

Jesus' Baptism

October 15th 2006

Introduction

In the book of Matthew, the baptism of Jesus marks the beginning of his ministry. John the Baptist had been baptizing many in the Jordan, fulfilling the prophesy that was spoken about him in Isaiah 40:3 "A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"

Text

Matthew 3:13-15

Why would John be hesitant to baptize Jesus?

- He knew Jesus didn't need repentance.
- It would be a little awkward to baptize the one who came to take everyone else's sins away.
- In John 1:19-28 John the Baptist clearly understood his role as subservient to the coming Messiah.

Fulfilling Righteousness

Why did Jesus say it was necessary for John to baptize him?

- To fulfill all righteousness.

We often think of righteousness as a moral quality. But it means more than that. It can also mean God's purpose for his people. In that sense, Jesus fulfills all righteousness because what he does is for God's purpose, not that Jesus needed baptism for repentance.

Matthew 3:16-17

Why was it important for God's Spirit to appear when Jesus came out of the water?

- It was a sign of God's approval of Jesus' mission.
- It was important for the people to know that Jesus came from God.
- It may have also been in fulfillment of Isa 43:2 "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you."

Whose voice did the people hear from heaven and why was it important that it be heard?

- They heard the voice of God, "This is my Son."
- It was important for the same reason seeing God's Spirit was important, to show that Jesus was indeed from God as the Messiah.

Jesus is called "Son" by God. Israel was considered God's son in the Old Testament. Jesus' sonship is not as an adopted son but as the one and

Baptism & Submission

only true Son sent from the Father (John 3:16).

What connection is there between Jesus wanting "to fulfill all righteousness" and God being "well pleased" with Jesus?

- Jesus did the will of his Father in being baptized.
- Righteousness is pleasing in God's sight.
- This marks the beginning of his earthly ministry and God is well pleased.

Jesus' mission is inaugurated with baptism and God being well pleased.

How is our baptism similar to Jesus' baptism by John as a beginning?

- Just as it marked the beginning of Jesus' ministry, our baptism marks the beginning of our Christian walk.

In Luke 12:50 Jesus speaks of another baptism that he must undergo. Just as the first baptism marked the beginning of his ministry, this second, figurative baptism, will mark the end of his ministry.

Luke 12:50

Since Jesus has already been baptized, what figurative baptism is Jesus talking about when he says "I have a baptism to undergo?"

- He is talking about his death on the cross.
- Baptism involves submission and Jesus is speaking of his submission to death on a cross.

Life & Death

Paul also viewed baptism in terms of life and death. We are dead in sin. Baptism buries that past and raises us into new life.

Romans 6:1-7

Baptism connects us with the death and resurrection of Jesus. When we are lowered into the water, we are symbolizing his death and when we are raised from the water we symbolize his resurrection.

What does Paul say is the result of our dying to sin?

- We are set free from sin

How is our baptism the fulfillment of God's righteousness in our lives?

- He washes away our sins.
- It unifies us with God through Christ.

How does our baptism connect us with God as loved and well pleasing children?

- We are adopted by God as his children (Romans 8:14-17)
- We are born again through baptism as God's children (1 John 5:18-19)

Application

Just as John tried to stop Jesus from asking him to baptize him, *What things have you tried to deter God from doing in your life?*

What in your life do you feel God is well pleased about?

As Paul compares baptism to death and resurrection in Romans 6, what areas of your life still need to be put to death?

What encouragement have you received from others that you can pass on to those who need a boost in their week?

Put it into Practice

When you get home, write down two things you need to give over to God. Pray about those two things each day this week that God would give you the power to overcome them and that you would have the willingness to finally let go of those areas of your life and give the control back to God.