

## ***Numbered with Transgressors***

*Matthew 3:13-17* - NCBC, March 31, 2019

Main Point: **Jesus' baptism identifies Him with the sinners He came to save.**

- The Son's association (13-15)
- The Spirit's anointing (16)
- The Father's approval (17)

Application: **Therefore identify with Christ as your Savior and King.**

### **Opening Announcements:**

- Ladies come and be encouraged by our REFRESH event on April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019. 6-8:30pm

<<Man of Sorrows (Hallelujah What a Savior)>>



God's love has rescued us from our sin by compelling God to sacrifice Himself in our place on a rugged cross. Hallelujah, What a Savior! His blood has pardoned us! No wonder we gather together each week to worship and celebrate our great God together.

We continue our worship now by opening our Bibles to **Matthew chapter 3, verse 13**. Today's Scripture focuses on the public coronation of Jesus as King. For it was at Jesus' baptism that our Triune God expresses Himself and publicly crowns Jesus as the Messiah.



If you don't have a Bible, simply raise your hand as people are coming now with Bibles for you to use in our worship together, and even take home as our gift to you.

And while you're preparing to read from **Matthew chapter 3**, I want to give an update on our search for our Associate Pastor of Care and Discipleship.



Over the last two weeks our elders have been receiving questions and comments related to calling Shaun Lewis as our Associate Pastor of Care and Discipleship. We are excited to announce today that we have heard great excitement and support for moving forward with Shaun. No questions or concerns have yet been raised that have not been adequately resolved.

So our next step is to invite Shaun back to preach again and give our members an opportunity to vote in support of the elders' desire to call Shaun Lewis as our Associate Pastor of Care & Discipleship. Because of Easter schedules, we've invited Shaun and his family to return on **Sunday April 28<sup>th</sup>**.

Therefore please plan ahead for this very special day the Sunday after Easter. In order to allow us to hear Shaun preach before voting, we will use live-streaming technology with overflow rooms to have one combined worship service that morning. So for April 28<sup>th</sup> – and April 28<sup>th</sup> only – Children and Adult Sunday School will begin at 9am, and the worship service will start at 10:15am. Immediately following the 10:15 service, we will have a

brief congregational meeting where our members will have an opportunity to affirm the elder's calling of Shaun Lewis to join our pastoral staff. We will count the votes and announce the results immediately.

What an exciting time to be part of New Castle Bible Church! God continues to be so kind to us.

Please keep praying for the Lewis family! They are so excited to join our church family. You have all done an exceptional job in welcoming them. Shaun has expressed multiple times how appreciative they are of your loving encouragement, notes, and welcome. Thank you church for making Jesus look so good here!!

And speaking of exciting times,



This Easter provides a great opportunity to glorify God by reaching farther with His good news. Last week we all received an amazing video testimony on email from several of our members– sharing how God is calling each of us to overcome our fears and reach out to our unchurched friends and family with an Easter invitation.

So don't miss out on what God's Spirit desires to do in and through us this spring. God is challenging our hearts towards repentance. God is sending outreach workers. God is wanting to work through us to bring His Name greater glory in central IL. Thanks in advance for being a people who are so responsive to the leading of God's Spirit in your lives!



Now this morning we continue our study of **Matthew's** presentation of Jesus as King in **chapter 3, verses 13-17**.

Please stand in honor of the public reading of God's Word as I read from **Matthew 3:13** in the **ESV**:

*<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup> John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" <sup>15</sup> But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. <sup>16</sup> And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens*

*were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; <sup>17</sup> and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*

Thus reads God's Word. You may be seated.

### **Let's Pray.**

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Last week the first part of **Matthew 3** introduced us to the preaching of John the Baptizer as he called God's people to repent of their sins. Jesus' reign in your heart will always be outwardly demonstrated by a life of repentance from sin.

In other words, your participation in God's kingdom is not based on who your parents are, or what church you belong to, or what clothes you wear, or what people think of you. Your participation in God's kingdom is only based on your personal relationship with the King!

When the King comes to rule – only those who have repented of their own self-reliance and self-rule will be welcomed and blessed by His arrival. Anyone whose life does not clearly give evidence of faith in Christ and repentance from sin will suffer fiery judgment when King Jesus comes back.

So for approximately six months now John has been out in the wilderness baptizing people who publicly identify with his message of repentance. He's boldly warning about the coming judgment for all who trust in themselves. The King is coming – you must prepare your heart and bear fruits of repentance from sin!

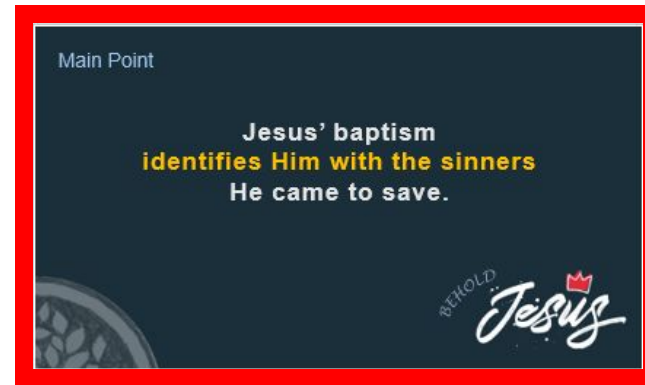
Then we come to **verse 13**, which makes us sit up in bewilderment:

*Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John to be baptized by him.*

The text is specific – Jesus left his home in Nazareth and came out into the wilderness with the express purpose to receive John’s baptism. This is the first biblically recorded event in Jesus’ life since he was twelve years old.<sup>1</sup> This is how Scripture first presents the adult Jesus in the public eye: coming to receive a baptism of repentance?!

What does this mean? Since Matthew is trying to help his Jewish audience understand that Jesus is God’s promised King in fulfillment of the Old Testament, why does Jesus need to receive a baptism of repentance from sin? Then in **verse 16**, if Jesus really is God in the flesh, what is the significance of the Spirit of God coming to rest upon Him immediately after His baptism? And what does God the Father’s voice from heaven mean in **verse 17**?

This sermon aims to answer all 3 of these questions as we learn how,



**Jesus' baptism identifies Him with the sinners He came to save.**

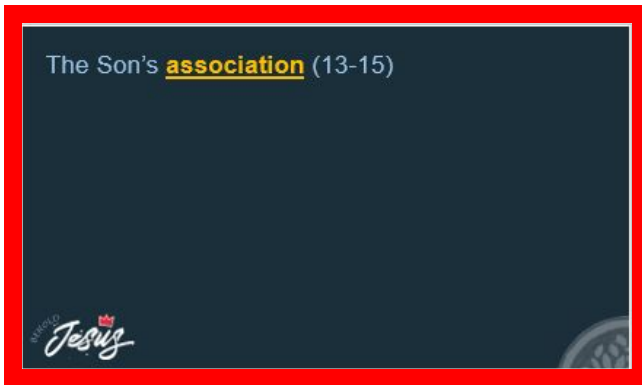
Our main point today is that Jesus’ baptism identifies Him with the sinners He came to save. This is the capstone event of Matthew’s first 3 chapters which all present Jesus as the promised King in fulfillment of God’s promises. All three persons of the Trinity are active in this baptism, as God formally and publicly inaugurates Jesus as King.

To rightly understand this, we will survey the Scripture’s presentation of baptism so we can understand the Son’s association, the Spirit’s anointing, and the Father’s approval.

Let’s first consider the,

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 2:41-52  
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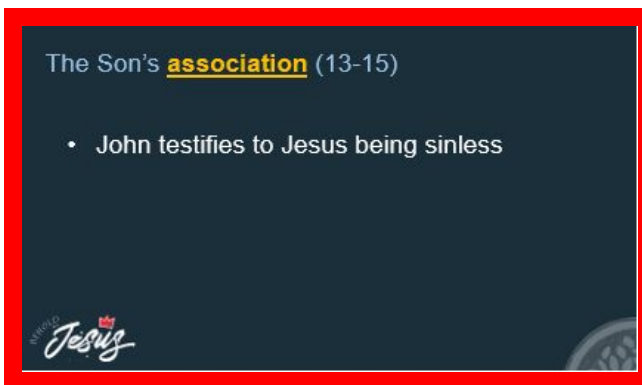


The Son's association in **verses 13-15**.

