

04162023 **Baptism Sunday...Have you ever noticed when people meet famous people or celebrities they want to tell other people? take pictures with, get autographs do selfies with? why? we want to be near them...that somehow that means something...and others should see who we have taken a picture with... why? Because they seem to be important and in a way we want connection to them....and one of our greatest fears is that we are not important, we don't really matter...**

What boggles my mind is that the most important being and person ever, the celebrity of all Celebrities... the most relevant being ever Jesus who is the King of all Kings ... God himself wants to be near you and Iand will look for us and find us often in our worst possible condition...because to him we are important... and he wants us to be with him, not just for a snapshot but forever! He meets our deepest need to belong!

Lets go back to the beginning for a moment...

NLT Gen 1: 26 Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. NLT Gen 1:27 7 So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them..

- **Image is a reflection...a likeness like when we look in a mirror...we are image bearers of our creator!**
- **By design... He is relational...Father, Son, Holy Spirit, similar to them and like them but not God...but human**

- **And he made us Male and female.... that is relational ...We were created to belong! we are spiritually, neurologically, physically wired for belonging.... God created us this way...**
- **As The essence of God is relationship....it is our essence also... You see we are born in relationship, we are wounded in relationship, and we are healed in relationship. We are wired for relationships.. authentic real relationships where we are accepted as we are.**
- **The opposite of belonging is fitting in! When we feel we don't belong we will spend our lives trying to fit in**
- **Fitting in is when we attempt to act like, dress like, speak like, think like, the people we are trying to receive belonging from, so we act or put on masks. we try to fit in... Because we have the belief that who we are, is not good enough to belong ! The fall caused this belonging problem...**

But thank God he delivers us from separation to belonging....

Paul first describes what takes place when a person enters into a relationship of belonging with God...

NLT 2 Corinthians 5: ¹⁷ This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

The old life of separation...is not fixed it is gone....we are now new creations...

- **So now our core identity is a child of God by Right...As John tells us..**

*NLT **John 1:12** But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.*

- **So through receiving Jesus you become a personal child of God**

adopted by God the Father! **Related to him personally, it is not a feeling it is a real relationship...**

- **And Through Jesus You now have the rights of a child of God**
- **it is not feelings it is a legal adoption!**

We now have a home a place of belonging...and a family to belong too..

NLT 1CO 12:27 All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.

- **And our differences no longer separate us but become a wonderful addition to the benefit of all the other children!**

NLT 1 Corinthians 12: 12 The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. 13 Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles,^[e] some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit.^[f]

- **And as a child of God not only do we have rights as a family member we also have responsibility ...**

NLT EPH 2: 10 For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

- **When we grasp this something changes in our lives...we begin to live carefully...we begin to have a hunger to know God...to know ourselves ...we start to get wise!**
- **The master has a plan for the masterpiece on this earth.....which the masterpiece has been formed to fit...**

But there is more...as a child of God.. you now also belong to his Kingdom as a citizen. two thousand plus years ago the King

arrived, and His kingdom reign has begun...**And what is the sign of our membership in the Kingdom....Baptism!!**

NLT Romans 6:4 For we died and were buried with **Christ by baptism**. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. ⁵ Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was.

Romans 6:8 And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him. ⁹ We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him.

- **We tell the world we are new people...members of God's family and citizens of Christ Kingdom**

Baptism signifies a new change in us for all the world to see...

NLT Galatians 3:27 And all who have been united with Christ in **baptism** have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes.

- **Right now we live by faith waiting for the establishment the kingdom of God on Earth**
- **Right now you have rights as a child of God and a citizen and future ruler in the kingdom of God exercise them...**
- **You have the right to wear the armor of God! You have the right to save up treasure and rewards in heaven... You are an ambassador of the Kingdom, a warrior for the Kingdom...You have identity, and purpose...You Belong!**

And as part of God's family we rest in the truth ...that we will never be abandoned by God!!

NLT Matt 28:18 Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Therefore, go and make disciples

of all the nations,^[b] baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

From separated from God to child of God.... from trying to fit in somewhere to belonging to God’s family, from misfit to perfect fit...from lost to found. From fear to faith... From less than to more than a conqueror!

- **from powerless to blessed with the authority of Christ!**
- **you go from separation from Christ to baptized into Christ empowered with the Holy Spirit**
- **you go from lost to Disciple... from ignorant of the things of God to a disciple learning the ways of God**
- **We have a father who loves us and will never leave us nor forsake us**
- **you go from living as rebels to living by obedience...from cursed to blessed!**
- **And he has promised to prosper for us in every way with every blessing in Heaven!!**
- **Today is a great day for those being Baptized! And it is a reminder for those of us who have been Baptized of who we are...We are Blessed beyond what we can imagine! and an encouragement for those who have not to get in!**
- **This earthly event has Tremendous spiritual impact...so as we get ready...I turn it over to Aurelia...**

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*Psalm 1:*¹ *Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers,*² *but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night.* ³ *That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither- whatever they do prospers.*

- **We gain understanding in who we are in Jesus... and that we are his Poema...masterpieces of God ...created to do good worthwhile things on this planet...**

