

# The Baptism of Jesus

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Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22; John 1:29-34

Today in our walk with Jesus, we will walk with Him to the Jordan River to be baptized by His cousin, John the Baptist.

The events surrounding the birth of Christ are only recorded in Matthew and Luke, whereas the baptism of Jesus is alluded to in all four Gospels. This indicates the importance of this event.

The baptism of Jesus signified the beginning of His public ministry. Baptism is also the first step of obedience in the in living for Christ.

## I. The WALK to His baptism (v. 13).

- A. The DEPARTURE—Jesus is now 30 years old (Luke 3:23). He closed the door of His carpenter shop in Nazareth for the last time and departed for the Jordan River to be baptized (cf. v. 5).
- B. The DISTANCE— A 60 mile walk. It is sad that some Christians won't walk 60 feet to follow the Lord in water baptism.
- C. The DETERMINATION—*"To be baptized of him."* Christ came **purposely** to be baptized. A Christian needs to determine to obey the Lord and be baptized. Obedience is always done on purpose.

## II. The WHY of His baptism (vs. 14-15).

- A. John's respectful OBJECTION (v. 14).
  1. John's baptism was the *"baptism of repentance"* (Mk. 1:4 cf. v. 6). Jesus was sinless and did not need to repent of anything. John's objection was a good testimony of his recognition of the righteous character of Jesus.
  2. John perceived his own unworthiness. John refused to baptize the Pharisees because of their sins (vs. 7-8). Now, John humbly hesitated to baptize Jesus because of his own sinfulness.
- B. Jesus' righteous OBEDIENCE (v. 15). Baptism was the right thing to do.

1. To affirm John's ministry.
2. To identify with sinners (Isa 53:12– "...*he was numbered with the transgressors...*"). He began His earthly ministry in the midst of sinners and died in the midst of sinners. Jesus had no sins of His own to confess so He was qualified to identify Himself with those He came to redeem.
3. To set an example for us to follow (John 13:15; 1 Pet. 2:21).

### III. The WAY of His baptism (v. 16).

- A. The PROCEDURE— By Immersion.
- B. The PLACE— The Jordan river ("descender") is a picture of death. It terminates into the "Dead Sea." The song "*I Won't Have to Cross Jordan Alone*" is about Jesus accompanying a Christian who crosses from life to death.
- C. The PICTURE— Picture of what He came to do—Death, burial, resurrection—The Gospel (Rom. 6:4; 1 Cor. 15:1-4)
  - Jesus' ministry was **initiated and concluded with a baptism** (cf. Luke 12:50).

### IV. The WITNESS at His baptism (vs. 16-17).

- Presence of the Trinity. **God the Father** speaking from heaven; **God the Holy Spirit** descending upon Jesus. **God the Son**, being baptized. We baptize in the name of the Trinity (Mt. 28:19).
- A. The Holy Spirit's ASSURING witness.
    1. Assurance that John had just baptized the Messiah (John 1:29-34).
      - How much did John, Jesus' cousin, know about Christ prior to His baptism?<sup>1</sup> By comparing Scripture with Scripture, John was probably raised in Hebron (cf. Luke 1:39; Josh. 21:11). Hebron was over 80 miles from Nazareth which meant there was probably not much interaction between them as they were growing up.

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<sup>1</sup> Did John know Christ was God in the flesh? Mary and Joseph knew, but Mary kept those things in her heart (Luke 2:51).

- John obviously knew Christ was sinless. But John needed additional confirmation that Jesus was Israel's Messiah.
2. Assurance that Jesus was anointed to preach (Luke 4:18).
  3. Assurance of Christ's purity and His mission of peace.
    - a) Doves were a symbol of purity and peace ("*harmless as doves*" - Mt 10:16).
    - b) Doves were used for sin offerings in the Old Testament (Lev. 12:6). We can have peace with God through Christ's sacrifice on the the cross.
- B. The Father's AUDIBLE witness.
1. The Father's **acknowledgment** — "*This is my beloved Son...*" Confirmation of Jesus' deity.
  2. The Father's **affection** — "*This is my BELOVED Son...*" Do you love Jesus? Ephesians 1:6—*To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us* .
  3. The Father's **approval** — "*...in whom I am well pleased.*"
    - Jesus said, "*I always do those things that please Him*" (John 8:29). The apostle Paul wrote, "*For even Christ did not please Himself*" (Rom. 15:3).
    - This is our goal in life—To please God. Most people are more concerned about pleasing themselves than God. Eternity will reveal who you sought to please in this life.
    - Up to Christ's baptism, He lived in relative obscurity. He never preached a sermon... healed the sick... calmed a storm... or broke bread to feed the hungry. His life up until this point was lived in the privacy of His home and the activity of His carpenter's workshop. But at His baptism came His Father's confirmation—"*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*"

**SUMMATION:** Is God pleased with you? Are you saved? Have you taken that first step of obedience in believer's baptism?