

Cooma Anglican Sunday 12 January 2025 HC 2.1

TIS 627 Praise and thanksgiving

Praise and thanksgiving, Father, we offer,
for all things living you have made good;
harvest of sown fields, fruits of the orchard,
hay from the mown fields, blossom and wood.

Lord, bless the labour we bring to serve you,
that with our neighbour we may be fed.
Sowing or tilling, we would work with you;
harvesting, milling, for daily bread.

Father, providing food for your children,
your wisdom guiding teaches us share
one with another, so that, rejoicing,
sister and brother may know your care.

Then will your blessing reach every people;
each one confessing your gracious hand;
where you are reigning no one will hunger,
your love sustaining fruitful the land.

The Grace

of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you.
And also with you.

'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.'

Jesus said: 'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

Lord have mercy on us, and write your law in our hearts by your Holy Spirit.

Sentence of the Day

John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. Luke 3:16

Prayer of Preparation

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, who anointed Jesus at his baptism with the Holy Spirit and revealed him as your beloved Son; inspire us, your children, who are born again of water and the Spirit, to surrender our lives to your service, that we may rejoice to be called your children; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Isaiah 43:1-7

¹ But now, this is what the LORD says—he who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. ² When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not

sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. ³ For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I give Egypt for your ransom, Cush and Seba in your stead. ⁴ Since you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you, I will give people in exchange for you, nations in exchange for your life. ⁵ Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bring your children from the east and gather you from the west. ⁶ I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' and to the south, 'Do not hold them back.' Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth — ⁷ everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made. "

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Psalm 29

¹ Ascribe to the LORD, you heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

² **Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness.**

³ The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD thunders over the mighty waters.

⁴ **The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is majestic.**

⁵ The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon.

⁶ **He makes Lebanon leap like a calf, Sirion like a young wild ox.**

⁷ The voice of the LORD strikes with flashes of lightning.

⁸ **The voice of the LORD shakes the desert; the LORD shakes the Desert of Kadesh.**

⁹ The voice of the LORD twists the oaks and strips the forests bare. And in his temple all cry, "Glory!"

¹⁰ **The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD is enthroned as King forever.**

¹¹ **The LORD gives strength to his people; the LORD blesses his people with peace.**

Acts 8:14-17

¹⁴ When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. ¹⁵ When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit, ¹⁶ because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

This is the word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

Luke 3:15-22

¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?" ¹³ "Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them. ¹⁴ Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?" He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely — be content with your pay." ¹⁵ The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. ¹⁶ John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." ¹⁸ And with many other words John exhorted the people and proclaimed the good news to them.

¹⁹ But when John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of his marriage to Herodias, his brother's wife, and all the other evil things he had done, ²⁰ Herod added this to them all: He locked John up in prison. ²¹ When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was

praying, heaven was opened ²² and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

This is the gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

Sermon - What is Baptism?

Question Time

The Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose from the dead, he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins and the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

Let us pray for the world and the church

Response: Christ Jesus, intercede for us, and in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray,

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.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Scripture Sentence

Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against any one, so that your Father who

is in heaven may forgive your trespasses. Mark 11:25

Prayer of Approach

We do not presume to come to your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

The Confession

The Spirit of truth comes to convict us of sin, of righteousness, and of judgement. Let us open our hearts and confess our sins in penitence and faith, confident in God's forgiveness.

Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent, and are sorry for all our sins. Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith: pardon you and set you free from all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Greeting of Peace

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

Hymn - TIS 599 - Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee.

Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee.

Take my moments and my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of thy love.

Take my feet, and let them be swift and beautiful for thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing always, only, for my King.

Take my lips, and let them be filled with messages from thee.

Take my silver and my gold, nothing, Lord, would I withhold.

Take my intellect, and use every power as thou shalt choose.

Take my will and make it thine; it shall be no longer mine.

Take my heart, it is thine own; it shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love: my Lord, I pour at thy feet its treasure-store.

Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for thee.

Thanksgiving for Offering

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere, mighty Creator, everliving God.

