



# ~AT HOME WORSHIP~

10<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Baptism of Christ

Theme: The whole world changed



## Preparation

This the day that the Lord has made.  
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.  
We are the family of God.  
And are called by God's name.  
We are heirs of Christ's kingdom.  
And born of the Spirit.  
Let us, therefore, come together in thanksgiving.  
Amen.

Spend a moment dwelling in the words of this prayer of preparation. Read each word slowly, let them flow through you and rest in your heart. Let the words speak into your time of worship, into your day and your coming week. Hold them and bring yourself fully into the presence of God.

## Hymn/Song: From heaven you came

[https://youtu.be/A0FSZ\\_iSYO8](https://youtu.be/A0FSZ_iSYO8)

From heaven you came helpless babe  
enter'd our world Your Glory veil'd  
Not to be served but to serve  
And give Your life that we might live

*Chorus*

*This is our God, the Servant King -  
He calls us now to follow Him  
To bring our lives as a daily offering  
Of worship to the Servant King*

There in the garden of tears  
My heavy load He chose to bear  
His heart with sorrow was torn  
Yet "Not my will but Yours", He said  
*Chorus*

Come see His hand and His feet -  
The scars that speak of sacrifice  
Hands that flung stars into space  
To cruel nails surrendered

*Chorus*

So let us learn how to serve  
And in our lives enthrone Him  
Each other's needs to prefer  
For it is Christ we're serving  
*Chorus*

© Graham Kendrick

## Opening Prayer

Lord God, giver of light and life,  
by your word you bring everything into being –  
the far-flung galaxies and the tiniest atomic particle.  
You have given us a world to enjoy and to care for.  
Give us compassion in the use of its resources,  
wisdom in our stewardship of your gifts,  
and reverence for all that you have made –  
for Jesus' sake.  
Amen.

## Prayer for the Day

Heavenly Father,  
at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son:  
may we recognise him as our Lord  
and know ourselves to be your beloved children;  
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

## Saying Sorry

Lord, when you came into the world, things changed. When we came into a relationship with you, things changed. Life became filled with a new sense of purpose and peace. But, Lord, sometimes we let you down by doing wrong things or failing to do right things.

**We are sorry, Lord.**

Sometimes, Lord, through pride, stubbornness or fear we build barriers and keep others at arm's length – even you, Lord.

**We are sorry, Lord.**

At times we give in to our weaknesses and temptations, failing to draw on your strength. At times we are troubled by difficult situations and find it hard to trust you.

**We are sorry, Lord.**

Help us to turn such things around and turn to you. Help us to learn from the past and, drawing on your strength and peace, make a better future.

**Amen.**

### Children's Prayer - Saying Sorry

Dear God,  
we are sorry that we don't always do or say the right things.  
Please hear our prayer and help us to change, in Jesus' name. Amen.

## BIBLE READINGS



### Acts 19:1-7

#### Paul in Ephesus

**19** While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul travelled through the interior of the province and arrived in Ephesus. There he found some disciples <sup>2</sup> and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?”

“We have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit,” they answered.

<sup>3</sup> “Well, then, what kind of baptism did you receive?” Paul asked.

“The baptism of John,” they answered.

<sup>4</sup> Paul said, “The baptism of John was for those who turned from their sins; and he told the people of Israel to believe in the one who was coming after him—that is, in Jesus.”

<sup>5</sup> When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup> Paul placed his hands on them, and the Holy Spirit came upon them; they spoke in strange tongues and also proclaimed God's message. <sup>7</sup> They were about twelve men in all.

## Mark 1:4-11

<sup>4</sup> So John appeared in the desert, baptizing and preaching. “Turn away from your sins and be baptized,” he told the people, “and God will forgive your sins.” <sup>5</sup> Many people from the province of Judea and the city of Jerusalem went out to hear John. They confessed their sins, and he baptized them in the Jordan River.

<sup>6</sup> John wore clothes made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup> He announced to the people, “The man who will come after me is much greater than I am. I am not good enough even to bend down and untie his sandals.” <sup>8</sup> I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

### The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus

<sup>9</sup> Not long afterward Jesus came from Nazareth in the province of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup> As soon as Jesus came up out of the water, he saw heaven opening and the Spirit coming down on him like a dove. <sup>11</sup> And a voice came from heaven, “You are my own dear Son. I am pleased with you.”

