

I have read this scripture so many times and I've always looked at it as just Jesus being obedient in baptism and John receiving revelation of Jesus being the Son of God. But when you stop and look at what is really happening in this passage, there is so much more that is happening.

Here Jesus is, coming up out of the water and as he does his Father has something very important to say to him. "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Jesus is about to be sent out to fulfill the mission that God planned for our salvation. But before he does, God wants to make sure that he understands one important thing. God the Father wanted Jesus to know that before he did one miracle, one healing, one wonder, defeat the devil and go to the cross for all mankind, that he was pleased with Jesus because he belonged to God.

Jesus needed that validation from his Father, after all, he was a human being like you and me. And if Jesus needed validation, how much more do we need to hear our Father say to us, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." Let this sink in for a moment. God is pleased with you just because you are HIS and it is because you are HIS that you receive HIS love. God's love is not based on what or how much you do for Him because HE loves you just because you are HIS awesome creation!

So many things try to put doubt in our minds about how secure God's love is towards us. Maybe you had a dad that only loved you when you were good and rejected you when you were bad. Did the daily mistakes or the traumatic events you've encountered let doubt creep in and allow the devil to give you feelings of separation from God's Love? It's not hard to feel unloved but the truth is that Jesus has passed this incredible love down to us so we can receive God's Word and be persuaded beyond doubt that nothing can or will separate us from HIS constant acceptance, validation, and love.

We have the opportunity to live in God's love; to be lifted up and empowered because we are loved for who we are. This love that we live in is from God and it also shapes our lives in all that we do. We share our love for one another, especially with our spouses and our children.

On Friday, I was sitting in the hospital with the Wilsons waiting for the results of the cat scan. At one point, Dolly was hovering over Jim's head and they just kept telling each other "I love you." It was a very powerful moment for both Jim and Dolly and all we could do was stand back and let them have that moment. Their love for one another is straight from God and helped them through the good times and the tough times of their life together.

On Thursday, my sister in law asked if I would be willing to talk to a guy in WI because he is really struggling with his wife's newly diagnosed disease. Whatever she has causes her to faint and she is happy to know what is going on and he has been struggling with it. When she was discharged from rehab, he decided to move in with his mom so he could have some time to himself. In this instance, I think the devil was able to weasel himself into their relationship and cause him to have doubt on the love that God had given them.

In sickness and in health we profess our love for our spouses, a love that is unconditional and very powerful because it is a love that is given from God. This is just one example of the love we share with one another. Even when we live in this love, there will be times where we let doubt creep in, but it is God who will help us to rely on the love that HE gives.

Take time in your thoughts and prayers to denounce all the negative feelings and doubts that have crept in and tried to separate you from your Father's love. Fear of rejection, condemnation, guilt, regret, insecurities, depression, self-pity, self-hatred, unworthiness, pride, let it all go and let the Holy Spirit flood you with the love of your Father. Let HIM persuade you that HIS love is forever and unfailing.