

Why Are You the Way You Are?

Scripture Reading — Matthew 21:23-27

“By what authority are you doing these things?” they asked. — Matthew 21:23

Clarence Jordan wrote an “interpretation” of the Bible called *The Cotton Patch Version of Matthew and John*, telling the story of Jesus as if he lived in modern-day Georgia. In a musical adaptation by Tom Key and Russell Treyz, who called it *The Cotton Patch Gospel*, Tom Key stood on a ladder onstage, playing the part of God. The actor playing the recently baptized Jesus stood below him, looking up with hope and a bit of anxiety. But he needn’t have worried. God speaks in a voice loud enough to be heard all through Atlanta: “You are my boy, Jesus. I am so proud of you!”

One listener remembers she could feel in the marrow of her bones the exuberant love and approval in the actor’s voice. Something like that happens between God and us in our own baptism: “This one is mine!” the Lord exclaims. “I see my image in her! And here comes my Spirit to sustain and guide as you go about doing what I put you on earth to do.”

At Jesus’ baptism God spoke to him so that all could hear: “You are my beloved Son” And in our baptism God the Father says, “You are my beloved child” We are adopted into God’s family through Christ. Our baptism is our ordination, and it is also our adoption. We are brought into God’s family. We get the same blessing as Jesus, from the same Father!

Prayer

Father, let us hear your voice saying that we are your children. Help us to realize how much you love us. In Je-sus, Amen.

Devotion topics: [Christianity](#), [Baptism](#), [God](#), [God's Kingdom](#)

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