## REFLECTION TIME



### Short Reflection by Angela Mak

Children may choose to use the Activity and Colouring Sheet

I wonder if you've made any new year resolutions? I gave up making them quite a few years ago, when I realised my will power wasn't great and the disappointment of not following through isn't pleasant! I also think that especially if we resolve to stop doing something, we immediately want to do it all the more! However, there are some very worthy resolutions especially those who aim for moderation e.g. Nicky Gumbell of HTB church : *Fear less, trust more; take less, give more; whine less, thank more; talk less, say more; hate less, love more.*

Some people are better than others in establishing new habits, and reaching goals. Self-help books and websites are spectacularly popular as we all seek that one secret ingredient of lasting change and improvement. The people in the time of Jesus were also seeking change and to be better people. The followers of John flooded out to the wilderness to hear his teaching of repentance, and were baptized in the river Jordan. Their baptism represented a sorrow at what they were doing wrong, and a choice to change how they lived. Baptism is also a sign of forgiveness; an ongoing receiving and giving forgiveness. Baptism represents change – new life. But as humans, we will continue to need to reflect on our failings, say sorry to God and receive forgiveness.

There is one facet of baptism which brings lasting change and which is a gift from God; a gift he bestows on his beloved Son Jesus, and then offers to us as followers of Christ. When Jesus is baptised, <sup>10</sup> *Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.* <sup>11</sup> *And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”* Jesus dramatically receives the spirit of God which marks the start of his ministry. All of his ministry is done in the power of the Holy Spirit, the early resisting of temptations in the desert, the healing of the sick, the raising from death, his teachings and conversations. John's baptism of people by water, and this separate baptism of Jesus in water and spirit is paralleled in the 2<sup>nd</sup> passage. Paul explains to the people of Ephesus many years later that they have been baptised in repentance, but they also needed baptising in the name of Jesus to receive his Holy Spirit.

From the Message translation: *“John preached a baptism of radical life-change so that people would be ready to receive the One coming after him, who turned out to be Jesus. If you’ve been baptized in John’s baptism, you’re ready now for the real thing, for Jesus.”* When they are baptised in the name of Jesus they dramatically change, speaking in tongues and prophesying. Jesus also taught that his followers would receive the Holy Spirit to bear witness to all that they saw, to give them power and to receive revelation of God in our hearts. [John 14:16](#)

*“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever.”* The epistles repeatedly refer to the Holy Spirit as the means by which the kingdom of God comes. Followers of Christ are to bear fruit, but this fruit is the fruit of the spirit and not of determination or practice.

Charles Stanley in the ‘Wonderful Spirit Filled Life’ advocates an authentic, lasting change in followers of Christ when we repeatedly recognise the indwelling spirit of God, and repeatedly depend on this Spirit for how to live. In Baptism, we receive the Holy Spirit who takes up permanent residence in us, bringing an inexhaustible source of life. After all *He is life*. God’s plan of salvation includes a provision to save us from ourselves. We cannot live in the right way on our own, whatever our good intentions and our good habits.

In order for us to change and in order for the world to change, we have to first acknowledge our desperate need for God, our need for his indwelling spirit to bring forth the kingdom of God in our world. And herein lies the significance of baptism; a recognition of our need of repentance, forgiveness and an invitation for the spirit of God to dwell within. Inviting the Spirit be the master of our lives. When someone is baptised in our churches, the congregation are invited to reaffirm their own vows of baptism. Baptism is a turning towards heaven, which is not a singular event. We might even say that the most impactful followers of Christ are marked by their consistent love, compassion and purpose because they repeatedly look towards Christ and depend on his Spirit in their every day choices and words. In the message translation of John’s baptism, he promised a baptism of the Holy Spirit which *“will change us from the inside out”*. The degree to which we live the life we know we are created for, could be said to be contingent on the new life which flows through us.

We make resolutions because deep inside we know we can be better than we are. We desire change – lasting change. In the baptism of Jesus, the whole world changed. The kingdom of God was being inaugurated. The final age of history was about to dawn. In that moment of heaven tearing open, there was a meeting of worldly and heavenly realms. We could use a phrase we associate with Christmas – Heaven come down. But the wonderful, good news is that all are invited in to this baptism. We live in a world where we have all we need in the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We are very conscious that our world has completely changed in the last 12 months. It is scary, it twists and turns, it puzzles us and shakes our foundations. But we need not fear because we have the spirit of the living God within us, bringing power and peace. Challenges will undoubtedly lie ahead, but we find in the Holy Spirit the resources that enable us to remain faithful and hopeful when the odds are against us. The resources to love and serve, to bear fruit. We have the privilege of not needing to perform or strive, but to **depend** on the spirit of God to **bear** fruit in us. The baptism of Jesus heralded a new world. We live in a world that is new to us, a world characterised by change. But in that flux, God is good, all the time. God is present, all the time. We can turn to the Spirit of God within us in any moment and God speaks truth, comfort and strength, as God did with the early baptisms recorded in Ephesus. They spoke God’s word and they prophesied. Let’s depend on the Spirit of God throughout, and let God speak in to our present and future. In times of change, imagine the impact on our lives and of those we love when the Holy Spirit makes us beacons of hope. Praise be to our God, to our redeemer and saviour. Amen



## Family Song (optional) Shine – with actions to learn too!!

<https://youtu.be/Btbzli8sR1o>

### Time for Prayer

Listen to this version of Breathe on me Breath of God

*Words: Edwin Hatch, (1835-1889) Music: Trentham, Robert Jackson (1840-1914)*

<https://youtu.be/MmkzSjs9eAw>

**Let us pray – you may wish to use these prayers or use your own.**

Eternal God, it feels as if the whole world has changed  
and yet in you there is stability and the opportunity of a new beginning.  
So, we pray now for those whose lives are in turmoil,  
those whose lives have been turned upside down, those who feel lost.  
May they feel supported, find fresh hope,  
**and use our prayers in Jesus' name to strengthen them.**

We pray for those for whom the lockdown has come as a relief,  
for those who now feel safer,  
but we pray too for those who now feel desperate,  
alone and worried about their jobs, their finances, their mental health.  
May they feel supported, find fresh hope:  
**Lord, use our prayers in Jesus' name to strengthen them.**

We pray for children and young adults as their schooling is disrupted,  
we pray for those who enjoy learning from home,  
but pray too for those who will lose confidence, who miss their friends, who feel vulnerable.  
We remember their parents  
and the parents of children with special needs, struggling to cope on their own.  
We pray for teachers, administrative staff,  
and all those who feel overwhelmed.  
May they feel supported, find fresh hope:  
**Lord, use our prayers in Jesus' name to strengthen them.**

We pray for the people of a divided America at this time of political and racial tension and transition,  
for outgoing President Donald Trump and President-elect Joe Biden.

We pray too for countries around the world struggling with ethnic violence and militancy.  
We remember the people of West Africa and in particular the people of Niger, villagers who live in fear,  
those who have been wounded in recent attacks and those who have been bereaved.  
May they feel supported, find fresh hope:  
**Lord, use our prayers in Jesus' name to strengthen them.**

We pray for those who have been injured or lost their homes and loved ones in the severe weather,  
remembering particularly the people of Norway affected by landslides,  
and those in Australia battered by cyclones.  
We pray for those who work in the emergency services,  
those whose work is dangerous and traumatic.  
We pray for those in refugees camps with little protection from the weather,  
those who sleep rough,  
those who can't afford to heat their homes.  
May they feel supported, find fresh hope:  
**Lord, use our prayers in Jesus' name to strengthen them.**

We pray for one another, our families, our communities, our church fellowships.  
May we support those who are unwell or grieving.  
May we bring fresh hope to those who feel forgotten and are vulnerable,  
and may we – both practically and prayerfully – share our faith  
in your Son Jesus in whose name we entrust these prayers to you.  
**Amen.**

## Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,  
Hallowed be your name,  
Your kingdom come,  
Your will be done  
On earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread  
Forgive us our sins  
As we forgive those who sin against us  
Lead us not into temptation  
But deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
And the glory are yours  
Now and for ever.  
Amen.

## Hymn/Song: This is Amazing Grace

<https://youtu.be/cgsbaBlaoVc>

Who breaks the power of sin and darkness  
Whose love is mighty and so much stronger  
The King of Glory, the King above all kings  
Who shakes the whole earth with holy thunder  
Who leaves us breathless in awe and wonder  
The King of Glory, the King above all kings

*Chorus*

*This is amazing grace  
This is unfailing love  
That You would take my place  
That You would bear my cross  
You laid down Your life  
That I would be set free  
Whoa, Jesus, I sing for  
All that You've done for me*

Who brings our chaos back into order  
Who makes the orphan a son and daughter  
The King of Glory, the King above all kings  
Who rules the nations with truth and justice  
Shines like the sun in all of its brilliance  
The King of Glory, the King above all kings  
*Chorus*

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain  
Worthy is the King who conquered the grave  
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain  
Worthy is the King who conquered the grave  
(repeat)

*Chorus*

*Josh Farro, Phil Wickham, Jeremy Riddle*

## Closing Prayer

Lord, help us to be open to your prompting  
as we seek to discover what you would have us be and do.  
Remind us again and again that you have promised to be our  
guide and companion on our journey.  
Help us to look forward with renewed commitment,  
and bless our thinking and speaking and doing.  
In your name.  
Amen.

## Dismissal

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord, today  
and always. Amen.

God bless you now and always



All music and digital material covered by the following licences:

HTS – CCL & MRL 21033, Streaming 930014, CVL 640919, PPL 1641113, CLA 640902, PRS 640892

SMLT – CCL & MRL 42256, Streaming 930111, PPL 1660620, CLA 2119754, PRS 148198