

Dear Baptized Ones,

This Sunday we will celebrate Birdie Josephine Riley's baptism along with Dan, Kaitlyn, and their families! Though we won't all be together, we can take this opportunity to consider how to apply our baptisms as primary citizens of the Kingdom of God who live between the Now and the Not Yet. To this end, consider **Hebrews 13:8-16**:

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefitted those devoted to them. We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured. For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come. Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”

Notice that Jesus' eternal unchangeableness serves as our firm foundation in this temporary, ever-changing world. The grace that our baptisms display serves to nourish and protect us from various teachings and conspiracies. We have been delivered from the fear and dread of death to the hope of eternal life in Christ's death and resurrection. The world cannot understand this hope in the Kingdom of God and will ridicule us for it as they ridiculed Jesus. Despite this, as baptized ones, we get the opportunity to declare God's sovereignty and goodness as well as the reign of Jesus as King. We do this through both our generous words and actions as temporary citizens of these passing cities for the eternal life of the world.

Pray for the Holy Spirit to bring to fruition what is signified in Birdie's baptism in her life by faith alone through God's grace alone in Christ alone. Ask the Spirit to convict you of where the present political circumstances have captured your imagination in fear and dread. Repent by cultivating your hope in the finished work of Christ as declared in your baptism. Trust in God's sovereignty and goodness over the unfolding events regardless of the potential for reproach from the world. May our celebration of Birdie's baptism serve to capture our imaginations and cultivate our dependence on God's sovereignty and goodness for the life of the world!

In Christ,  
Cameron