We give you thanks and praise for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, who by the power of your Spirit was born of Mary and lived as one of us. By his death on the cross, he offered the one true sacrifice for sin, and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people.

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Merciful God, we thank you for these gifts of your creation, this bread and wine, and we pray that by your Word and Holy Spirit, we who eat and drink them may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread; and when he had given you thanks he broke it, gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take, eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup, and again giving you thanks he gave it to his disciples, saying, Drink from this, all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Therefore we do as our Saviour has commanded: proclaiming his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, and looking for his coming again, we celebrate, with this bread and this cup, his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Renew us by your Holy Spirit, unite us in the body of your Son and bring us with all your people into the joy of your eternal kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, and in whom, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, we worship you, Father, in songs of never-ending praise:

Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours for ever and ever. Amen.

The Holy Communion

As this broken bread was once many grains, which have been gathered together and made one bread: so may your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.

The gifts of God for the people of God

Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts with thanksgiving.

After Communion

Gracious God, we thank you that in this sacrament you assure us of your goodness and love. Accept our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving and help us to grow in love and obedience that we may serve you in the world and finally be brought to that table where all your saints feast with you for ever.

Father, we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Lord. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen

Notices

Hymn - TIS 3147- To God be the glory

To God be the glory, great things He hath done;
So loved He the world that he gave us His Son,
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin,
And opened the life-gate that all may go in.

CHORUS

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, Let the earth hear His voice!
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son,
And give Him the glory, great things He hath done.

O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
To every believer the promise of God;
The vilest offender who truly believes,
That moment from Jesus a pardon receives. **CHORUS**

Great things He hath taught us, great things He hath done,
And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
But purer, and higher, and greater will be
Our wonder, our worship, when Jesus we see. **CHORUS**

Blessing

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord:

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Sermon - Luke 3:15-22 What is baptism?

Who here spoke another language before they learnt English? I've never learnt another language except for a very small amount of very poor high school German, and a year learning Greek and Hebrew in Bible college, most of which I've forgotten. I've heard English is one of the hardest second languages to learn, partly because it has so many words that have multiple meanings. Apparently the English word with the most distinct meanings is the word run: we run for exercise, we run computer apps, characteristics run in a family, and even our noses run. These are just a few of the 645 different meanings the editors of the Oxford English dictionary have found for the word run, so it must be hard for someone learning English to guess which meaning someone intends when there are so many choices.

Most of the time, of course, experienced English speakers reliably guess what particular meaning a word should have from the context without consciously thinking about it. But I imagine it must be much harder when you start learning English, either as your first language, like my 3 year old grandson, or as a second language.

Because we tend to do it unconsciously most of the time, we need to be very careful that we do it when we read our Bibles. One of the common errors new Bible students make when they read their Bibles, and particularly if they are trying to be clever and are reading Bibles in their original languages, Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic, is to find every reference of a particular word in the Bible, and assume it means the same thing everytime. In the olden days (that is, before computers) you could find every instance of a given word using a concordance like Strong's, which had every word in the Bible sorted into order with its reference. There is a copy of Strong's concordance in the meeting from behind the office if you ever want to just it. Nowadays we do the same thing with a few keystrokes on a computer. However, it is obvious when we use language normally that the same words have different meanings in different contexts, so we should remember this when we read our Bibles.

Now you are probably thinking 'why is Martin waffling on with a grammar lesson when he's supposed to be teaching the Bible?' The reason is that there is a word in our gospel reading today that has multiple meanings, even though we don't normally think it has. Can anyone guess what that word is? The word I'm thinking of is 'baptise.'

Now, keeping in mind what I've said about multiple meanings, who can tell me what baptise means? I guess most of us normally think baptism is a bit like a ceremonial bath. That's certainly the way I most commonly use the word. In this church, children, and sometimes adults, have water sprinkled on them to symbolise washing away of sins and that they are members of the church. However, our gospel reading mentions two other sorts of baptism. Do you remember what they are?

John the Baptist said that while he baptised with water, one was coming who would baptise with fire, and with the holy spirit. These are clearly different from the water baptism that John was doing, and so as we read other parts of our Bibles and see the word 'baptise' we need to check the context to see which meaning it should have.

