



I wonder if every once in a while when we do this whole baptism thing if we should check in with ourselves to see where we stand on this whole baptism thing. After all, I'm sure many Christians still cling to the idea of the life insurance policy of sorts: that God almost makes a contract with the individual with the end date that doesn't exist. A gracious agreement to insist that the child of God is taken care of for all eternity.

All well and good, but I wonder if there's something else about this whole baptism thing that may make absolutely no sense to us mere mortals, and yet, is absolutely perfect for God. Because I have this sneaking feeling that God cares just as much about today as God does about the time that is forever away. I have this sneaking feeling that God cares just as much about Theo's today as any other day in his everlasting life.

But the part that doesn't make any sense at all for the casual human observer is an idea I have come to appreciate about baptism in recent years: that there is this Divine insistence that through the baptismal waters, God is lifting up a precious disciple of Jesus Christ. Now the rest of us supposedly wiser and more mature adults would insist that Theo has some learning to do before he can take on such a holy task and all. The rest of us would insist that Theo's going to need some Sunday school-training and Bible-reading and Confirmation-completing and even high school-graduating, perhaps even some church committee-serving, and yes, some learning from Matt and Elsa thrown in for good measure. But there's absolutely no way he's ready for that now, not today, not anytime soon. Let him be sweet and precious and produce the nicest and warmest fuzzy feelings for his parents and godparents and grandparents and everyone's heart for the meantime. That's more than enough for him to take care of for the rest of us. However, God insists that Theo has more than enough Holy Spirit in him as anyone else to start serving far sooner than we would ever give him credit for in this life.

And so I wonder with this whole baptism thing: that this isn't just about Theo, but raising our awareness of God's activity in the youngest of life.

Yes, as sweet and precious as it is to hold the youngest of life in your arms, to have them experience such calming comfort that they fall asleep: I wonder if that isn't just about giving parents and godparents and grandparents the nicest and warmest fuzzy feelings, but I wonder if that is one of the best ways for us to experience the very paradise of God. I wonder if the youngest of life have the best way of revealing us to the peace and serenity and tranquility that we adults so desperately long for, and in that moment of our embrace of them, they bless us with perhaps the best glimpse into the day when the paradise of God is brought to life. I wonder if in those captivating moments, that Theo is actually doing his own discipling of the rest of us supposedly wiser and more mature adults.

I wonder that in the moments when he and all other infants seem to be enthralled with what we consider to be the most random matters of life, that they are begging us to stop from our constant desire to be on the go, and completing all the adulting tasks, and simply be in the moment of whatever they deem beautiful, whatever they believe is worth our attention and amazement; that they will continue to unleash their seemingly endless supply of joy and laughter into our sometimes cynical day-to-day living. I wonder if that isn't just about Theo and the rest

of the youngest of life being cute, but fulfilling their discipleship to the rest of us supposedly wiser and more mature adults.

Us supposedly have it all figured out adults, who will always cling to the cliché that the youth are the “future of the church.” Granted, we mean that with all the love and hope we have for the young people in our midst. But I think every once in a while when we do this whole baptism thing, we remind ourselves that God insists on an idea that makes absolutely no sense to our standard operating procedure. For Theo is not the future of the church. Theo and even the youngest of life are the present disciples of Jesus Christ, who have more than enough Holy Spirit rushing through them as the rest of us, who are more than capable of teaching the rest of us about the breath-taking beauty of God and the Creation and all the all-around living going on around us, who will sometimes put the rest of us supposedly wiser and more mature adults in our place, and proclaim the Gospel in their own precious way that will astound us. Yes, as sweet and as precious as they are in producing the nicest and warmest fuzzy feelings, they are just as capable of serving as the strongest proponents of love and compassion and grace and new life and the very joy of God over all humanity. Theo doesn't have to wait around for us to show him the ropes of churchy living. He has more than enough Divine material to work with within him, and the best part that still makes absolutely no sense to the rest of the human standard operating procedure is that nothing will ever happen in Theo's life to convince God to ever stop loving him, to ever stop believing in his gifts to the rest of us, to ever stop embracing him with a joy to fill the whole world. So for that Greatest News for Theo and all of us, we most certainly give thanks to God, indeed! Amen!