- ***what happens on the earth affects the Heavens...being a part of the body of Christ...weakens the enemy and strengthens the church***
- ***you no longer walk the way you used too...your direction in life begins to change***
- ***you no longer think like you used too..your mind starts to become transformed***
- ***You begin to live the Blessed life...as opposed to the cursed life you inherited...***

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EPH 2: 10 *For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

- ***when we grasp this something changes in our lives...we begin to live carefully...we begin to have a hunger to know God...to know ourselves ...we start to get wise!***
- ***The master has a plan for the masterpiece on this earth.....which the masterpiece has been formed to fit...***

Matt 28:18 *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

- you go from powerless in the spiritual realm to blessed with the authority of Christ!
- you were separated from God to a new creation whose Father is God!
- you go from separation from Christ to baptized into Christ empowered with the Holy Spirit

- you go from separation to Disciple... from ignorant of the things of God to a disciple learning the ways of God
- you go from rebellion to obedience...cursed to blessed!
- and you prosper in every way

today is a great day for those being Baptized! it is a reminder for those of us who have been Baptized of who we are...and an encouragement for those who have not to get in!

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And what is the sign of our membership in the Kingdom....Baptism!!

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Romans 6:8 And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him. ⁹ We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him.

- **we tell the world we are new people...members of God's family and citizens of Christ Kingdom...**

[2 Corinthians 5:17](#) This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a **new person**. The old life is gone; a **new life** has begun!

Baptism signifies a new change in us for all the world to see...

[Galatians 3:27](#) And all who have been united with Christ in **baptism** have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes.

- **Right now we live by faith waiting for the establishment of that country united with the heavenlies called the kingdom of God**
- **Right now you have rights as a child of God and a citizen and future ruler in the kingdom of God exercise them...**

- **You have the right to wear the armor of God! You have the right to save up treasure and rewards in heaven...**

Matt 6: ²⁰ Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal.

Good works are your treasure in heaven!

Baptism is your citizenship papers!

lets take a moment to hear from those being baptized today about when they received forgiveness became members of the family of God and commemorate that today through baptism today

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When God created the earth he designed it to be under the ruler ship of Himself...With Jesus as the King over the whole earth and the citizens of his Kingdom will manage and rule as members of his family and heirs of the earth! It's a great day today! official citizenship in the Kingdom of God will grow by ____ today. why do I say that?

Well before you can be a citizen of the Kingdom of God, a person starts by being a member of 'god's family. which he decided long before you were born...to adopt you into his family

[Ephesians 1:5](#) *God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.*

You were included when

Eph 1:12 ¹³ *And now you **Gentiles** have also heard the truth, the Good News that God saves you. And when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago.* ¹⁴ *The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will give us the inheritance he promised and that he has purchased us to be his own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify him.*

- **So now our core identity is a child of God by Right...As John tells us..**

***John 1:12** But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.*

- **So through receiving Jesus you become a personal child of God adopted by God the Father! Related to him personally, it is not a feeling it is a real relationship...**
- **And Through Jesus You now have the rights of a child of God**
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And as a child of God not only do we have rights as a family member we also have responsibility ...you now also belong to his Kingdom as a citizen. two thousand plus years ago the King arrived, and His kingdom rein has begun

Luke 1:31 *You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus.* ³² *He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David.* ³³ *And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!"*

- **The gathering of all those called to be in his Family belong to this Kingdom is in full swing....generation to generation...you are the called in this generation with the business of gathering more to the Kingdom...taking back what the enemy has enslaved.**
- **and His resurrection...overcoming death is the proof the King will live and reign forever, so his kingdom is not temporary and your existance is not temporary...you will be raised also!**

1 Cor15: 20 Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died. ²¹ So you see, just as death came into the world through a man, now the resurrection from the dead has begun through another man. ²² Just as everyone dies because we all belong to Adam, everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new life. ²³ But there is an order to this resurrection: Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back.

**You as a child of God and a citizen of heaven have the rights of royalty
You have the right to approach God's throne when in need...**

***Hebrews 4:16** ⁶ So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.*

- **and someday this will happen first Our King Jesus COMES BACK...
AS proclaimed by Daniel**

Dan 7:13 As my vision continued that night, I saw someone like a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient One and was led into his presence. ¹⁴ He was given authority, honor, and sovereignty over all the nations of the world, so that people of every race and nation and language would obey him. His rule is eternal—it will never end. His kingdom will never be destroyed.

The kingdoms of the world will come before the Lord...and his court of Justice and rights..

Daniel 7:26 “But then the court will pass judgment, and all his power will be taken away and completely destroyed.

The heavenly court of justice will judge.. And the world’s governments will be handed over to us to rule under the king and according to the laws of the kingdom!

²⁷ Then the sovereignty, power, and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be given to the holy people of the Most High. His kingdom will last forever, and all rulers will serve and obey him.”

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- **Baptized into his death, therefore buried with him...flesh died**
- **Raised with him into eternal life...freed from the power of sin**
- **Verses 10-11... now we live with him**

Romans 6: ¹⁰ And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. ¹¹ The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you. And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him. ⁹ We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him.

