

**“Saved through waters  
By Rev. Frances Savill  
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**Readings:**

**Luke 3:15-22**

This morning we come to one of the very familiar passages of the Bible.

It appears in all four gospels – so we know it’s very important.

It’s the story of Jesus` baptism.

So, to get you thinking, brains in gear, as we consider this foundational text consider important moments in the Bible when God`s people have been rescued through the waters of death in order to enter a new creation life in the Old or First Testament.

This is important because Luke, and the other gospel writers, want you to hear all those foundational, touch stone moments when you read that Jesus entered the waters with all the people.

4 important moments in the Biblical Old Testament story when God`s people have been rescued through the waters of death in order to enter a new creation life:

1. Creation, page 1 of your Bible.

The waters covered the cosmos, the Spirit of God hovered over the waters, God spoke and the waters were divided.

That was the first step towards life.

As Luke tells you what happens he`s included details to help you remember, and show the significance of this moment.

In **Genesis**, in the creation story, the Spirit of God hovered over the waters.

In **Luke**, at Jesus baptism, the Spirit of God descends on Jesus.

This is a new creation moment.

And how does the Spirit descend on Jesus?

``Like a dove.``

Where does a dove play an important role?

2. In the second great water deliverance story:  
Noah`s Ark.

Humankind is rescued through the waters of the flood.

God provided a new start for all creation.

As Jesus steps into the waters, we are invited to hear echoes and see that this long awaited Son of God is one greater than Noah, who saves us

from the ruin we have brought upon ourselves,  
who will give us a new start.

As Jesus descends into the waters, Luke wants  
you to remember the next greater water  
deliverance.

I expect that it is the one that many of you  
thought of first:

3. The people of God going through the Red  
Sea, as the way to freedom from the  
Egyptians, to begin their journey to the  
promised land.

God saved them from the hand of the  
Egyptians. He answered the cries of his  
people for deliverance from their oppressors.

Jesus the is New Moses, the greater Moses,  
who rescues us from slavery, from  
oppression, and leads us into freedom.

4. And the 4<sup>th</sup> water deliverance is with Joshua,  
when the people went through the waters of  
the Jordan River as they were about to go  
into the promised land.

Jesus is a leader greater than Joshua, who we  
can follow into God`s promises.

And just in case we missed some of this, Luke is going to show us again, with the genealogies that follow this passage.

I would encourage you to bring your Bibles to church, and to have them open in front of you.

We are in Luke 3.

We read verses 15-22.

Now look at what comes directly after this.

The genealogies.

Jesus is in the line of David, the greatest King of Israel, Solomon, the wisest.

Luke traces Jesus` line through, Solomon, David, Joshua, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Judah, Moses, Noah and Adam.

And the conclusion is: Jesus, son of Adam, son of God.

When Jesus enters the waters of baptism, with all the people, there is a sense of his going in with people of all times and all places.

Jesus was at the beginning of creation bringing life.

He is like Noah, the one who was chosen to give God`s people a new start- so we can be saved and start again.

Jesus is a leader like Moses who goes through the waters with us rescuing us from slavery, delivering us and bringing us freedom.

And he is the like Joshua who will lead us through the waters to see God`s promises fulfilled.

When we are baptized and when we affirm our baptism, we are joined with Jesus in His life, death and resurrection.

Baptism is the re-enactment of what it means to be rescued through the waters of death in order to enter a new creation life.

But consider for a moment what it doesn`t mean. New Creation life is not a life without pain and problems.

New Creation life doesn`t mean that God will now make all your dreams come true.

That`s a myth and simply isn`t the truth of the gospel.

God`s dream and plan for you and me are for you and I to put on Jesus, to become perfect like Him, to learn to trust God, and mostly for you and I to

partner with God to make this world a more kingdom of God place.

Entering Jesus life is not a comfortable, nirvana place, but it is a place of hope.

Today, we follow Jesus into the waters of baptism. And we hear the voice of God which speaks to Jesus and to us as we enter the waters with him: "You are my beloved, with you I am well pleased."

God's pleasure rested on Jesus as he stood in place for us.

We hear that it is God's good pleasure that Jesus entered our history to save us.

*"The way of salvation is no grudging fulfillment of divine duty but a delightful outpouring of the Spirit on the Son to do the work of the Father."*

(Peterson)

With the outpouring of God's Spirit, Jesus began his ministry amongst us to redeem, to save, to do the work of his Father, drawing all things, all people to himself, and God the Father was pleased.

So where does that leave us?

We may find ourselves basking in the pleasure of God the Father, because we are caught up in, and identified with Jesus the Son.

We are in Christ, Jesus dwells in us, and through this gift we are now part of the beloved of God – invited to hear God’s love for us – invited to know that God is especially fond of us.

Jesus brings us into His relationship with His Father.

Maybe for some there’s the decision about a response, to turn again and be drawn up into Jesus and to let his healing Spirit wash us clean.

Or maybe, it leaves us praying, kneeling before God, praying, waiting before God for the Holy Spirit to empower us with the courage to face the truth and the courage to accept Jesus’ lordship over our entire lives, so that we might follow Jesus as he begins his ministry amongst us.

Or maybe, it leaves us simply saying “thank you” and worshipping him who came to reveal God’s good pleasure in saving us.

All thanks and praise be to God.

Prayer: Lord, we all come before you- your glory fills this place, and your presence demands a response- for some of us we come to you, asking you to wash us clean and make us new, that we would be drawn up into Jesus and given new life. Others of us are praying on our knees, for the courage to accept Jesus lordship over the whole of our lives.

Others of us are thankful we are yours, and know the smile of your good pleasure washing over us, being filled with your Holy Spirit, sent out to follow where you are leading us.

And some of us are simply in a place of thankfulness as we see the Father's pleasure in saving us, redeeming us, and sending Jesus to live amongst us, full of grace and truth.

Wherever we are at this morning O Lord, we know that we are yours. Amen.