

# The Journey... Walk as Jesus Walked

## Part 6 – The Baptism of Jesus Matthew 3:13-17 – January 17, 2010

*Intro: I remember the day I baptized my 2 kids. It was a great day for our family. I was so proud that Katie and John had decided to follow Christ and though, it didn't save them, it was a milestone in their life spiritually. Jesus' baptism was a milestone in his ministry.*

*We now begin our journey with Jesus at the beginning of his ministry. John's (The Baptist) ministry is ending and Jesus begins with his own baptism. Why was it important for Jesus to be baptized? What was the difference in John's baptism and our baptism today? Note: You can find this passage in Mark 1:9-11 and Luke 3:21-23 as well.*

**Outline:** John is ministering to the **multitudes** in 3:1-12 and now he turns his attention to the **Messiah** in 3:13-17.

### I. Jesus is the **Messiah** (Matthew 3:13-17)

#### A. The **agreement** by John the Baptist (v. 13-15)

##### 1. John's **objection** (v. 13-14)

*Note: Only in Matthew not Mark and Luke*

*Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup>But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?"*

**Background:** He was preparing the people for the Messiah by calling them to repentance. The people came to repent (**Matthew 3:2; 6; 11**). John had predicted there would be one coming that would baptize them with the Holy Spirit and in fact, he wasn't even worthy to carry his shoes. (**Mt. 3:11 cf. Luke 3:16**).

John refuses at first because he feels so unworthy to baptize Jesus who he knows is God. Jesus hadn't sinned and didn't need to repent! The idea of Jesus' being baptized by him was unthinkable to John. He not only knew Jesus' human

identity but His divine identity. John's example of humility in drawing attention, not to himself, but to Jesus, is instructive for us today. For the opposite reason, he doesn't baptize the Pharisees because of their spiritual pride!

Though they are cousins, they probably haven't seen each other for years!

Note: Those who were strongly influenced by Gnostic philosophy believed that until His baptism Jesus was just an ordinary man, sinful like every other man. At His baptism He was endowed with deity by the divine *logos* (Word), the "Christ Spirit." His baptism was therefore necessary to purify Him and make Him suitable to receive the divine endowment. Like the rest of the Gnostic views, that idea does not square with Scripture. Jesus was *born* the Son of God (Luke 1:32, 35) and was called 'Immanuel,' which translated means 'God with us,' even before His birth. (Matt. 1:23). MacArthur, J. (1989). *Matthew* (76). Chicago: Moody Press

*Prevent*: The Greek verb is in the imperfect tense (*diekōluen*) and suggests a continued effort by John – "he kept trying to prevent Him."

I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me? He did not directly contradict Jesus, as Peter would do (Matt. 16:22), but he thought that somehow he surely misunderstood what Jesus intended, that He could not possibly mean what He seemed to be saying.

In essence John is testifying not only to Jesus' sinlessness, but also His deity.

### **Why did a sinless Jesus need to be baptized?**

- **Identification**: Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in order to identify with a sinful world, not because He was involved in a sinful world!

And He "made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" 2 Cor. 5:21

and v. 11... "and He will bear their iniquities"

- **Obligation:** “to fulfill all righteousness” (cf. John 8:29). He also sets the example of obedience for his future followers.
- **Consecration:** Jesus was the spotless lamb. (“Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” John 1:29). He is the fulfillment of OT prophecy. Isa. 53:6 “The Lord has caused the iniquity of us all on Him and v.11... “and He will bear their iniquities” “Tempted like us yet without sin”. (Heb. 4:15)  
No Old Testament sacrifice, no matter how carefully selected, had ever been truly pleasing to God. It was not possible to find an animal that did not have some blemish, some imperfection.
- **Proclamation:** This was John’s official introduction of Jesus to the Jewish nation. His baptism fulfilled two purposes: it prepared the nation for Christ and it presented Christ to the nation (John 1:31).

## 2. John’s Obedience (v. 15)

*<sup>15</sup>But Jesus answering said to him, “Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he permitted Him.*

- *To fulfill all righteousness:* There was not Levitical law requiring baptism, but part of Jesus’ way of identifying with his future followers.
- *Permitted:* He baptizes Jesus after the second request. It is an idiom meaning that the act of His baptism, though not seemingly appropriate, was indeed appropriate for this special **time**. Jesus understood John’s reluctance and knew that it came from deep spiritual commitment and sincerity.

