

The Feast of the Baptism of Christ, 12th January 2020

Brilliant and Beautiful: The Baptism of Jesus

Matt. 3:13-17

Do you ever wonder why God made the world?

Was He bored? Was He lonely?

Well, here's a clue. Why did Beethoven write music? Why did Michaelangelo paint?

They did it to be brilliant. They did it because something inside of them wanted to be outside, wanted to shine and sing.

They couldn't hold it in. It wanted to burst out of them in beauty and brilliance.

Well, it's a bit like that with God.

God made the world to be beauty and brilliance.

And what we call sin is when it isn't. When we are small and mean and sad, in all our different ways.

Now God could say *enough*. He could just give up and say, it's not worth it. These people will never be beauty and brilliance. I should let them go, forget them.

But He did something different.

God became one of us. He lived in one of us. And because he was God, that one was full of brilliance and beauty.

That's Jesus, the brilliant and beautiful one, the one about whom God said: 'You are my Son. With you I am well pleased!'

But that wasn't all God did.

He looked at us, small and sad.

And He looked at His Son, all beauty and brilliance.

And He said, let's put the one inside the other.

Let's put the beauty and the brilliance inside the sadness and smallness.

And so Jesus got baptised.

Jesus didn't *need* to get baptised. Baptism was only for sinful people, people who needed to make a new start. Jesus didn't need that; he was the beloved Son of God! That's why John said, 'No! What are you doing here! This isn't for you!'

But Jesus said: it is. Whatever is for the sinful, the sad, the small – is for me. I'm going into it to change it, to fill it with beauty and brilliance.

I'm going into to it, to change it.

That is pretty much the whole of the Gospel. God came into the small, into the sad, to fill them with beauty and brilliance.

He did it first at the baptism, and last at the Cross: wherever there's sin and failure and death, now there's Jesus, blazing in beauty and brilliance.

Wherever there's sin and failure and death – which means in me. In *you*.

If you'll ask Him in, He will be in you, whoever you are.

However sad and small you are, He will be in you, brilliant and beautiful.

That's what being a Christian is.

It's not about being *good*.

It's about *being brilliant. Being beautiful. Being in Jesus*.

So that the Father looks at you and says, *you* are my beautiful, brilliant, beloved child. In *you*, I am well pleased.

If you'll ask Him in. If you'll be baptised, if you'll come to communion.

If you'll just ask him *to be* in your smallness, in your sadness – He will.

And He will make each one of you brilliant and beautiful.

Let's stand to confess our faith in Him: