

41-01-06 Who Do You Think You Are?

Epiphany, Pentecost, Trinity, birth, affirmation, identity, Father God  
Mark 1:11

We do not know ourselves fully until the Father identifies us.

### **INTRODUCTION:** (Scripture Reading Mark 1:6-11)

–“Finally, it's over!” is what I often hear from moms after they deliver a baby. I tell them, “*Oh no, it's just the beginning! You have about 20 more years of labor until you push them out again!.... And sometimes they just keep climbing back inside.*”

– Birth is a *comprehensive event*: **physical birth** (a separate *body*) then **psychological birth** (a separate *individuality*), and God wants there to be a 3rd stage of spiritual birth (our *true identity* in Christ).

–God watches over all 3 stages of birth, but *especially the 3rd* [**3 stages of labor**]: the 3<sup>rd</sup> is the most crucial, the one doctors want to be present for...].

–This traditional *Epiphany* passage is actually *Christ's Pentecost*, the last step in gaining *self-understanding* needed for His ministry.

–**text**: Mark 1:11. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” **HOM.idea**. Let's look at the process...

### **I. God the Father Prepared Jesus by Weaning Him from Mary**

A. Despite the number of “Madonna with Child Jesus” pictures you see, there had to be a weaning process in Jesus's life.

1. [**A nursing infant** often treats a mom's breast as personal property. *Life and well-being* are found in the security of Momma's arms. Maturity comes by learning to feed oneself.... still dependent, but learning independence, too.]
2. We have lifelong dependence on Mother Earth, but God wants to help wean us off of dependence on this world for our life and security. (We need to find our identity in God's kingdom.)

B. Christ's realization of His heavenly mission, which His earthly parents couldn't help Him fulfill. (His temple experience– Luke 2:49, “Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?” (it was premature, so He “submitted to them.”)

C. Joseph cut Jesus loose from Mary's “apron strings” in a carpenter shop. (A special task of earthly fathers: to help bring individuality and personal autonomy into an ongoing parental loyalty.)

**TRANS:** There is a passage where Jesus showed that His weaning from Mary's mothering influence was complete: Mark 3:20-21 (ESV), ...and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. And when his family heard it,

they went out to seize him, for they were saying, “He is out of his mind.” / 3:31-35. And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you.” And he answered them, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.” Jesus at that point understood *who He was, and what He was to be about*. The *crisis point* of this self-understanding came when the Holy Spirit descended on Him at His baptism and the voice of God the Father said, “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” And the same is true for us: **We do not know ourselves fully until the Father identifies us**. Let's look closer at how this took place at Jesus' baptism, where...

### **II. God the Father Confirmed Jesus in His Divine Identity**

- A. We often fail to understand the true humanity of Jesus: He really became one of us, and like us, He learned everything as a process, just as we do. (This baptismal scene shows how the entire Trinity cooperated in the mission of the Son of God's Incarnation.)
- B. Christ's baptism was similar to our own (at least it was in the early church, in two ways, [which Hippolytus of Rome wrote about in 215 AD]:
  1. [Hippolytus: “...they shall first pray over the water... that is, the water of a spring or a flowing body of water. Then they shall take off all their clothes. The children shall be baptized first.... After this, the men will be baptized. Finally, the women, after they have unbound their hair, and removed their jewelry. No one shall take any foreign object with themselves down into the water. {*An initial anointing with oil took place where each person renounced the Satan and his kingdom*}.... Then, after these things, the bishop passes each of them on nude to the elder who stands at the water. They shall stand in the water naked....” {being immersed a total of three times, once after confessing each of the three sections of the Apostle' Creed}] (Oil was symbolic of the Holy Spirit, and it symbolized departure from their previous lifestyle, but the naked baptism symbolize being born into a new life, because Just as a naked *physical birth* involves water from the womb, so the *new birth* is ceremonially sealed with water through baptism)
  2. [Hippolytus: “Afterward, when they have come up out of the water, they shall be anointed by the elder with the Oil of Thanksgiving, saying, ‘I anoint you with holy oil in the name of Jesus Christ.’” Then, drying themselves, they shall dress and afterwards gather in the church.”] ( [In the early church

oil was poured on those baptized, to symbolize the descent of the Holy Spirit and to identify them as God's children, as the Spirit's descent on Christ identified Him.] (As the Holy Spirit descended on Christ for His ministry, so the 2<sup>nd</sup> anointing with oil was to symbolism the personal Pentecost of every believer for their service to God.)

C. The Father validate us (cuts off of us Mother Earth's apron strings)

1. We inherit new expectations that come from being *part of God's family* (Live like children of "the Father of lights"– Eph 5:1, 8 (ESV), Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.... for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.
2. He especially does this validation of who we are by the *outpouring of the Holy Spirit* – Rom 8:15-16 (ESV), For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

D. The Holy Spirit's presence equips us to live supernaturally:

1. Not just a natural lifestyle that's totally bound to the ups and downs or the whims and wishes of Mother Earth....
2. *Who we are* is no longer determined by who we feel we are, but by *who we are empowered to be* (by our personal Pentecost):
  - a. An identity of *freedom* (our *will set free* to serve God's will)
  - b. An identity of *holiness* (our *life set apart* in union with God)
  - c. An identity of *prayer* (our heart *opened* to commune with God)
  - d. An identity of *service* (our life *participating* in God's work)
  - e. An identity of *guidance* (our feet *following* Christ's footsteps)
  - f. An identity of *worship* (our voice *singing* the praise of God)
  - g. An identity of *faith* (our soul *trusting* in the goodness of God)
  - h. An identity of *evangelism* (our lips *sharing* the truth of God)

**CONCLUSION:**

–**We do not know ourselves fully until the Father identifies us.** But we may think we do, based on identifying factors from Mother Earth:

*How much of our identity is wrapped up in family tradition rather than the Divine will? Are we truly baptized into God's purposes for our lives, or immersed and drowning in the worries of the world? Have we been listening to the voice of God to us personally, identifying us in our calling as a son or daughter beloved by Him? Are we waiting for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to empower us to be who we really*

are in Christ?

–It is the *season of Pentecost*, and the right answer to all these questions comes with our *own personal Pentecost*.