**“Don’t You Know?”**

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Genesis 1:1-5

Romans 6:1-11

Mark 1:4-11

Baptism of Our Lord

“Do you not know?” Romans chapter 6 asks …

and I’m hopeful that **you do know what it wants you to**.

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and from our Lord, and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Bridge

As much as I’d like to say that “I know God”, what it is that I **do know** is that my knowing of Him isn’t really the issue. See, I can’t much Him. I’ve barely (I’m aware) scratched the surface of any knowledge of him on my part. It is essential however (and this I do love that is the case because of His baptism of me) that God in my unity with Christ Jesus **knows me intimately** **(as He knows Himself,** **our having been baptismally joined together)**. When asked if “I know the Lord”, I most always say “not too very well, actually”, and that’s OK under the circumstance. I’m not smart enough (or knowledgeable enough) to **save myself by my knowledge of God (no one can)**. But “**by baptism**” I’ve been joined to God Himself in the person and work of Jesus, the Son … all that’s His, apart and outside of me and Good is yet baptized onto and into me by water and Promise. And **that act connected to such a CHANGING PROMISE saves me in my reliance upon it. It gifted me (as Romans 6 describes) a “walk that’s in a newness of life, dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus”**.

**Text**

Mark positioned this **baptismal transaction** as the, quote, “**beginning of the Gospel**”. As sure a creative exchange as when and how light replaced darkness as that was described by God’s act of saying it into existence recorded in Genesis’ first verses, so creative also was this “**washing of regeneration** (this re-**genesis**)” and “**renewal**” being united savingly **with the Heavenly Father’s Son**. What **I don’t know** to try and save myself from the filth of my sin (or, even cognitively, the knowing of God in some full manner that’s somehow worthy of being saved by my own intelligence), any thought of that is traded-by-God with a gift of a unity with the divine Him who, Himself, **knows the Father for us** awarding us with, (then after baptism) the His **recognition of us because we’re connected to His Son who He knows**. **The knowing and recognizing** is **all God’s to do**. It’s the mystery that we’re OK to call sacramental since it (through God’s Promise) makes salvation an act of only **APPRECTION FOR THE PROMISED EFFECT**. All that is necessary for us (not in the fact of it, but the benefit in Promise of it) is **“Don’t You Know”** **THAT BAPTISM UNITES US BENEFICIALLY TO JESUS?** **…** **that’s IT**. **God makes this Promise: to know and notice us just like He does His own Son** when we get **savingly wet in the creative union to Him**. That’s the blessed Promise which Romans 6 makes all to **KNOW JUST THAT** … Paul surprised if anyone **wouldn’t KNOW AND APPRECIATE what is THAT Promised and Gifted Gospel**. God loved **the world** by Jesus coming and dying with sin He got given when baptized into humanity. Humanity gets saved **personally (each personally and individually)** as we **get baptized into** **God’s Son Jesus and His universally-effective sacrifice**. ….

Last weekend, my New Year’s party place was at a wedding. As weddings go, it was pleasant, and family gathered around, the location was posh, the catering and pageantry planned out. It was a **testament to human planning and preparation, to human set-up and human skills in some areas of venue creation, DJ music preparation and equipment usage, lights, cooking, chair and table set-up, then loosening up enough to dance or, just, enjoy what had been prepared for the festivities**. Weddings (with receptions) often look like one thing **ultimate in human endeavor**, vows “personally” written carefully crafted or spontaneous as the mood moves one. **What they appear is different than all they are**.

As a matter of fact, in that the wedding of last week reflected the **topic at hand today**. Paul spoke of it in Romans 6, Genesis accounts it in its first words, Mark shows its cosmic importance by starting with it, no matter how “**human**” **it can look**.

Jesus stepped into a small pool of water. I’ve been there. It wasn’t the main flow of the Jordan River, but rather a dug watering trough off of the river’s main flow. With steps to step down into the knee deep pool, God’s Son descended to be water poured upon. A few moments earlier, others did that in the midst of the animals travelers traveled with stepping down for a drink. The physicality of the water was questionable as to cleanliness. It had the saliva of sheep and oxen floating around and the sweat of human dirty skin. It had what could be gathered and pooled in a place not much wider than 15 feet square. The volume of “slurpers” and those John baptized using that water was huge. The **exchange of common physical elements** **added to the pool** was inevitable, and one wouldn’t be surprised to consider that fact.

But a **wedding happened there**. Something **got created** as sure as light got created in the first few moments of “the beginnings”. Something got created in a pool of water (Mark talks about) and something got created last week at a wedding venue. A **change through the union of God’s Words Promising**, so actually **making something happen**, “**Don’t you know?**” The outcome’s the same in all events that God “joins together”.

Last week, it didn’t get said, but “what God joins together, let not man separate”, so a man and women (a step nephew of mine with the woman who he chose) became (on paper and in public commitment) what God had **created within them** (changing their existence from 2 individuals to, indelibly, joined “one flesh-ness” … “married” … in the only semi-figurative use the word, **baptized into each other / united … really**.

The **baptized into Christ** (in God’s name, Father, +Son, and Holy Spirit with water, which is baptism) have been so **married** and **conjoined**. Jesus took from the **wedding bath** the dirt He carried to a cross. We get His relationship with the Father, insiders into God. And what we know of it is not what we **see of it**, but **what we’re told** **…** **Promised in it**.

I’ve seen weddings as ornate as you probably have. I’ve seen weddings as simple as anywhere where God Promises to join a man and woman. I’ve seen baptisms as ornate as you have, no doubt. Cute Christening gowns and family gathered have been some of the earthly customs, but I’ve seen the divine joining through baptism as simply as a few water drops from a Styrofoam cup applied to a newborn in an incubator or a elderly woman immobile and wired to life supports.

“Do you not know” **what all of that is though?** It’s **what’s reminded us** at the monumental occasion of a funeral of one baptized, that “**they are (don’t you all know it?)** buried with Christ by baptism into His death, in order that, just as Christ was raised by the glory of the Father, **we too (those baptized) might walk in newness of life**. If we have been **united with Jesus** in a death like His, **we shall certainly be united with Him** in a resurrection like His, our old self **crucified with Him** in order that the body of sin in us might be brought to nothing. If we have **died with Christ by baptism**, we believe that we will also **live with Him**.”

**Application**

**Personal** **APPRECIATION FOR GOD’S PROMISE IN THAT** is “**belief**” … it is **faith … and we’re saved by our faith in God’s Promise**. “**Don’t you know?**” asks only for an **APPRECIATION OF THE FACT OF THE FACT: GOD’S PROMISE TO AND UPON ONE’S BEING UNITIED WITH CHRIST JESUS BY BAPTISM**, **THEREFORE WITH EVERY SAVING BENEFIT OF THAT**. **Thanks be to God, in +Jesus’ name**. Amen.