**Verse 13** is clear – Jesus came to John with the express purpose of being baptized by him. But in **verse 14**, John repeatedly (the verb is in the imperfect tense) – John kept on trying to prevent Jesus' intention, saying,

*I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?*

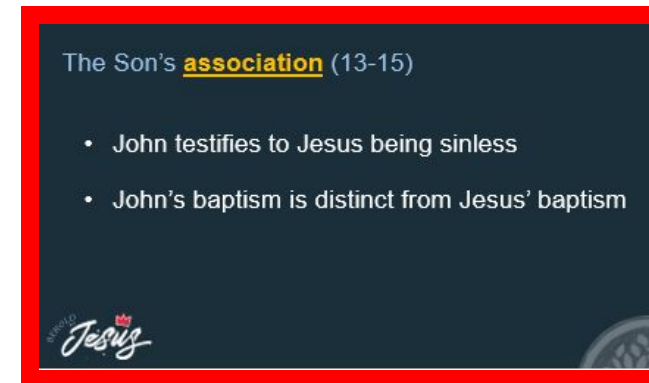
John didn't understand. He humbly didn't see the need for Jesus to associate Himself with repentance. In fact, it is worth noting that in this indirect manner,



John testifies to Jesus being sinless.

Being a cousin of Jesus,<sup>2</sup> it's likely the John would have seen Jesus at various times throughout their first 30 years of life – at least at the 3 Jewish festivals when relatives would gather together each year? Obviously both sets of parents had received angelic revelation about the spiritual realities of these two boys.<sup>3</sup> From **John 1** we know that John the Baptist wasn't absolutely certain that Jesus was the Messiah until he saw the Spirit descend on him after He was baptized.<sup>4</sup> But here in his reluctance to baptize Jesus, John gives testimony to the fact that Jesus didn't need to repent of any sin. Jesus had no sins to confess. So why would He insist that John baptize Him before beginning His public ministry?

I believe the answer to this question becomes clearer when we realize that,



**John's baptism is distinct from Jesus' baptism.** In fact, I was surprised to learn in my studies that Scripture

<sup>2</sup> Luke 1:36

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 1:20-25; Luke 1:8-23, 26-38; 1:41-45, 57-80.

<sup>4</sup> John 1:31-34

speaks of baptism from 7 different perspectives. Did you know there are 7 different kinds of baptism mentioned in the Bible?

I didn't know this! So put on your track shoes... because I'd like to do a quick study of all 7 kinds of Biblical baptism. Through this study I pray we'll be better able to understand the significance of Jesus' baptism in **Matthew 3**.

First let me give you an overview of all 7 Biblical portraits of baptism:

Baptism:	For:	Identifying w/:	Mode:	Scriptures:
John	Sinners	Repentance	Wet	Mt 3:6; Acts 19:4
Fire		Judgment	Dry	Mt 3:11; Rev 20:15
Jesus	Christ	Humanity	Wet	Mt 3:13-15
Cross		Judgment	Dry	Mk 10:38; Lk 12:50
Believers	Christians	Death & Resurrection	Wet	Mt 28:19; Acts 2:38
Spirit		New Covenant	Dry	Mt 3:11; 1 Cor 12:12-13
Moses	God's people	God's Deliverance	Wet & Dry	1 Cor 10:1-2; Eph 4:5

Please don't get overwhelmed...we'll walk through each of these individually, but I want you to see where we're going. Notice the Scriptures speak of **the Baptism of John, the baptism of fire, the baptism of Jesus, the baptism of the cross, the baptism of believers, the baptism of the Spirit, and the baptism of Moses.**

All of these expressions simply present baptism from a different vantage point... since baptism by definition is a means of public identification. So for each of these biblical baptisms, we will briefly consider who the baptism

is for, what the baptism publicly identifies the participants with, and whether it is a wet baptism in water or not.

So let's first review,

Baptism:	For:	Identifying w/:	Mode:	Scriptures:
John	Sinners	Repentance	Wet	Mt 3:6; Acts 19:4

**John's baptism**, which of course we know from earlier in **Matthew 3** is for sinners who want to publicly identify with their need for repentance.<sup>5</sup> This was a wet baptism – meaning those who publicly identified with their need to repent of their own personal sin were immersed in the Jordan river.

In **Acts 19**,

<sup>5</sup> Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3; Acts 13:24; C.f. John 4:1-2 where Jesus' disciples also baptized according to John's baptism of repentance before the cross.

Baptism:	For:	Identifying w/:	Mode:	Scriptures:
John	Sinners	Repentance	Wet	Mt 3:6; Acts 19:4

And Paul said, "**John baptized with the baptism of repentance**, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus."  
<sup>5</sup> On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup> And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them ...  
**Acts 19:4-6a**

Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus."

