

By [Glenn CJ Byer, MA SLD](#)

Christ's coming in history was an amazing moment, according to our readings today. When John starts his preaching it was at a singular moment of history, it was a time chosen by God even in terms of the Roman Empire. The message is clear, baptism for the forgiveness of sins under Roman occupation, like the freedom from the Babylonian captivity granted by Cyrus the Persian centuries before, is not an accident. And even if, as the psalm tells us, it seems like a dream, the Gospel makes it clear that salvation in Christ is something very real indeed.

Paul reinforces this concrete thinking in the passage we read today, that God has truly begun something in us and will bring it to completion. On this day we can also reflect on how this passage of scripture is used in liturgical prayer. Ordination rites, from the admission to candidacy to the ordination of a bishop all use this passage in some form, asking that God, who has begun the good work, bring it to completion. No life of faith is ever complete until we come to the life of heaven.

So it seems that while we look to the coming of Christ as a future event, we stand firmly planted on this world, living our lives and working for the coming of the kingdom.

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