

The Heavens Opened and The Spirit Like A Dove

Scripture: Mark 1:9-15 (KJV)

Date: February 21, 2021

Message: *And it Came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, Jesus saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him. And there came a voice from heaven saying, thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him. Now after that John was put in prison. Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying the time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the gospel.*

Mark 1:9-15

John was baptizing people from throughout the region in the Jordan River. Many were coming to be immersed in the waters by the man living in the wilderness. Baptism was based on the daily ritual of immersion in the waters of the Jordan which offered continuous flowing water for purity and repentance of sins. Jesus was a quiet man from Nazareth who, like the other citizens, traveled to the Jordan and was baptized by John.

John had referred to One that was coming, the Messiah who would be more powerful, and he (John) who was unworthy to carry his sandals. When Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens opened and the Spirit, like a dove, descended on him. Jesus came as a man following God's call. God revealed to Jesus, in a voice only he could hear and a vision only he could see, that he was His beloved Son in whom God was well pleased. God sent His Holy Spirit to dwell within Him.

This very simply written verse transforms the *baptism of repentance* to the *baptism of forgiveness*. The Spirit of God came to dwell within Jesus, and His life changed. The Spirit immediately sends Jesus into the wilderness. During those forty days He is confronted by Satan and tested to the limits. Jesus lived among the wild beasts and was ministered to by angels.

John was put into prison. Then Jesus began His ministry in Galilee with a new message for all mankind. The message for us was to know repentance and forgiveness. The Gospel of the kingdom of God is open and at hand. Believe! What Good News...what a revelation!

I often think of Jesus and how He must have felt as He answered the call of God, the things He emotionally endured and physically suffered. We proclaim God as our Creator. Acknowledge and profess Jesus Christ our Savior. We, too, are tempted, confronted with our weakness, and sometimes feel like we are wandering in the wilderness. Through Jesus Christ we learn that the Spirit remains with us to guide and help to strengthen our walk with God. Jesus manifested what God created us to be. What love our Father has for His children!

Prayer: *Father, I lay open my heart and repent of my sin. Renew my hunger for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Strengthen me with the power of the Holy Spirit to witness and boldly proclaim you in my word and action so that I, too, may have victory. Amen.*

Laura Malone
Pisgah (Morgantown) United Methodist Church
MonValley District
lkm06011954@gmail.com
Lay Servant