

A Day Never to Forget

Read: Psalm 66

Summary:

The Israelites were very good at looking back and celebrating occasions when they had seen the victory of God. Psalm 66 is one of thanksgiving on behalf of the nation and individuals. When they 'passed through' the waters was an occasion of great joy: Moses led the people out of slavery and despair through the Red Sea. Joshua leads the people across the River Jordan as they enter into the Promised Land, an inheritance from God.

The picture of passing through the waters in the New Testament is linked to baptism and there is much that we can learn about this:

John Matthew records how John comes baptising, a washing away of sin and commands the people to repent. There was no sprinkling but a full immersion wash! Baptism demonstrates that we are sinners who have done wrong before a holy God and that we don't want to live in our sin any more but want to die to it.

Peter When Peter writes to the church about baptism he refers to the story of Noah and the ark. The whole earth had done wrong and God brought judgement through the world wide flood. However in his grace God spares Noah and his family. Baptism therefore is a sign that we no longer face the wrath of God

Paul In his letter to the Corinthians Paul takes his readers back to the Moses scenario and leading the people across the Red Sea. This is a sign of submission to leadership: things kept going wrong when the people complain and rebelled against Moses. Baptism declares that we submit to Jesus... it is His standard for our lives, His use of our time and money that we now live for.

Jesus John baptises Jesus even though Jesus had not and never did sin. However Jesus got baptised to identify with us. When we get baptised we proclaim that we identify with Him. We are not ashamed to be Christian- we want all to know that we follow Him. In fact our whole identity has now changed I am a new person In Christ... I have died to myself!

Application:

Please select from the following questions, encourage all to take part and be honest. Please give time and space to pray together.

1. What did God say to you on Sunday and what are you going to do as a result?
2. What do you most enjoy about submitting to Jesus? What do you find the hardest about it?
3. Share about the day that you were baptised.
4. What impacts the way that you feel about yourself?
5. Have you really died to yourself? What do you 'keep wanting to do' rather than go God's way?
6. Are you ever embarrassed or ashamed of being a Christian? If so when and why?
7. What do you need to repent of from the last week? Take some time in silence to do that now.