

Year C*Epiphany 1*2010*Go Down Into the Plans of God
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Fear Not by Helder Camara

*Go down
into the plans of God.
Go down
deep as you may.
Fear not
for your fragility
under that weight
of water,
Fear not
for life of limb
sharks attack savagely.
Fear not the power
of treacherous currents under the sea.
Simply do not be afraid.
Let go. You will be led
like a child whose mother
holds him to her bosom
and against all comers is his shelter.*

“Go down into the plans of God. . . do not be afraid.”

In the baptism of Jesus we see him go down into the waters of God.
When he comes up, you could almost say, the die was cast.
If Jesus was to say no to God, this was the time,
not in the Temple,
not in Gethsemane or on Golgotha,
but now, here, at the Jordan, at baptism.

God has a will, a plan, in Jesus Christ,
to forgive,
to save the world,
to redeem all creation.
And this is the real beginning of it all,
not in the manger,
but here at the waters of the Jordan.

God has a plan for Jesus which involves all that we will celebrate in the weeks and
months to come:
calling followers and confronting opposition,
working miracles and teaching crowds.
There will be visions and revelations.

We will go to a wedding in Cana of Galilee where his glory will be revealed.
We will go to his home synagogue in Nazareth where he will declare HE is the fulfillment of God's purposes in the world.
We will go to the Mountain of Transfiguration where the Divine Voice will again declare from the cloud of mystery, **"This is my Son, my Chosen;ⁱ listen to him!"¹**
Then we will go up to Jerusalem,
Gethsemane,
Golgotha,
and the Garden of Resurrection.
But it doesn't end there.
Then we will go to the Spirit-filled Upper Room and finally be sent to proclaim the Good News of God's love in the face of Jesus Christ to the world.

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under that weight
of water. . .*

Jesus is not afraid to go down into the waters of baptism,
into the plans of God.
Or, maybe he is afraid, but he goes down anyway.
Jesus is in, all the way.
Or as Andre Agassi says in his autobiography. . . It's on!

Would you like to be in it all the way?
Will you give yourself more fully, more unreservedly to God's will in Jesus this year?
If you are baptized how deeply have you allowed yourself to go down into God's plan?

What is stopping you?
Complaining about doctrines you don't agree with?
Fondling grievances of past hurts?
Have the cares of this world crowded out your love of Christ and commitment to follow him?
Are you engaged in some deadly behavior which is destroying your spiritual life?

I have been guilty of all the above at one time or another.

But this is what I have learned.

ⁱOther ancient authorities read *my Beloved*

¹*The Holy Bible : New Revised Standard Version*. 1989 (Lk 9:34-35). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Life abandoned to God's will is infinitely better than the cramped, suffocating, deadening prison of my will.

I say,
*Go down
into the plans of God.
Go down
deep as you may.*

God's will for us is brighter, happier, more fun, more liberating, more effective than our will for ourselves.

Each day of this New Year surrender your life to a Power Greater than Yourself. Begin each day of 2010 on your knees at your bedside and surrender to God's will for each day.

Maybe, like me, you think you can do better than God. I could not.
Maybe, like me, you are afraid to trust God.
Maybe, like me, your faith is timid and your brain overgrown.

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of treacherous currents under the sea.
Simply do not be afraid.
Let go.*

Let go and go down into God's water,
Jesus' baptism,
God's will.

Here we are today at the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,
here we are with Jesus waist deep in the Jordan.
John the Baptizer dunks us down today into the water of God,
the will of God,
the plans of God.

We come up and the Spirit descends.
We come up and a voice proclaims,
You are my son.
You are my daughter.
I am pleased with you.

I am delighted with you.

The pleasure and delight of our God is the air we breath,
the water we drink,
and the bread we eat.
God's will and plan is to delight on us.

The delight of God will banish all spiritual cowardice and fear.
The delight of God picks us up and embraces us as Mother Mary picks up the baby Jesus
and holds him to her breast.

*Simply do not be afraid.
Let go. You will be led
like a child whose mother
holds him to her bosom
and against all comers is his shelter.*

It's never to late to let God do this.
Today is the beginning. . . let God pick you up.
Use your faith to imagine it.
Use your will to believe it.
Use your spirit to enjoy it.

Let go of all your fears and trust God.
Go down into his plans.
Go deep into his waters.
Let God pick you up,
hold you to her bosom,
be your shelter.