- **we tell the world we are new people...members of God's family and citizens of Christ Kingdom...**

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Baptism tells the world we are new people ...

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Matt 6: ²⁰ Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal.

and we will reign with him on the new earth

Rev 22:3 No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him. ⁴ And they will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. ⁵ And there will be no night there—no need for lamps or sun—for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever.

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- **Jesus loves His church so someone cannot love Jesus and not like his church the body!**

- **So no Self condemnation..for that has no place in the body**

¹⁵ Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body.

¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. ¹⁹ If they were all one part, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

- **So no Self exaltation....Pride has no place in a body! In fact it deforms the body...**

²¹ The eye cannot say (forbidden) to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” ²² On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, ²⁴ while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, ²⁵ so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. ²⁶ If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. ²⁷ **Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.**

- **We gain understanding in who we are in Jesus... and that we are his Poema...masterpieces of God ...created to do good worthwhile things on this planet...**

EPH 2: 10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

- **when we grasp this something changes in our lives...we begin to live carefully...we begin to have a hunger to know God...to know ourselves ...we start to get wise!**
- **The master has a plan for the masterpiece on this earth.....which the masterpiece has been formed to fit...**
- **yet only the master gets to call the shots...**
- **following Jesus gets real...really quick... the first thing they are confronted with is priority**

The step of belonging is confession and Baptism...

Eph 4:4 There is one body and one Spirit-- just as you were called to one hope when you were called-- ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

- **There is one body and one Spirit: We have unity and peace because of what we share in common.**
- **In Jesus we share one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one Father.**
- **Each of these common areas is greater than any potential difference. We are not left out of anything That God's other children receive...**

The challenge is we are all bought into this body ...family church...from different backgrounds ...whom social scientist call Ethos...

Ethos, Webster's defines ethos as the fundamental *character or spirit* of a culture; the underlying sentiment that informs the beliefs, customs, or practices of a group or society.

- **We must not underestimate the significant role of the spirit of a culture and the distinguishing character of a community in shaping and developing the character of an individual.**
- **We have been trained by the ethos (spirit of our culture) we are not OK.. this brokenness is also demonstrated by the idea of ...dysfunction..emotional brokenness**

- Brokenness can be the result of many factors such as abuse, neglect, abandonment, trauma, or sin injury or illness.

Emotional fragmentation can be the consequence of our own actions or the actions of others. We could be either victim or victimizer. Most often we have a dual role. Hurt people hurt people.

- **When a person is emotionally fragmented alienation and rejection becomes their theme.**
- Alienation becomes Isolation...and Rejection becomes rebellion ...Often they are convinced no one loves them or even cares. or they are convinced they do not want or need people...
- **Even when the tears of those who love them are free-flowing, they still feel they are alone. They seem incapable of experiencing or even perceiving love.**
- The entire science of psychiatry is the outgrowth of the study of dysfunction. Yet one thing is clear—there is a growing fragmentation of the human spirit in our society.
- This growing fragmentation of the human spirit is impossible to ignore.
- The result of the ethos of our culture is a profound aloneness.... loneliness ...

A profound aloneness.... Mother Teresa, never afraid to give a direct and candid answer, looked at the reporter with her sparkling eyes and said simply..."the poverty of Calcutta is physical, but in the United States the poverty is the disease of loneliness." "It is the poverty of being nobody to anybody"

*****Which brings us to the church... the assembled or called out ones...of their ethos into God's Kingdom, and united as a family through faith in, and relationship with Jesus one another – to carry on Jesus' ministry. We are His Body.**

It is built on Jesus and by Jesus for us and with us ...

- **God's family (His church) is a place where the sick, the hurting and disenfranchised with life come to belong and get well.**
- God's family is comprised of people from every walk of life with untold countless issues. When someone hurts in your family it affects the whole family and the whole family rallies to do their part in helping their brother or sister get well.

Here is the deal...one can't really be a healthy Christian alone. Christianity, is

corporate from its very roots. It is absolutely essential for God's children to learn to work and play together, fight and make up together...fail and succeed together.. love and grow together... together (in the church) and in the future (in heaven) and in the new earth...

*****So there is no such thing as an isolated individual healthy christian **Why? Because of the person-to-person relationship that is at the very heart of the doctrine of church**

- If you think faith is purely private, a "me and Jesus" thing, you are fooling yourself. **That is dysfunctional christian thinking**
- You might ask, "Who says you need church to be a good Christian? Who says so?" Well, God says so. Just look at some of the ways that God describes the church in the Bible.

In God's family it is our Ethos to Care for each other as a command to us and is the draw to a world caught in the web of its destructive Ethos...

***John 13:34** "A new command (Cultural directive) I give you: Love **one another**. As I have loved you, so you must love **one another**. **35** By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love **one another**."*

And sixty years later...writes this

***1 John 3:11** For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love **one another**.*

***1 John 4:12** No **one** has ever seen God; but if we love **one another**, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.*

Bottom line...you can only love one another, from a distance but only up close and personal....like being part of the body....always making room for more family and parts of the body....