So John's baptism was distinct from being baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus in **verse 5**, and receiving the Holy Spirit in **verse 6**. John's baptism was a baptism of repentance.

We saw the 2<sup>nd</sup> kind of baptism in **Matthew 3:11**, where the coming King will,

Baptism:	For:	Identifying w/:	Mode:	Scriptures:
John	Sinners	Repentance	Wet	Mt 3:6; Acts 19:4
Fire		Judgment	Dry	Mt 3:11; Rev 20:15

**baptize you with fire.** This baptism is also for sinners, but it is a baptism of judgment. This is not a water baptism,

but a baptism of God's fire, or judgment, upon all who refuse to repent of their sins.

Baptism:	For:	Identifying w/:	Mode:	Scriptures:
John	Sinners	Repentance	Wet	Mt 3:6; Acts 19:4
Fire		Judgment	Dry	Mt 3:11; Rev 20:15

And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was **thrown into the lake of fire.**  
**Revelation 20:15**

Just as **Revelation 20** speaks of all unbelievers being, **thrown into the lake of fire**, the biblical baptism of fire speaks of the final immersion of unrepentant sinners in unquenchable, eternal fire of God's judgment.

Then of course we have

Baptism:	For:	Identifying w/:	Mode:	Scriptures:
John	Sinners	Repentance	Wet	Mt 3:6; Acts 19:4
Fire		Judgment	Dry	Mt 3:11; Rev 20:15
Jesus	Christ	Humanity	Wet	Mt 3:13-15

**The Baptism of Jesus** by John the Baptist, found in all four Gospel accounts.<sup>6</sup> Obviously this was a water

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22; John 1:29-34

baptism in the river, and we will see with more detail in a moment that this baptism publicly identified Jesus with the sinful humanity that He came to save. But interestingly, this is not the only baptism Jesus submitted Himself to on earth.

Jesus actually referred to,

Baptism:	For:	Identifying w/:	Mode:	Scriptures:
John	Sinners	Repentance	Wet	Mt 3:6; Acts 19:4
Fire		Judgment	Dry	Mt 3:11; Rev 20:15
Jesus	Christ	Humanity	Wet	Mt 3:13-15
Cross		Judgment	Dry	Mk 10:38; Lk 12:50

The cross as another kind of baptism that He had to submit to. This was not a water baptism, but a baptism of suffering, through which He identified personally with the judgment and penalty of our sins.

Baptism:	For:	Identifying w/:	Mode:	Scriptures:
John	Sinners	Repentance	Wet	Mt 3:6; Acts 19:4
Fire		Judgment	Dry	Mt 3:11; Rev 20:15
Jesus	Christ	Humanity	Wet	Mt 3:13-15
Cross		Judgment	Dry	Mk 10:38; Lk 12:50

*I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled! <sup>50</sup> I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished!* **Luke 12:49-50**

In **Luke chapter 12**, Jesus said, *I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished!*

So since baptism always publicly identifies you with something, how does Jesus referring to the cross as a baptism He has to be baptized with help us understand why He insisted on being baptized by John to fulfill all righteousness?

Of course the Scriptures also speak frequently in the New Testament about,

Baptism:	For:	Identifying w/:	Mode:	Scriptures:
John	Sinners	Repentance	Wet	Mt 3:6; Acts 19:4
Fire		Judgment	Dry	Mt 3:11; Rev 20:15
Jesus	Christ	Humanity	Wet	Mt 3:13-15
Cross		Judgment	Dry	Mk 10:38; Lk 12:50
Believers	Christians	Death & Resurrection	Wet	Mt 28:19; Acts 2:38

**Believer's baptism.** Believer's baptism is for Christians who have been regenerated or born again by the Spirit of God. This is the water baptism that publicly identifies the Christian with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

According to Jesus' words at the end of **Matthew 28**, believer's baptism is the sign of Christian discipleship.



Baptism:	For:	Identifying w/:	Mode:	Scriptures:
John	Sinners	Repentance	Wet	Mt 3:6; Acts 19:4
Fire		Judgment	Dry	Mt 3:11; Rev 20:15
Jesus	Christ	Humanity	Wet	Mt 3:13-15
Cross		Judgment	Dry	Mk 10:38; Lk 12:50
Believers	Christians	Death & Resurrection	Wet	Mt 28:19; Acts 2:38

*"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."* **Acts 2:38**

This is the water immersion that all Christians today are commanded to outwardly submit to upon their repentance from sin and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>7</sup>

Believers' baptism is a one-time public act of identifying with Jesus. Publicly demonstrating that by your faith union with Christ, you have died to sin and now live for righteousness!