## B. The **anointing** by the Holy Spirit (v. 16)

*After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him,*

1. Notice the actual baptism is not described. We see the events immediately after. Did he dunk him one time backwards, 3 times forward or sitting down? We don't know!
2. *The heavens were opened.* When Ezekiel saw the heavens opened and had the vision of God, he saw such things as the four living creatures, the chariot, and the wheels (Ezek. 1:1–19). Just before he died, Stephen saw “the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God” (Acts 7:56), and John the apostle had several heavenly visions (Rev. 4:1; 11:19; 19:11). MacArthur, J. (1989). *Matthew (79)*. Chicago: Moody Press.
3. The Holy Spirit descends *like a dove*. Not an actual bird but a visible manifestation. It is the only time in Scripture that the HS is represented like this! He perhaps is the only one who can see it. Like the Spirit of God hovering in Gen. 1:2? The HS anointed Jesus' ministry in His humanness.
4. Dove represents safety after the flood (Gen.8:10) and is a symbol of purity, innocence, gentleness, and peace today. Doves were used for sacrifice. The symbol of the Spirit as a dove is important: the dove is a clean bird; it is faithful to its mate in love; it is peaceful and gentle. *App: God is faithful to us. It is His kindness that leads us to repentance!*
5. The name Jonah means “dove,” and he too experienced a baptism! Jesus used Jonah as a type of Himself in death, burial, and resurrection (Matt. 12:38–40). Jonah was sent to the Gentiles, and Jesus would minister to the Gentiles. Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary*. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books.
6. It is clear that Jesus is special; not like everyone else that is getting baptized. Christ was born through the power of the Spirit (Luke 1:34-35) and was also empowered by the Spirit for His life and ministry. It also fulfills the prophecy of *Is. 11:2 “And the spirit of god will rest on Him...”*

C. The **affirmation** of the Father (v. 17)

*<sup>17</sup>and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."*

1. Note: Evidence of the Trinity... Baptism of Jesus, anointing by the HS (dove) and now the audible confirmation by the Father. It refutes the heresy of modalism which asserts that God is one person who manifests himself in 3 distinct modes, but only one at a time! **It is a family reunion at graduation!**
2. God's voice is a great encouragement to Israel. Remember: He has been silent for 400 years! God breaks His silence by authenticating the message Jesus is His Son and thus He is God as well!
3. God is quoting parts of **Psalm 2:7** and **Is. 42:1**. Some try to teach adoptionism: that Jesus only became God's Son at His baptism.
4. This actually is His commissioning and the formal beginning of His public ministry. (**Acts. 1:21-12; 10:37-38**). After an eternity in heaven and 30 years of obscurity, Jesus is ready to get started! **What do you think He was feeling?**
5. There is a great model of affirmation from the Father to the Son. This is the first time that Jesus hears His Father's audible voice. This is the first of three occasions when the Father spoke to the Son from heaven. The other 2: **Matt. 17:5** at His transfiguration and **John 12:28** just prior to the cross. There are 3 things every son needs hear from his father...
  - I **love** you: "*beloved*". How many times can you say it? Not enough. Did I tell you I loved you today? This is the **emotional** connection.
  - I "**fathered**" you: "*my son*" So many kids don't even know who their biological father is. You are my son. I am a part of you and you are a part of me. This is

another indicator of his Deity! This is the **biological/physical** connection.

- I am **proud** of you: “*in whom I am well pleased*”. Why was God the Father pleased? Because Jesus was fulfilling the will of the Father! Do you look for ways to affirm your kids? Tell them what they are good at. This is the **psychological** connection

## II. The **Mandate** of Baptism: Why should I be baptized?

### A. It is the **pattern** of the NT:

*When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Acts 19:5*

*So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. Acts 2:41*

1. We do so in obedience to God’s Word.
2. It is an ordinance that Jesus appointed for His Church

*See Matt 28:19-20 “Make disciples....baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”*

3. All 3 were involved in Jesus’ baptism as well.

### B. It is our **public** declaration:

*For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13*

1. It is an outward ceremony of an inward profession of faith. It is our public identification with Jesus Christ
2. It demonstrates a “break” with the old life
3. It is a “declaration of dependence” on the Lordship of Christ!

### **III. Your Response Today...**

- A. Do you need to bless your kids? Do they know that you love them and are proud of them?
- B. Do you need to identify yourself as a Christ-follower?
- C. Do you need to get baptized?

#### **Table Talk:**

1. What does God the Father “reveal” about His Son?
2. How were you “blessed” by your parents? If you didn’t have a great childhood, what do you want to do differently as a parent?
3. Discuss with your family or (life group) what you applied from the sermon this week.

#### **Sneak Peak:**

Next week we will look at Baptism, Part 2. We will be looking at the role that baptism plays in the church and the spiritual implications for a Christ-follower. This week take time to “catch” up and read whatever you like in God’s Word... but read something!