

Baptism of Jesus

Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-23; John 1:29-34

Jesus' baptism was the first adult event of Jesus' life recorded in the Gospels. It marks the official beginning of His ministry, identification as the divine/human Messiah by the Father, and His introduction to the believing remnant.

All four Gospels and the book of Acts relates the baptism of Jesus as the beginning of His ministry. (Acts 1:21-22; 10:37-38) Jesus came to John for the purpose of baptism. It was baptism by immersion. Jesus was completely dipped into the water. The Greek prepositions indicate being completely in the water.

Why was Jesus Baptized?

1. "to fulfill all righteousness" Matthew 3:15 Jesus submitted to many Old Testament laws: This is the only reason Jesus gives for His baptism. The rest of the seven given here are the results of it. Circumcision; feasts, food restraints, sabbath restraints, temple taxes- are all Jewish laws Jesus submitted.

Jesus came to fulfill the law not to destroy it. Matthew 5:17; Galatians 4:4-5

Priestly cleansing - Jesus was consecrated to God and acceptable to Him for service. All of Israel knew John was from God, Jesus' baptism by him was part of the authentication of Christ in their minds.

2. Jesus's baptism gave God's public approval to John's ministry. His message of repentance needed to be heeded. John was publicly known as a prophet from God. Prophets always had a purpose, the message of repentance with baptism and the introduction of Jesus was John's mission from God. Matt. 11:7-10
3. Only after Jesus' baptism did God affirm the Messiahship of Jesus. It was in God's plan to use the baptism of Jesus as the time to begin His ministry. The early church saw it as the beginning. (Acts 1:21-22; 10:37-38) God Himself declared from heaven that Jesus was the Messiah!
4. Only after Jesus' baptism was it revealed to John that Jesus was the Messiah. Then He could relay it to the faithful Jews. John's ministry brought these people together. Those that were faithfully waiting for the coming Messiah are known as the "believing remnant." Zachariah, Elizabeth, Simeon, and Anna were examples of those who were continuing to believe the promises of God and looked for the Messiah. When Jesus was baptized by John, He was identifying Himself with these people.

What did they submit to? The "believing remnant" was willing to submit to the call for repentance and the baptism of John.

Generally, these were not the Religious leaders of the day.

5. Jesus was baptized to identify Himself with sinners. He was their substitute. He was their Lamb. 2 Corinthians 5:21 Jesus will always identify Himself with sinners. Those who need Him and accept Him. (Matt. 9:9-13)

6. Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit to fulfill the ministry of the Messiah. Acts 10:38
 Isaiah 61:1; 11:2; Luke 4:1
 God the Father declared Jesus the Messiah.
 The Trinity was present: Christ - Worker
 Holy Spirit - Empower
 God the Father - Instigator
7. Jesus' baptism pictured His coming death, burial, and resurrection. Mark 10:38; Luke 12:50
 Warren Wiersbe said, "Our Lord's baptism in water was a picture of His work of redemption."
 WW p. 147
8. Jesus' baptism was a likeness to the Christian's baptism with the Holy Spirit into a new life.
 Romans 6:4; I Cor. 12:12-13 This is strongly taught in the epistles. Our old lives are buried in Christ and brought up in newest of life by the power of the Holy Spirit!

“(“Now when all the people were baptized (lit. – being baptized), it came to pass,” Luke 3:21) Then cometh Jesus from (“ Nazareth of” Mark 1:9) Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. ¹⁴But John forbad (Gk - tried to prevent) him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? ¹⁵And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer (Gk - allow) it to be so now: for thus it becometh (Gk - proper) us to fulfill all righteousness . Then he suffered him. ¹⁶And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, (“praying,” Luke 3:21) lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending (“in a bodily shape ” Luke 3:22) like a dove, and lighting upon him: ¹⁷And lo a voice from heaven, saying, (“Thou art” Mark 1:11) This is my beloved Son, in (“thee” Luke 3:22) whom I am well pleased.” Matthew 3:13-17 “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. ³⁰This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. ³¹And I knew him not : but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. ³²And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. ³³And I knew him not : but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining (Gk – abode v. 32 & 33) on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. ³⁴And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.” John 1:29-34