But just like sinners who receive both a wet and dry baptism, and Christ who receives both a wet and dry baptism, so likewise Christ-followers today also experience the dry, or spiritual,

Baptism:	For:	Identifying w/:	Mode:	Scriptures:
John	Sinners	Repentance	Wet	Mt 3:6; Acts 19:4
Fire		Judgment	Dry	Mt 3:11; Rev 20:15
Jesus	Christ	Humanity	Wet	Mt 3:13-15
Cross		Judgment	Dry	Mk 10:38; Lk 12:50
Believers	Christians	Death & Resurrection	Wet	Mt 28:19; Acts 2:38
Spirit		New Covenant	Dry	Mt 3:11; 1 Cor 12:12-13

**Baptism of the Spirit.** Our immersion in God's Spirit is like a public seal<sup>8</sup> that identifies us as the new covenant people of God.<sup>9</sup>



As **1 Corinthians 12:13** says, *For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body... all were made to drink of one Spirit.*

It is our Spirit baptism that identifies us with God's one united family.<sup>10</sup> Like John told the hypocritical leaders in

<sup>7</sup> Acts 2:41; 8:35-36; 16:14-16; 19:5  
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<sup>8</sup> Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 2 Corinthians 1:22

<sup>9</sup> Ezekiel 36:22-32

<sup>10</sup> Galatians 3:26-29

**Matthew 3**, it is the baptism of the Spirit that is the sign of those who are in the kingdom of God.<sup>11</sup>

And then finally we discover a 7<sup>th</sup> expression of biblical baptism in **1 Corinthians 10**.

Baptism:	For:	Identifying w/:	Mode:	Scriptures:
John	Sinners	Repentance	Wet	Mt 3:6; Acts 19:4
Fire		Judgment	Dry	Mt 3:11; Rev 20:15
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Believers	Christians	Death & Resurrection	Wet	Mt 28:19; Acts 2:38
Spirit		New Covenant	Dry	Mt 3:11; 1 Cor 12:12-13
Moses	God's people	God's Deliverance	Wet & Dry	1 Cor 10:1-2; Eph 4:5

**The baptism of Moses.** Interestingly the baptism of Moses is both wet and dry, and identifies God's people with the exodus – with God's saving acts of deliverance.



Paul describes it this way for the Corinthians, *I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through*

<sup>11</sup> Romans 6:3-4; Ephesians 4:5; Colossians 2:11-12  
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*the sea, <sup>2</sup> and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,*

The Jewish forefathers who experienced God's deliverance from Egypt were baptized into Moses in the cloud – that was the expression of God's Spirit among His people right? And in the sea – that is speaking of God's bringing His people through the water – the judgment of the Red Sea – in a public display of their salvation before all nations. So Moses' baptism was both dry and wet wasn't it?

Baptism:	For:	Identifying w/:	Mode:	Scriptures:
John	Sinners	Repentance	Wet	Mt 3:6; Acts 19:4
Fire		Judgment	Dry	Mt 3:11; Rev 20:15
Jesus	Christ	Humanity	Wet	Mt 3:13-15
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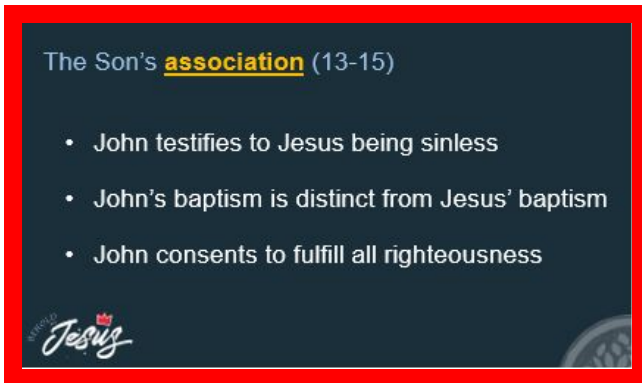
So what's the point of this brief survey of the 7 kinds of biblical baptism?

