

- **WHAT THEN SHALL WE DO?**
- **Epiphany/Theophany = Revealing/Awakening**
- Jesus' baptism in gospel of Luke
 - Tell the story in reverse beginning with God's words, this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.
 - Those words are also meant for us, to hear when we are baptized.
 - People can't be reminded of that enough.
 - The waters of baptism are the same waters that fall on us
 - (include that these words are the words in the baptismal ceremony)
 - Baptism is an act of accepting for ourselves and for others the universal love of God,
 - which means it's not that Jesus is different from Us,
 - it's that in baptism we are becoming more like Christ.
 - And so baptism becomes an exclusive personal act that welcomes us into the inclusive love of God.
 - And then the dove descending...
 - Hildegard of Bingen's quote.... One wing is the attentiveness of God's glory and one wing is awareness of life's pain and suffering.
 - Hildegard of Bingen, a 12th century German Benedictine abbess, writer, composer, philosopher, and Christian mystic (aka, BIG deal rock star) said *we are made to fly like eagles. The thing is, though, she points out we can't soar to the true heights we're being invited into on only one wing. To live the abundant and amazing life Jesus offers everyone in John 10.10 we need two wings. One is attentiveness to life's glory and the other is awareness of life's pain and suffering. Focusing on and trying to "fly" with only one of those realities will leave us earth-bound and unfulfilled, like a one-winged eagle.*
 - (<https://ifgraceisanoceanwerealldrowning.wordpress.com/>)

- *“Let’s be alive to the inexpressible glory of every moment. And at the same time, let’s pay attention to the unspeakable sufferings that are happening at the moment, within us, within our own nation, within our families, within the creatures. Let’s allow ourselves that sort of deep strength to weep.” – John Phillip Newell*
 - Because it's Hildegard of Bingen, it's not only about human suffering, it's about the suffering of all creation.
- The sixth extinction, which is what most scientists say we are going through now: animals going extinct, coral bleaching...
 - ***"what good is religion, my faith in the face of this suffering? "***
 - ***WHAT THEN SHALL WE DO?***
 - I think what Hildegard of Bingen would say is that there are times in human history when sorrow, death and suffering seem, and actually are, greater than any indication of God's glory.
 - But it's precisely there that we need to remember the love and glory of God that we are all invited to Participate in Without condition.
 - Remember what we are being baptized into
- The river
 - Meister Eckert -- God flows into all things.
 - *God is infinite in his simplicity and simple in his infinity. Therefore he is everywhere and is everywhere complete. He is everywhere on account of his infinity, and is everywhere complete on account of his simplicity. **Only God flows into all things, their very essences. Nothing else flows into something else. God is in the innermost part of each and every thing, only in its innermost part, and he alone is one.***
 - Meister Eckhart
 - God is not static and unchanging

- God is like a flowing river : you cannot step on the same water twice.
- Which is an interesting paradox between the reality of God and the sacrament of baptism
 - the waters that fall on us in our baptism are the same waters that fall on Jesus.
- John the Baptist and humility.
 - The coming of Christ to baptism is in the context of John the Baptists humility:
 - *"I am unfit to tie the sandals of one who unifies the world,*
 - *who brings the spiritual to the material*
 - *and makes matter matter."*
 - The consciousness of creatures is important here.
 - In recognizing that their pain and suffering becomes our pain and suffering
 - See, the practicality of baptism is not just because you had it done
 - It is the mindset it intends to instill within us
 - Baptism is not about "*What then shall I do?*"
 - It is about *who we are*
 - *Become like Christ*
- The structure is coming down/apart
 - This is why the passage begins with the power structure of the day
 - Herod to Pilate to the religious leaders
 - John the Baptist is the herald of the new way that is coming into the world
 - It means the world looks different
 - The old structures no longer work
 - liberal/conservative
 - theist/atheist
 - evangelical/Catholic/Protestant
 - human/animal
 - Objective truth/subjective experience
 - In baptism, this is done. Now there is just one thing.

- **Col 3:1-4,10-11**
 - **Gal 2:19-20**
- What then shall we do?
 - Remember, we have 2 wings
 - God's glory and the suffering of the world
 - We come to the river at the call of John the Baptist with Jesus
 - In humility
 - Bringing with us all that glorifies and all that causes suffering in you and in the creation
 - Richard Rohr
 - *It's time to rebuild Christianity from the bottom up. If the foundation is not solid and sure, everything you try to build on top of it is weak and ineffective.*
 - *Most religion begins with a transcendent God up there in heaven, and then we try to explain everything down here in relationship to that transcendent God. Jesus taught us to find God incarnate in this world, in our neighbor, in the Eucharist—that is, in the ordinary elements of this earth.*
 - *All of creation and each of us have received original blessing...rest silently in the awareness that you are already and forever, without any effort or achievement on your part, a beloved child of God.*
 - (<https://cac.org/from-the-bottom-up-introduction-weekly-summary-2017-01-07/>)
 - Join the one, Jesus Christ, son of man and God
 - Who makes you at once like everyone else and all the creatures
 - And at the same time is wholly unique in all of history
 - And hear again God's words *for you*
 - *You are my beloved child, in whom I am well pleased*
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- What do you want people to leave with?
 - When God says "You are my beloved child in whom I am well pleased," that love includes YOU in the love God has for all creation.
 - Or another way

- When God says that, God says it to the human being, he also says it to the dog, the squirrel, the weird sea creatures living a mile beneath the surface, the bats, the snake....
- Because baptism is not only about the human condition, it's about all of creation.