I don't have time this morning to show where all the different types of baptism come from in the Bible, so I'll just summarise the main ones. As I see it, the different types of baptisms in the Bible are:

1. OT ceremonial washings - these were intended to cleanse sins before entering God's presence in the temple. I call these baptisms since when Mark 7.3-4 talks about the Pharisees criticising Jesus for not performing the ceremonial washings before eating, the word they use in the original Greek is baptising, even though most English translations translate it as washing.
2. The final day, or judgement day will be a baptism, cleansing the world of sin by fire, and Jesus even calls his own crucifixion, which is essentially when this war against sin is won, a baptism in Mark 10.39
3. The believers in Jerusalem at Pentecost receive a Holy spirit baptism at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon them in tongues of fire in Acts 3.1-3
4. As we read in our gospel reading, John the Baptist baptised with water to symbolise repentance of sins in Matthew 3.5-6 and Luke 3.15-22
5. 1 Corinthians 12.12-14 describes becoming a Christian as baptism by the Holy spirit baptism
6. And finally, in the Great Commission in Matthew 28, Jesus commands believers to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit - which I understand is water baptism signifying church membership, and a public demonstration a new Christian's Holy Spirit baptism that we just mentioned on becoming a Christian.

Perhaps one way to think of the different baptisms is by thinking of different phases of salvation history.

1. In the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve before sin entered the world, there was no need for baptism
2. Priests and people sinned in the Old Testament after Eden, for which God ordained the consequence as fiery judgement (which is in itself a cleansing baptism). Baptism in the form of priestly washings and sacrifices were needed to approach God and for forgiveness on sin
3. IN the next phase of salvation history, John the Baptist baptised in water to demonstrate repentance in preparation for Jesus coming
4. Then, during the Gospel period, during Jesus's life and ministry, his death on the cross was a baptism for cleansing the sins of the whole world

5. The period of the Book of Acts, and in particular at Pentecost, we see the initial general outpouring or baptism of holy spirit with fire in the form of tongues of flame,
6. And finally, today, in what the Bible calls the last days, the baptism of Holy Spirit changes our hearts to put out trust in Jesus, and Jesus's death for sins takes effect for those who put this trust in him. Also, the water baptism commanded in great Commission as a visible sign of faith in Jesus and membership of his church.

This is not an exhaustive description of what happens during these different baptisms. I particularly haven't mentioned the outpouring of the Holy Spirit's power on believers during Holy Spirit baptisms in the Acts period and in some instances into these last days, but that is more a subject for another sermon. But the point I want to make today is that while I said earlier that all the baptisms were different, it is important to understand that they are also related. They all either purify from sin, or symbolise purification from sin. Ultimately, only one baptism really purifies us from sin, and that baptism is the baptism that Jesus told James and John he would have to go through in Mark 10, his saving death on the cross.

All other baptisms either point forward to Jesus' baptism, or point backward to it.

The Old Testament priestly washings, sacrifices for the sins of the people, and John's baptism for repentance in preparation for Jesus coming all point forward to Jesus' death. Baptisms today, in pointing back to the crucifixion, makes it real in our lives in Holy Spirit Baptism, and in water baptism is a visible demonstration of the invisible reality of forgiveness through Jesus's death in our lives, and our call in the great Commission to baptise in the name of God the father, sin and holy spirit is the visible demonstration of that invisible forgiveness and our membership of his church.

So, today, as we talk about baptism, I hope you understand the different baptisms, and which particular one you are talking about.

Most importantly, my prayer is that you are able to say that you have been truly baptised: most fundamentally that Jesus died on the cross for the forgiveness of your sins, and that you have been baptised by the Holy Spirit and so have been given the faith for this forgiveness to be real. My prayer is that every Christian will also publicly declare their faith, their forgiveness through Christ's death and resurrection, and their membership of Christ's body, the church.

If you are at all unsure about the reality of any of these baptisms, please talk about them to me at your earliest opportunity, they are all so important for the eternal life that God promises all who believe in him.