

Faith In the Home: Sermon Notes for Families

The Baptism of Our Lord, Matthew 3:13-17, "All Righteousness Fulfilled."

"Sorry boy, no walk today," happens more than I would care to admit. Some days there is not time to walk my dog. On rare occasions the cat will decide to sit on my lap, but of course it only happens when I need to get up to do something. Perhaps these things are not that big of deal. What's much worse is when I hear from my seven-year-old son, "Daddy, you didn't play with me today." Or when I have to leave home and my baby girl realizing that I am leaving lifts up her arms towards me and says something very close to, "Dada pickup," before breaking down into tears because I can't just stay and hold her for 30 more minutes, as much as I would like to. What about that laundry that needs folding? What about that sink full of dishes? What about the yard? What about quality time with my wife?

Sound familiar? We all want to be good spouses, good parents, good kids to our parents, good siblings, good friends, good employees or employers, good pet owners, and on and on and on. And we want the people that we know to see as those things to. We want to be good. Sometimes that is a noble thing as we try to do good for others, and sometimes that desire is treacherous because we are only trying to be good for our own gain. The hard truth is that we all fall short of being good, and one of the chief reasons why we fall short is because we get so busy that we try to do it all without God.

In Matthew 3, When Jesus came to the Jordan River and met His cousin, John the Baptist, John thought that it was Jesus that supposed to baptize John. I don't blame him for thinking that. After all it is God that does the work in baptism. But John is told that he must be the one to baptize Jesus. Jesus said, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Jesus had to be baptized in order to fulfill all righteousness.

Why? Because He had in mind for us to be baptized. When you were baptized you were baptized into Christ's baptism. That means that you were baptized into His death and resurrection as the Apostle Paul says in Romans. While God, gives us people to love and work to do, He is the one that makes us righteous. He is the one who helps us do these things well. And when we fail at our vocations, the Spirit and the Word remind us that we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

You are not going to be perfect for everyone in every moment. But when God sees you, He sees you baptized into His Son who fulfilled all righteousness. Because Jesus paid

for your sins, when God sees His Son in you, He looks at you as His beloved child and is "well pleased." When you know that you are righteous before God, you can live out your responsibilities with joy rather than with burden.

How do we teach and model these things to our kids?

1. Fatigue from one-year-old thinking that sleeping through the night is not fashionable has certainly challenged my living with joy, and made things feel more burdensome. In a moment of clarity, I ran to God in prayer for strength, and for forgiveness. I am sure that parents here can relate. Run to God for strength and mercy.
2. Remember that God who sent His Son to die and rise for us, did do so not to abandon us in this world. He is still with us. We may not realize it, but He is doing the heavy lifting in our lives.
3. Our children are going to fall short just we fall short. Just as we need the grace of Jesus, so do they. Remember to be intentional with the words "I forgive you." Any relationship will provide the opportunity to say these words, but none more than the relationship between a husband and wife, and a parent with their children.
4. Finally, because of God, we are free to enjoy the relationships he gave us, and stress out over the responsibilities that those relationships bring.