I. Jesus' Arrival

- A. John had been baptizing for quite a while. From the book Matthew by Blomberg: “The paths of the two main characters of chapters 3 now intersect. John will climax his ministry of baptism by baptizing Jesus. Then John's role will decrease, as Jesus' ministry gains momentum (John 3:30).” p. 81
- B. Jesus came from Nazareth At the beginning of Jesus' ministry, His home was Nazareth. This will change as they reject His claim to be the Messiah.

II. John's Argument

- A. He strongly disapproved of Jesus being baptized.
- Seems to be based on the knowledge of Jesus' sinlessness. John sees Jesus does not need his baptism of repentance. This thought is actually hinted, not completely verbalized. This is amazing, John will

later admit He did not know that Jesus was the Messiah until He saw the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove descend on Him. But here at this point He already knew Jesus was not needing baptism unto repentance. We can only suppose that John had known Jesus' sinless character and compared to his own knew that he should be baptized by Jesus!

- B. "becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." – But Jesus' had a different reason for baptism than the crowds, it was not because He had sin to be repented of. Again, Blomberg says, "To fulfill all righteousness" means to complete everything that forms part of a relationship of obedience to God." Here we see the first principle and driving force of Jesus – "fulfill all righteousness." This is based on the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies and fulfilling the will of God.

Please realize, we are not told of John's actual mode of the baptism of Jesus. We are only told He was baptized and came out of the water. The Greek word actually does – immersion.

III. Jesus' Anointing Here we see God's stamp of approval on the Jesus! As Jesus was coming out of the water, Luke is the only Gospel that tells us Jesus was praying but all four Gospels record the anointing of Jesus by the Holy Spirit. It was at this time, the baptism of Jesus, that all persons of the God-head are seen together!

- A. The dove – A bird did not come down from heaven! But a descending physical and visible manifestation of the Holy Spirit. "like a dove" – Matt./Mark/John; "bodily shape like a dove" – Luke

-Both Jesus and John saw the dove – The Scripture seems to indicate these were the only two who saw the dove.

-It "remained"/"abode" on Jesus – Isaiah 11:2 "His miracles, teaching, preaching, all His supernatural activities are attributed in the Gospel to the Holy Spirit." Shepherd p. 72 Acts 10:38 How the God-man was filled with God the Holy Spirit is a mystery. A theological point impossible to explain!

- B. The voice – We will find three different incidences that God will speak from heaven to Jesus during His ministry. 1) Christ's baptism 2) Transfiguration – Matt. 17:5 3) Passover week (before crucifixion) in Jerusalem – John 12:28

-From heaven – God is announcing His pleasure in the Jesus. The reality is Jesus has not really done anything yet, or has He! He has left heaven in obedience, became flesh and was dwelling with man! And God was pleased!

-"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" vs. "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." – This combines language from Ps. 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1. "beloved" – declares affection; carries the meaning of "the only one"

Don't miss the Trinity here – Jesus the Son in the flesh – the Holy Spirit in the form of the dove – the booming voice of God calling from heaven!

IV. John's Announcement John the apostle does not give the event of Jesus' baptism in chronological order. He places it within another incident in the life of John the Baptist. After the Prologue to the book of John, John 1:1-18, a record of four/five days is given. These days are **after the baptism and temptation of Christ!** But on day two we have the testimony of John concerning the baptism of Jesus. It was at that time He realized Jesus was the Messiah. That is why we are looking at it now. We will look at the other events after our study of Christ's temptation. Day 1 – v. 19-28; Day 2 – v. 29-34; Day 3 – v. 35-42; Day 4 - v. 43-51

A. Explanation of his understanding. "John bare record" – the baptism was earlier, and John is giving a **testimony** concerning the event and how it confirmed to him that Jesus was the Messiah!

