



February 2020

Dear Friends,

I felt confident in my role as a hospital Chaplain until one day I was asked to visit a Vicar admitted after a heart attack. I felt really daunted at pastoring a pastor until he told me that on his first night in hospital he'd been afraid to go to sleep, because he didn't think he'd wake up! I suddenly realised he didn't need the polished prayers of a professional. He was struggling with his mortality and his future and just needed someone to listen, offer a prayer and most of all, to be there with him.

We all have insecurities, times we feel unworthy. John the Baptist must have felt like that when Jesus came to him for baptism. John had been doing great things, speaking with great authority, encouraging people to repent of their sins and be baptised. But when presented with Jesus, John was faced with real authority - the Son of God. He didn't feel worthy, but Jesus didn't need John to be perfect, to be better than he was, he just needed John to be faithful to his calling and baptise Jesus so that Jesus could be faithful to his own calling.

There's a message in that for us all. Whether Christian or not there are times in our life when we feel called to do things - to use our *God given* gifts. God has called us to be his hands on earth, to do his work, to be his people. He calls some to preach, others to sing in the choir; some to fund-raise for charity and others to serve tea and coffee; some to campaign for justice, others to care for the environment by reducing their use of plastics etc... The one constant in that is to be faithful to our calling whether it be great or small, we like it or not, we feel worthy or not.

Terrible things are happening around the world! Politicians can't get it together! Everything seems to be unraveling! But the Bible acknowledges that life is seldom easy. When little David acted in faith, followed his calling, he slayed the giant Goliath. When Jesus was faithful, he died on a cross, but God raised him from the dead three days later. We all have our part to play. We need to be faithful to our calling. John almost deserted his calling by refusing to baptise Jesus. If he'd done that the world would have lost a great moment. But John was faithful, and he heard God say, "*This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.*" God was pleased with John too! Not because John was great but because he was faithful to his calling.

Let's listen for our calling. Let's not be afraid if God calls us to do something great or ashamed if he calls us to do something small. Let's be faithful and prepare ourselves to see the heavens open and hear God's voice say, "*Well done!*"

*Rev'd Nicki*