



## Who are you? What's your name?

*When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased." (Luke 3:21-22)*

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Baptism of the Lord  
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Who are you? What's your name? In recent years we often now must prove who we are with just about everything we do. Like taking a flight or staying at a hotel, renting a car and of course whenever we purchase something with a credit card. Most times we must produce something that proves our identity. When it comes to the web it gets even more difficult. Along with the customary identity questions and numbers, we usually are also asked to enter a password to prove we are who we say we are.

With all of this, we are also very consumed with protecting our identity so that we don't allow someone to steal it. Our identity today does not seem to be as attached to our names as much as it is attached to numbers and passwords.

But through baptism we are reminded that God is the one who calls us by name and claims us. In Luke's gospel passage Jesus is claimed as a beloved son of God even before he begins his ministry. This naming comes as a gift, a gift to Jesus and it is also a gift for us, too. Before we do anything, before we can be faithful, God claims us as His own. When God does this we are all given a name. It is the name given in baptism: "child of God".

In a world where apart from family and friends, no one knows our name, our baptism makes us strangers no more. In every church everywhere the pews are filled with our family: brothers and sisters in Christ, one and all. For all of us are children of God, marked by the cross of Christ forever, and that happens even without the proper identification like a photo ID to prove it.

Most of us may have had the occasion to say to a daughter or son, "I am proud of you". The child may ask us why and our response is usually a list of recent accomplishments and such. But really we are not proud of these children because of their accomplishments, and we don't love them just because of what they might have done, instead our response should be "I am proud of you because you are you." And that's pretty much what God was saying to Jesus when the voice came from the clouds. It's not that Jesus had done anything at that moment, but it's that Jesus is the Son... and that is really all that matters.

His identity begins with a humble baptism that identifies him with the people he has come to redeem. What could bring him any closer to us then to wade in the muddy Jordan with the people weeping for their sins. And God names him with the name only he may hear "*You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.*"

There is nothing more important for any of us then to hear God call our name. What Jesus received by right, we are invited to receive by grace.

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow!*