

Baptismal Identity and Inheritance

Luke 12:47-48 ⁴⁷ That slave who knew what his master wanted, but did not prepare himself or do what was wanted, will receive a severe beating. ⁴⁸ But the one who did not know and did what deserved a beating will receive a light beating. From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded.

We, the baptized, are the ones to whom much has been given. Jesus has just finished telling us (earlier in chapter 12), and we spent the last 2 weeks looking at it, that we have been given an inheritance. This inheritance is better than any possession – better than anything money could buy – better than anything we could ever dream of or ever earn or deserve.

Nothing pleases the Father more than to see us sharing our kingdom inheritance. Nothing displeases the Father more than seeing us squandering it. The Father is happier with the ignorant slave that did wrong than the slave who knew better.

Why? Because God's mission must be completed. Everyone must learn about this love that God has shown them through Jesus. Everyone will be brought into a right relationship with God, because God desires it.

Romans 5:8 ⁸ But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

We have no say in the baptismal matter. It is an answer to God's call. Luther felt baptizing babies best represented this grace of God since we cannot kid ourselves into thinking that they did anything to deserve it. But even those of us who were baptized as adults did not have a choice. The Holy Spirit spoke to us, the Father called us by name and we were compelled to answer. We came forth, like a baby riding the wave of mother's water breaking, and new creatures were born!

God's mission must be completed. Everyone must learn about this love that God has shown them through Jesus. That is what makes Holy Baptism and Holy Communion important. They witness again to that love of God for us. When we gather around font or altar, we are re-experiencing God's love for us, and we are reprioritized and reminded of our baptismal identity. We are sent out as messengers – slaves of God's good news.

1 John 3:1 See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are.

Peace be with you,
Pastor Chris