



When Jesus is baptized, the Spirit of God descends like a dove to come and rest on Him and a “voice from heaven said, 'This is My Beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased'” St. Matthew 3:17. The catechism teaches that the Son, Jesus, has no beginning and has always existed with God the Father. We confess in the Nicene Creed, Jesus as “begotten, not made.” **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God...And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” St. John 1:1-2, 14.**

Jesus has always existed with the Father for all eternity, before the foundation of the world. This is beyond our ability to understand. We accept it by faith from God's grace. The reason we need to see Jesus as eternal is to know that He is God, not merely man alone. Jesus is the God/Man as we learn from **St. John 1:1-2, 14** along with **Hebrews 1:3, “He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature, and He upholds the universe by the word of His power. After making purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”**

At the Baptism of Jesus, the voice of the Father speaks. The Father identifies Jesus as His Beloved Son. This emphatic statement of the Father, that He is pleased with His Son, signals that the work of Redemption and Salvation done by Jesus is perfect. All sin is paid for through Jesus; the wrath of God appeased through Jesus; the blessings of the cross given by grace through Jesus.

Therefore, God's grace freely gives the gift of faith and sinners are declared righteous by the work of Christ Jesus on His cross. Faith is given as God's pure gift from grace through what Jesus does: His life, suffering, death and resurrection. God's gift is to make a person righteous by what Christ does in His work of salvation assigned to Him by the compassion of God. To understand Jesus as the God/Man is to know that His sacrifice on the cross is the ultimate and only sacrifice that pays for the sins of the entire world. To know this is to know God's great love for us through Christ our Savior. The Formula of Concord, Epitome Art. VIII states: “It was not a mere man who suffered, died, was buried, descended to hell, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and was raised to God's majesty and almighty power for us. But it was a man whose human nature has such a profound close, indescribable union and communion with God's Son that it is one person with Him.” Jesus is God and God the Father is pleased with Him in all He does in love and mercy toward us.

**“In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” 1 John 4:10.** The compassion of God sends Jesus to us. Jesus, the Son of God, does what cannot be done by a mere human. Jesus fulfills the Law, by living it and obeying it without fail. Thus, God the Father is pleased with Him as stated at the Baptism of Jesus. But Jesus does even more, the truly innocent One, who does not deserve death or a cross, goes to the cross and suffers the punishment that we deserve. This great exchange takes place as Jesus takes our punishment we deserve on the cross suffering the penalty of our sin. This is the greatest act of love the world has ever known. Jesus puts Himself in our place and we are declared righteous in the sight of God through the shed blood of Christ our Savior. God is pleased with us through His satisfaction with what Jesus has done in His sacrifice.

God's grace, mercy and peace, cannot be any more clear than that shown in the shed blood of Jesus. When the Law is applied to Jesus, as He hangs on the cross; we receive the Gospel. The Good News for us is that we do not receive what we deserve, but instead are declared righteous and holy in God's sight through the merits and work of Christ on the cross. The resurrection of Christ is the Father's declaration, that He has accepted the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross thereby giving us forgiveness, life and salvation.

Through this gracious work of God to us through Jesus, our death for sin is taken from us and put on Christ. Martin Luther teaches of God's compassion given through Christ that we would live with Him forever in the words:

God said to His Beloved Son;  
“It's time to have compassion.  
Then go, bright jewel of My crown,  
And bring to all salvation.  
From sin and sorrow set them free;  
Slay bitter death for them that they  
May live with You forever.”

LSB 556 “Dear Christians, One And All, Rejoice” stanza 5