In the Scriptures, baptism is always identifying the participant with some aspect of God's salvation. Different kinds of baptism illustrate different aspects of God's deliverance. In its wet expressions with water, baptism points to some aspect of the flood of judgment rightfully deserved by our sin.<sup>12</sup> In its various spiritual or dry

<sup>12</sup> C.f. 1 Peter 3:20-21

expressions, baptism points to participation in the eternal accomplishments of God.

So all of this brings us back to the question of **Matthew 3**. What does Jesus mean when He tells John not to object this time, for this water baptism *is fitting to fulfill all righteousness*?



Even though John knows that Jesus is sinless, **John consents and baptizes Jesus to fulfill all righteousness**. Jesus undergoes a water baptism to somehow identify Himself with the flood of God's judgment towards sin.

Now think with me carefully about the words *fulfill* and *righteousness*. We know that Matthew repeatedly emphasizes how Jesus fulfills God's promises. To fulfill means to bring about, or complete, or finish what has been previously promised.

So how did God promise to bring about the righteousness of the nations in the prophets?<sup>13</sup> It was

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<sup>13</sup> Isaiah 42:1, 4, 6; 53:11; 61:1-3, 10-11; Luke 1:75; c.f. Ephesians 4:22-24; Titus 2:11-12

through the substitutionary work of the Messiah! This is why Jesus had to be baptized by John. As the Lamb of God who would substitute Himself to pay for the sins of the world,<sup>14</sup> Jesus had to publicly identify Himself with the required judgment, death and resurrection that alone could bring about the righteousness of sinful people like you and me.

Jesus' baptism publicly identified Himself with everything that would be necessary for Him to do in order to bring about our righteousness. Jesus' baptism identifies Him with the sinners He came to save! In fulfillment of **Isaiah 53**, this baptism numbers Jesus with transgressors!<sup>15</sup> What a powerful way to start His public ministry!

And of course **verse 16** authenticates the profound significance of this event with,



The Spirit's **anointing**.

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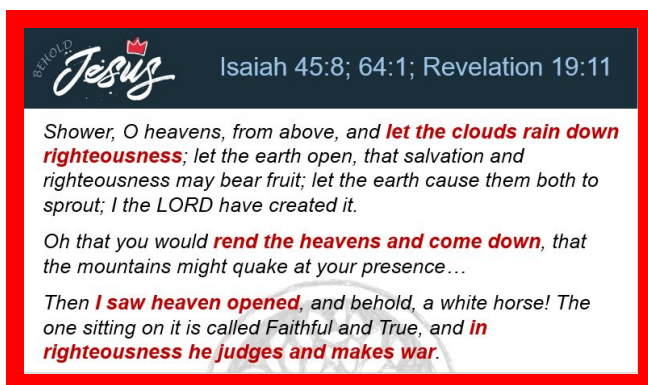
<sup>14</sup> John 1:29

<sup>15</sup> Isaiah 53:12

As soon as Jesus was baptized or immersed in the river water, Matthew uses the interjection “behold” twice – once in **verse 16** and once in **verse 17** to arrest our attention upon the Divine response to Jesus’ acceptance of His earthly mission.

*Behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on Him.*

Now the phrase, *the heavens were opened* recalls



occasions when various prophets prayed for the heavens to be rent apart to shower down righteousness upon God’s people.<sup>16</sup> Sometimes the opened heavens brought God’s judgment, other times blessing. But here as the sinless Jesus publicly accepts His mission to take the place of sinners, heaven opens and sends the Spirit to come and rest upon Him.

<sup>16</sup> Isaiah 45:8; 64:1; Revelation 19:11; c.f. Genesis 7:11; Psalm 78:23; Ezekiel 1:1; Malachi 3:10; Acts 7:56, 10:11.



The righteousness of God is now available to humanity through the work of the Spirit. Just as the tearing of the temple veil gave man access to God,<sup>17</sup> this tearing of heaven has conveyed that God Himself is now among us.