-John did not know who was the Messiah – As Jesus and John grew up, John did not know that Jesus was the Messiah. This is understood by the need of a sign from God. (John 1:33) But John did seem to understand Jesus' perfect character – no need of baptism for repentance.

-“I knew him not” – John did not recognize nor know who the Messiah was, but he understood God would reveal to him and to Israel the Messiah. That is why John preached repentance and baptized those who repented - in preparation for the One.

-God had revealed to John the sign which would signal the identity of the Messiah. – The sign was “Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining...” The dove coming down and remaining on Jesus was the identification John had been told about.

B. The Announcement

-“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” – (who said this - John) – Here John changes his message. He had told of the One coming, saying “Prepare ye the way of the Lord.” Now John the Baptist points out that One with, “Behold the Lamb of God,”

-“Lamb of God” – This phrase was not a contemporary, popular Jewish thought concerning the coming Messiah. The Jews of the day did not see their Messiah as a suffering, sacrificial Messiah! We have hindsight, these Jews did not. John's use of this phrase has given rise to theological debate and even concern to the true meaning of the phrase. Yet, we see it as the Holy Spirit revealing the truth of Jesus' mission to John the Baptist. Warren Wiersbe said of the phrase, “the Lamb of God,” “In one sense, the message of the Bible can be summed up in this title.” p. 230 Old Testament – “Where's the lamb?” Gen. 22:7; New Testament – “Behold, the Lamb of God.” John 1:29; Revelations – “Worthy is the Lamb.” Rev. 5:12

In the Old Testament, lambs were brought by Jewish men into the temple daily to be sacrificed to God. But here God brought the perfect lamb to man! A lamb able to take away the sins of the whole world!

-“the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” – (who said this - God) – Christ's giving of the Holy Spirit is a very important event to John the Baptist's message. He declared this to the masses. Jesus will not speak to the disciples in detail about the coming Holy Spirit until the night before His death. John 14:16, 26; 15:26

“and I saw” – vs. 32, 34 In the Greek these words are full of clarity and settled conviction! Beyond a shadow of doubt John the Baptist knew Jesus was the Messiah.

“this is the Son of God.” – could also be translated “chosen of God” (8 times in other translations)

Because of John’s witness, many believed on Jesus – John 10:39-42.

***“John’s work as a Fore-runner was accomplished.
He had prepared the way and declared the Messiah.”***

Believer’s Application:

1. Jesus’ greatest desire while on earth was to do His Father’s will. Our lives should have the same purpose!

John 4:34; 6:38-40; Phil. 2:8

Obedying His commands has been a directive from God since time began. We find it in the Old Testament, Gospels, and Epistles. Those who love God and faithfully follow Him will be obedient to His will.

Let’s be committed to learn His will and obey it as faithful followers in the 21st century!

Joshua 1:8; Psalm 40:6-8; Matt. 7:21-24; John 14:15; James 1:22; 2 John 1:6

2. The Holy Spirit is an incredible gift from God. Let’s realize the power and reality of God’s indwelling as we live our lives!

Reminders of the Holy Spirit’s work in our lives today!

1. The Holy Spirit is a Seal in the lives of believers. In times ancient times, a seal was like our legal signature. It was a validation to an agreement. The Holy Spirit in our lives is God’s proof to us of our forgiveness of sin and our future home in heaven. We can move forward confident in our adoption into the family of God. Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30

2. The Holy Spirit is a Helper Who teaches and reminds. The Greek word for Holy Spirit is “Parakletos” which is translated “Helper”; “Advocate” and “Counselor” in different English translations. These all have to do with legal counsel or assistance. The Holy Spirit gives wise counsel to Believers. As we learn and study God’s words and ways, we have a Holy Spirit who will teach, reveal, and remind us daily! John 14:26; I Cor. 2:14; I John 2:27-28

3. The Holy Spirit helps in our weaknesses and intercedes for us. When we feel overwhelmed, without direction, and hopeless, the Holy Spirit can minister to our hearts with the truth of God’s word and will. Rom. 8:26-27