

The Beloved Son is Baptized

Mark 1:9-11

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⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." Mark 1: 9-11

If you asked John the Baptist how he viewed himself compared to Jesus, we already know the answer. John said, he is not worthy to even untie the sandals of Jesus. John's ministry was coming to a close because Jesus has arrived on the scene. And John's ministry comes to an end by him baptizing Jesus.

This passage is the commencement or the commissioning of the Lord Jesus Christ. This passage has a level of importance that it must be expounded separately. The baptism of Jesus is an epic, monumental and historic event that cannot be ignored.

Verse nine.

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

In those days. Meaning right after John had preached about repentance, Jesus of Nazareth came from the region of Galilee and came to John the Baptist and was baptized in the Jordan river. Nazareth was an insignificant place.

Mark is rather concise in his description of the baptism of Jesus.

There is a back story prior to the baptism of Jesus.

The parallel account of Jesus' baptism is from Matthew chapter three. Verses 13 and 14.

¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. ¹⁴ John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"

Here you see John the Baptist is in a moral dilemma of sorts. John even attempts to not

baptize Jesus. Why?

Because John the Baptist knew that Jesus was *greater* and *mightier* than him. Not just mightier and greater but sinless as well.

Jesus' sinlessness.

There are no moral defects in Jesus Christ. Jesus was every bit human just like you and I but with regard to sin, moral purity, righteousness or blameworthiness, Jesus is absolutely perfectly morally upright. No flaws in Jesus. The more you know him and study Jesus the more you will find him worthy of following.

Here are few places in the Bible that describe Jesus' sinlessness.

1. Do you know Jesus challenged the Jews to prove if he had any sin. *Which one of you convicts me of sin?* John 8:46
2. *He (Jesus) committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.* 1 Peter 2:22
3. *You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.* 1 John 3:5

John the Baptist knew that sinful men, including himself, cannot take away sin of the world. That is why John said, "*Behold, lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*" (John 1:29).

Jesus is one of a kind, only one Savior one Redeemer of the World. There is no one like Jesus.

Why we baptize?

We baptize people because it is symbolic of their faith in Jesus Christ. When you are immersed in water it's as if your sin has been buried with Jesus "by baptism into death" and when you come out of the water you identify with the resurrection of Jesus.

However, Jesus is not a sinner like the rest of us. John the Baptist knew that. Jesus is sinless and does not need repentance like us.

So why does Jesus ask John to be baptize him?

The answer is from Matthew 3:15

¹⁵ *But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented.*

You see that?

To fulfill all righteousness. That was the reason Jesus asks to be baptized.

Righteousness in a broad sense is the state of him who is as he ought to be, the condition acceptable to God

- a. It is the doctrine concerning the way in which man may attain a state approved of God
- b. It is the integrity, virtue, purity of life, rightness, correctness of thinking feeling, and acting

Righteousness refers to what is deemed right by the Lord (after His examination), what is approved in His eyes.

Three observations as to why Jesus is baptized

1) Jesus' baptism displays his *humility* and *obedience* to God.

Notice Jesus asks for his baptism. We, on the other hand, are commanded to baptize and be baptized. Jesus knows he needs to be baptized by John. Jesus is being obedient to the Father for His mission on earth. This is where his public ministry begins.

2) Jesus' obedience purchases *redemption* for sinners.

Jesus identifies with sinners.

Whether it was the Pharisees, the soldiers, the tax collectors or any one else. Jesus identifies with you and I. Jesus fulfills all righteousness – he suffers and dies on behalf of others to secure redemption.

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Hebrews 4:15

Water Baptism can be an issue for some people. If Jesus came and identifies with our sin, I wonder why it would be the problem for anyone to identify with their Savior who has humbled Himself and gave Himself for them? It becomes a question of humility.

Baptism is an ordinance, an outward symbol of the inner reality of a forgiven sinner and a transformed heart. Someone who is really transformed on the inside should not have an issue with baptism.