Now... please listen carefully. The Spirit of God is not a dove. It descended visibly, in a form that could be seen by John and the others around,<sup>18</sup> and it descended like a dove. Meaning it came down gently. Not like a lightning bolt, but just as the Spirit came upon David when Samuel anointed him king,<sup>19</sup> so likewise the Spirit of God came upon the God-man Jesus, empowering the human nature of Jesus to do all kinds signs, wonders, and preaching of the Gospel by the power of God’s Spirit.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Matthew 27:50-51; c.f. Hebrews 10:19-20

<sup>18</sup> Luke 3:22; John 1:32-34

<sup>19</sup> 1 Samuel 16:13

<sup>20</sup> John 3:34; Matthew 12:28; Acts 2:22; Acts 10:38



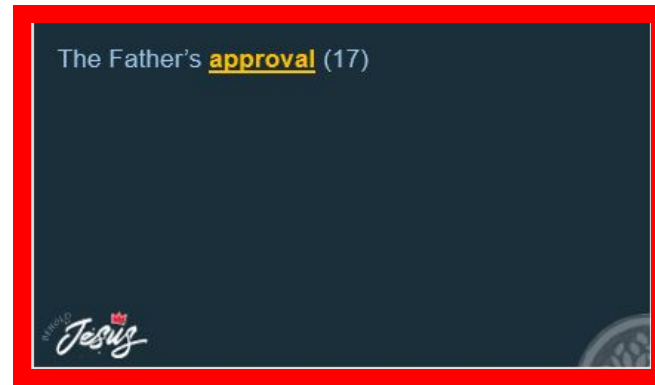
In other words, the empowerment of God is now fully upon the God-man Jesus. In His humanity, Jesus needed strength. His earthly ministry had to be accomplished by the power of the Spirit.<sup>21</sup> And again, this visible anointing of God's Spirit was a public affirmation that Jesus was the long-awaited King, upon whom God would put His Spirit to bring forth righteousness among the nations.<sup>22</sup>

Finally **verse 17** calls us to behold, look at this, a voice from heaven said, *"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.*

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<sup>21</sup> Matthew 4:1; Luke 4:14

<sup>22</sup> Isaiah 42:1; c.f. Isaiah 61:1-3



This is the Father's approval of Jesus as He publicly identifies Himself with the sinners He came to save.

God the Father quoted from two Old Testament Messianic prophecies:



*This is my beloved Son* reflects back to **Psalm 2, verses 7-8**. This is a Messianic psalm, and by referring back to **Psalm 2** God is expressing His approval by,



Expressing that God loves His Son and gives Him all nations as His inheritance.

By the way, we see the Trinity – one God in three persons – reflected together so clearly in this text, right? God the Son is on earth, God the Spirit descends from heaven to rest upon Him, and God the Father speaks from Heaven.

God loves Jesus, because God loves Himself. There is no higher good, no greater beauty, no more satisfying delight than God Himself. Therefore to love anything else more than He loves Himself would be wrong. So at this very initial inauguration ceremony of Jesus' ministry, God makes it clear – this is My son. And I love Him so much I'm going to give Him all the nations of the world as His inheritance!

Further, when God says, *with whom I am well pleased*, it points back to

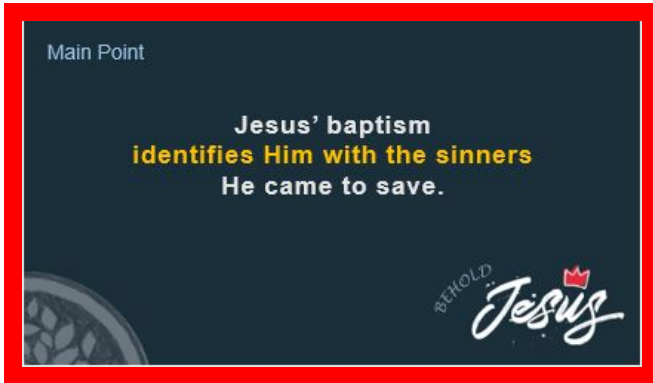


**Isaiah 42:1**, where the same words are used to describe the Messiah, upon whom God has put His Spirit.

Church here's the point. There nothing that pleases God more than the planting of righteousness among the nations. There's nothing that pleases God more than the obedience of faith which is planted and grown by God Himself. This is why Jesus was sent to this earth. The mission statement of Jesus is written for you on the cover of your worship folder this morning from **Isaiah 61:1-3**.



God delights in the accomplishment of righteousness among all nations. He publicly approves of Jesus' ministry. In fact, He has ordained it!



So the point of **Matthew 3:13-17** is simply that, **Jesus' baptism identifies Him with the sinners He came to save.** His ministry is now officially and publicly sanctioned, recognized, and empowered by God Himself. It was this baptism experience that convinced John the Baptist that Jesus was truly the Son of God.<sup>23</sup> Matthew has recorded everything in these first 3 chapters to make sure we know that Jesus is the King who fulfills all of God's promises.

