“The King and His Kingdom: Immersed in God’s Favor”

Matthew 3:13-17

(notes based on the sermon by Pastor Steve Massey, Hayden Bible Church, 6/19/22)

What does God think of me?

Let’s start by asking, “How should I think of me?” Well, I am a sinner in need of repentance! The world tells me to be self-obsessed. The Bible gives me the right measure of self. I am to be God-centered, not self-centered. (Q1)

Matthew writes of a new genesis for God’s world and for God’s people, through the work of the gospel. This requires a new exodus from our sins, the repentance preached by John the Baptist. [Repent means to turn from sin and turn to God, a truly radical change. Has this change happened to you?] Imagine trekking through the dry, dusty hills of Judea, and then suddenly coming to the lush surroundings of the Jordan River. Why did people flock to this site? The Spirit allowed them to see their great need for repentance. Jesus, too, came to participate in a baptism for the remission of sin. But why would He seek to be baptized? He doesn’t need to repent of anything! Verse 14 shows that John wondered the same thing. (Q2)

John knew that Jesus was sinless. Jesus insisted that He be permitted to be baptized. Why? Because the King gladly identifies with His sinful people. There, in the Jordan River, Jesus is not baptized for His sins, but for the sins of His people (see Isa. 53:5-6). Jesus, the sinless Son of God, made it a point to identify with His sinful people there in the Jordan River. How great a love is that!

Now back to our original question: What does God think of you? Well, He thinks you’re a **sinner**. Some people don’t see it that way, because they’ve made up their own definition of sin. Don’t measure your standing with God by the good you have done. To be honest, we must look into the mirror of God’s Law (Exod. 20:1-17). Maybe you haven’t robbed others, but have you robbed God of the glory He is due? Maybe you haven’t coveted your neighbor’s stuff, but are you living in contentment with what you have? Have you let anything creep in as an idol in your life? Need I go on? How long is the record of your failure to live within His boundaries? Yes, God sees you as a sinner, but He **loves** you so much that He sent His only Son to die for your iniquities.

Matthew 3:16-17 is a fantastic depiction of the Trinity: The Father chooses the Son, and the Son gives His all for His people, through the power of the Holy Spirit. The King commands us to walk in the Spirit, because that’s just what He does. (Q3) Jesus was and is our representative before the Father. As He is accepted by the Father, we are **accepted** by the Father. At Jesus’ baptism, Jesus has the Spirit rest on Him. Isa. 11:2 describes this perfectly. Now read John 1:32-34. Jesus, our perfect Savior and anointed King, is publicly and powerfully affirmed in the great unveiling there at the Jordan River.

So, what does God think of you? What God thinks of you has EVERYTHING to do with your relationship with His Son (John 3:16-18). Ask yourself: What do you think of Jesus? Do you identify with Him? Do you surrender to Him completely? Do you depend upon Him daily? God the Son has been the delight of His Father for all eternity. WE ARE THE ADOPTED CHILDREN OF GOD THROUGH CHRIST. He **delights** in us, too! As the Father is pleased with the Son, so He is **pleased** with all who are found in Him. As God is pleased with the King, so He is pleased with all of the King’s people! Through Christ alone you are immersed in God’s favor. What does God think of you? He thinks you are a sinner saved by grace. He accepts you; He loves you; He delights in you. You are His beloved, and with you He is well-pleased. Amen. (Q4)

**QUESTIONS**:

1. What is a correct, Biblical view of self?
2. Why did Jesus come to John to be baptized?
3. One translation of Gal. 5:25 says, “If we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.” What does it mean to “keep in step with the Spirit”?
4. In your own words, explain what baptism is and what it is not.

“Blessed Assurance” (Crosby)

1

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine;

Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!

Heir of salvation, purchase of God,

Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

(chorus)

This is my story, this is my song,

Praising my Savior all the day long.

This is my story, this is my song,

Praising my Savior all the day long.

2

Perfect submission, perfect delight,

Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;

Angels descending, bring from above

Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

3

Perfect submission, all is at rest,

I in my Savior am happy and blest;

Watching and waiting, looking above,

Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.