

Reflection Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> January

## **Luke 3:15-17, 21-22**

<sup>15</sup>As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, <sup>16</sup>John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup>His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

<sup>21</sup>Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, <sup>22</sup>and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

"You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased," is the declaration of God regarding Jesus at this crucial point in his life and ministry. An expression of assurance that would give confidence to Jesus as he set out on his travelling ministry around the region, teaching, healing, challenging, annoying, and frustrating those around him.

Have you ever considered that Jesus might have had self-doubt? Have you always perceived Jesus as being assured in all he did?

It is so easy to focus upon the divine nature of Jesus that we fail to recognise his full humanity; Jesus was as human as we are with the same feelings, emotions, and ability to be hurt and undermined in confidence. Was the self-assurance Jesus is perceived as having as a result of his prayer life, living in close communication with His heavenly Father?

During the ordination service for Methodist Presbyters and Deacons a question is asked of the congregation regarding those to be ordained; "Do you believe and trust that they are, by God's grace, worthy to be ordained?" The reply from the congregation is "They are Worthy." The rubrics for the service actually read – "**The people acclaim:** "They are worthy" ".

The response is not a quiet whisper but a positive affirmation; it is an incredible experience to feel so uplifted and affirmed as a large congregation raise their voices, as one, aloud. There is no dove descending but a loud voice is there.

Many in life need affirmation, but sadly there can be more criticism than positive response to those around and about us at all levels of society.

May this year we seek to be more affirming of the good whilst positively challenging where change is needed.

"Well done, good and faithful servant' is not a bad expression to look forward to at the end of earthly life but may we express such words to the living and hear them ringing in our own ears as we seek to be Jesus people, however unworthy we may feel.