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<sup>23</sup> John 1:31-34.  
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**Therefore identify with Christ as your Savior and King.** You must not sit on the sidelines while all three persons of the Trinity give such strong witness to Jesus as your Savior and King! You must go public and identify with Jesus among all the nations of the world.

How, you ask? How can a simple person like me publicly identify with King Jesus?

First, through repentance. You must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. You must turn from your sin. You must put your faith in Jesus' death and resurrection for your spiritual standing with our holy God. You must receive the Holy Spirit which plants the very righteousness of God within you!<sup>24</sup>

Second, you identify with Jesus through believer's baptism. Water baptism declares your public union with Christ's death and resurrection. The Scriptures have no category for unbaptized Christians. All who partake in the "vow renewal ceremony" of communion are assumed to have already publicly professed their union with Christ

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<sup>24</sup> Isaiah 61:10-11

in baptism.<sup>25</sup> Baptism doesn't save you of course. But baptism should be one of the first public ways that your salvation demonstrates your obedience to the Lordship of Christ. So repent, and then be baptized, and then third, identify with Christ through a life of Spirit-powered righteousness.

King Jesus came to bring about your righteousness, and the righteousness of people from all nations. We must not continue living for ourselves.<sup>26</sup> No! Just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too must walk in newness of life.<sup>27</sup> Christ was numbered with transgressors that we might become the righteousness of God through Him.<sup>28</sup> Therefore keep working out your life of repentance and faith – keep submitting to God's Spirit and walking by His grace, that you might publicly identify with your Savior who so humbly identified with us so that we and people from all nations may be saved!

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<sup>25</sup> Study 1 Corinthians 10, especially verses 14-17 in the earlier context of Moses' baptism in verses 1-4.

<sup>26</sup> Romans 6:1ff

<sup>27</sup> Romans 6:4

<sup>28</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:21; c.f. Isaiah 53:12



**Let's pray.**

<<Be Thou My Vision>>

**Let's pray our benediction together as we dismiss.**



*Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations! <sup>4</sup>Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."*

**Revelation 15:3b-4**





## Recommended Resources on Jesus' Baptism:

- Psalm 2:7-9
- Isaiah 11:1-5; 42:1-9; 61:1; 64:1
- Ezekiel 1:1, 28-2:2
- Mark 1:9-11; 10:35-39; 11:28-32
- Luke 3:21-22; 12:50
- John 1:29-34; 3:34; 8:18
- Acts 19:1-7
- 1 Corinthians 10:1-4
- 2 Corinthians 5:21
- Galatians 3:27
- Ephesians 4:5
- Hebrews 4:15; 9:14
  
- <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/80-57/understanding-baptism>
- <https://www.gotquestions.org/seven-baptisms.html>
- <https://www.gotquestions.org/Jesus-baptized.html>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/why-was-jesus-baptized>
- <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/41-3/the-significance-of-jesus-baptism>
  
- *Believer's Baptism*, Thomas Schreiner
- *Putting Jesus in His Place*, Robert Bowman Jr, et. al.

## Discussion Questions:

1. Read Matthew 3:14. Why did John keep trying to prevent Jesus from being baptized by him? (c.f. Hebrews 4:15)
2. Read Matthew 3:15. Jesus convinced John to baptize him since his baptism by John was necessary to bring about or fulfill all righteousness. Which of the recommended Scriptures above help you understand what this means?
3. Read Mark 10:35-39 and Luke 12:50. How does the baptism of the cross help us better understand the general meaning of baptism? (C.f. the baptism of Moses in 1 Corinthians 10:1-3)
4. Compare the baptism of 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 (c.f. Matthew 3:11; Romans 6:3-4; Ephesians 4:5; Colossians 2:12) with the baptism of Matthew 28:19 (c.f. Acts 2:41; 8:35-36; 16:14-16; 19:5; 1 Peter 3:21). How would you teach a young child the difference between a believer's dry and wet baptism?
5. Read Acts 19:1-7. Explain the differences between John's baptism, Jesus' baptism, and believer's baptism. Who is the person being baptized publicly identifying with in each of these 3 different water baptisms?
6. Have you received the baptism of the Holy Spirit? Have you received believer's baptism? What difference do these baptisms make in your daily walk

with Christ? Share together, praying for one another to know the fullest joy of God's baptisms in your lives.