A “presidential pardon” is the act of officially nullifying punishment or other legal

consequences of a crime.

The power to grant pardons is vested in the President alone. No hearing is held. Those who receive a presidential pardon are notified in writing.

A “pardon” is the act of officially nullifying punishment or other legal consequences of a crime. While a presidential pardon will restore various rights lost as a result of the pardoned offense and should lessen to some extent the stigma arising from a conviction, it will not erase or expunge the record of your conviction.

However, Jesus’ forgiveness is final and all the records of sin that stand against you before God are treated as if they are erased and expunged. Amen!

In addition to identifying with sinners, Jesus also showed perfect obedience and perfect righteousness. With his perfect obedience including his baptism, Jesus gives His righteousness to you.

So, when God who is Holy must judge sinners according to his law, looks the obedience of Christ, God credits the righteousness of Jesus to your account when you repent, confess and put your faith in Jesus Christ alone.

What saves you from judgement is your putting faith in Christ that his obedience is sufficient for your acquittal. What follows after repentance and faith is obedience. So, for a believer, when God looks at you, he sees Jesus’ finished work and righteousness and passes over His wrath.

The “now” is important because Jesus is willing to take on the role of a servant.

“Now” indicates urgency because you must not put away repentance and confession for another day. Don’t wait until tomorrow. Don’t delay any step in the way of righteousness.

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. 2 Corinthians 5:21

Jesus’ baptism:

¹⁰ *And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”*

We see at least *three* major observations as Jesus is baptized.

1. Notice what Mark says. Immediately. The heavens were opened up. Something supernaturally takes place. When Jesus died the curtain in the temple was *torn* into two. And the rocks were *split* or broken apart. In the same way, the heavens were torn open.
2. What else do we see? As Jesus *ascends* out of the water, the Spirit *descends* on him. *Ascending* is an echo of resurrection. And at the baptism of Jesus, it is his commissioning.
3. So, as Jesus ascends out of the water, and the Spirit descends on him, there is a voice from heaven. That voice is the voice of God the Father.

This is the Divine confirmation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God by the Father and the Holy Spirit. The Godhead is seen in this historic event. Jesus' public ministry begins with the baptism of Jesus and is confirmed by the Father and Holy Spirit.

After the second century, a heresy called *Adoptionism* became popular. Some viewed Jesus as being born of natural causes. But when Jesus was baptized, the view was that Jesus was adopted by God. Hence the heresy *Adoptionism*.

But here we see that the Father relates to the Son in love. The Father says to the Son "*You are my Beloved Son*". The Father always has been. The Son always has been.

The Son became incarnate as flesh. But the Father and Son are always *united in being*.

Jesus is baptized as an act of obedience. Jesus fulfills all righteousness. Jesus imputes his righteousness to unrighteous sinners. Jesus is the Messiah.

I began with asking, "How good are you?" The question we need to ask ourselves is not "how good are you?". No one is good. No one is righteous. Rather, the question is "how good is Jesus?" Jesus is good enough to save. Jesus is good enough to sustain you. Jesus is good enough to give your eternal life. Jesus is good enough to see you through your trials. Jesus is good enough to save you from straying. Jesus is good enough to welcome you back after straying.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:6

Don't wait another day, open your eyes and see, The Messiah has come.

----- Discipleship Questions-----

MESSAGE SUMMARY: The Beloved Son. Mark 1:9-11

HEAD: These questions help you examine the truth of God's Word.

4. According to Matthew's Gospel, why does John the Baptist hesitate to baptize Jesus? What is significant about Jesus' response to John and his insistence to be baptized? Matthew 3:13-15

HEART: These questions help you wrestle with what you believe.

5. What does Jesus' baptism signify? Do you believe Jesus Christ imputes you with his righteousness by his perfect obedience?
6. What is God convicting you of and to believe in light of this message?

HANDS/HABITS: These questions help you bring the truth into your everyday life and develop behaviors that change your habits.

7. For personal reflection: What will you change to make disciples of Christ?