*“But you, beloved, building yourelves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”* [Jude](https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/Malachi/4/2) 20-21

One of my favorite devotionals is a website called *Light for the Day*. The day I wrote this message there was a picture of a beautiful rainbow of lupines gracing the shore of Lake Tekapo in the foreground of a snowcapped mountain on the South Island of New Zealand with the above Bible verse. The sheer beauty was breathtaking and reminded me of the amazing love our Father has for us. And that we don’t have to look far to see God’s handiwork. Whether we are in the mountains, on the beach, in the city or country nature surrounds us abundantly with things that only a divine master could conceive. We risk missing all that God offers when we are not vigilant. The Holy Spirit of God surrounds us every moment and lives in every breath we take. In fact through the rhythm of our heartbeat the Spirit flows in, around and through us. There is no escaping the presence of God, for Christ dwells within us. What does that mean? It means we are already a child of God, beautifully blessed and promised eternal life. Through baptism we are made alive having been washed clean through the water and the Word. We are forgiven and given the promise of the ever present Holy Spirit. And that my friends, is only the beginning. If we are to live out our baptism properly we will dedicate our lives to enhancing the beauty of the world every day until we die.

Martin Luther wrote that baptism “is continued all through our earthly life and cannot be fully achieved while we are alive on earth. Only at the hour of our death is it completed. Then the person is truly sunk into baptism, and the meaning of it is fulfilled. Therefore this whole life is nothing but an unceasing baptism unto death...a commencement of blessed dying, for at the Last Day God will make us a new and different being.” Truth be told every day does bring us one step closer to death, but that should inspire us in at least two different ways. One, we have much to accomplish in our lifetime if we are to fulfill the desires of God’s will and, two, each day we are that much closer to the completion of our baptism and because of Jesus’s life, death and resurrection we, too, will rise again! We will live forever in the loving presence of God. How amazing is that! Dr. Robert Kwok in *Health Top* writes “God is timeless, [but] for mere mortals like us, the clock keeps ticking. Since that is known, is inevitable, and cannot be changed, we can live our lives ignoring the clock and just go out to do wonderful things for our world, our country, our community, and ourselves” (www.healthtap.com). We have been made alive with the fullness of God’s creativity from the day we were born. As we grow we have the potential to bloom far greater than any field of flowers, clear blue lake or majestic mountain. Let’s not wait.

*“All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers and the flower falls, but the Word of the Lord endures forever.”*1st Peter 1.24

**Blessings, Pastor Cheri**