Lord shall give strength to his people; *

the

Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.

The New Testament

Acts 19:1-7

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." Then he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They answered, "Into John's baptism." Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied— altogether there were about twelve of them.

The Gospel

Mark 1:4-11

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Group Discussion Questions for Coffee Hour (1/10)

Today's gospel lesson is about end time events. Other readings emphasize the importance of learning to trust in God. Take a moment to review these questions in preparation for our time together. **NOTE: Please have your bibles or a copy of the lessons on hand to use during our time in break rooms.**

Group 1. What impressions/thoughts occur when you read these introductory words about creation (Genesis 1:1-5)? Why do you think our bible begins with an event that no human was there to witness?

Group 2. Psalm 29 mentions *the voice of the Lord* throughout its verses. Giving consideration to the Genesis lesson for today, what do you believe might be the reason(s) that the *voice of the Lord* is mentioned so frequently?

Group 3. In our lesson from Acts, the Holy Spirit is the focus of Paul's attention. Why would the Holy Spirit be important in the lives of believers? Is the Holy Spirit still important for believers?

Group 4. In our lessons for today we are given several reminders about the power of words. Considering the clergy letter written to Dr. King as well as his response, what impressions do you get about the authors of these documents? Be prepared to share a brief thought about each letter.

Group 5. In Mark's gospel we read, *just as he (Jesus) was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him.* What does this descriptive language mean to you? Why is the Spirit mentioned?

Group 6. Once again our passage from Mark provides food for thought. The final verse for today says, *And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."* Considering the fact that Jesus was just beginning his ministry, why would God say of Jesus *"I am well pleased"*? What might we learn from these words?/

Group 7. Bishop Rob Wright spoke on the podcast entitled *Un-mattered Lives* about Black Lives Matter. What did you think of this interview? Be prepared to share a brief thought or two about your impressions.