

Pastor Jeremy M. Thomas
Fredericksburg Bible Church

107 East Austin

Fredericksburg, Texas 78624

830-997-8834 jthomas@fbgbible.org

C1422 – June 18, 2014 – Matthew 3:13-17

The Presentation Of The King

We've been looking at John and his baptizing ministry in Matthew 3. If you went away two weeks ago confused, don't worry, John is going to become confused too. In Matt 11 he's going to be arrested and thrown in prison and he's so confused he sends messengers to Jesus saying, "Hey, I'm about to die, you're probably going to die, so are you the Expected One? What's happening here? Are you the King? If so where's the kingdom." Jesus sends back this answer, "The lame walk and the blind see," so yes, I'm the King. The King had come, the kingdom had been offered but the proclaimer of the kingdom had been arrested so it's confusing. The last thing I want to do is confuse you but I just think that the nature of what is happening is confusing and so there's nothing you or I can really do about it. The thing is to not be discouraged. A lot of Scripture you have to wrestle with and I would suggest that this is so because you're trying to understand what an infinite, omniscient God is doing and you just have to stick with it and in the process He turns on a few light bulbs and over time He turns on a few more and it gradually makes sense so hang in there.

We're working in a pre-cross setting, under the OT dispensation of the Law where Israel was the focus and Israel's covenants controlled the situation. They were guaranteed a kingdom and a king and the time had drawn near, the king was coming to His own.

John had come before Him. Why had John come? What was the purpose of John's ministry? To prepare the nation Israel. Prepare them for what? To meet, recognize and enthrone their King. The king always had a forerunner and when the king would come into a region, the forerunner would go before him. John is the forerunner. He has come to prepare the people. Were the people ready? No. How could they become ready? Repent and start obeying

the King's Law. The King had given His Law at Mt Sinai. They weren't following His Law; they were following the man-made laws of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Would the King be happy if He came and found them not following His laws? No. They were sinful. So repentance was the order of the day, they needed to have a change of mind about their way of life and return to obeying the King's Law. Anyone who repented John would baptize with water. Why did he do that? The baptism with water would formally terminate the baptized person's relationship with the Pharisees and Sadducees and identify him with John and his message of the 'at hand' kingdom. That will become important tonight. The kingdom had drawn near because the King was near and if the leadership received Him then the people would follow and the glorious kingdom would come. So it's critical to keep in mind that the kingdom's arrival was contingent on the nation's reception of the King. Many in the nation were unsatisfied by the system of the Pharisees and Sadducees so they were coming out to John to be baptized. As they were being baptized verse 6 says they were confessing their sins. They were admitting that they had not been living according to the King's Law. But in verse 7 when many of the Pharisees and Sadducees came to John for baptism yet wanted to remain Pharisees and Sadducees John became vitriolic. In OT prophetic fashion he says, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" If these deceivers truly wanted to be baptized then they needed to evidence it by bearing fruit in keeping with repentance. What would the fruit be? The fruit would be the works of the King's Law; obedience. Did they think they needed to repent? No, they thought that physical descent from Abraham was sufficient to gain automatic kingdom entrance. What was John's counterpoint? A true child of Abraham had faith. Did the Pharisees and Sadducees have faith? No. Verse 10 indicates they needed to heed John's message immediately. The King was coming with His axe and any Israelite that did not bear good fruit would be cut down by the King and excluded from the kingdom. Verse 11 explains that John's baptism was based on repentance in preparation for the King but he himself was not the King. The King was much greater than Him. And when the King came He had two baptisms to administer; one a baptism with the Spirit which would identify the one baptized with the King and ensure kingdom entrance, the other a baptism with fire which would identify them with judgment and exclusion from kingdom entrance. But at this time the king had not arrived yet and so John was baptizing with water to prepare the people for His arrival.

Verses 13-17 recount His arrival. He's coming out to John. What's the big idea in this pericope? The presentation of the King to the nation. If you get nothing else, get this, John is going to present the King to the nation and the Father and the Spirit are going to authenticate that His Son is indeed the King. After this it will be left up to the nation to respond to the King as He is further authenticated by His teaching, signs, miracles and wonders. So the big idea of vv 13-17 is the presentation of the King.

In verse 13 we see the King's arrival. Why is the King coming? To be baptized. Why does Jesus need **to be baptized by John**? That's the big question. Verse 15 gives an easy enough answer, **Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness**. Anyone can quote that as the reason Jesus was baptized but what does that mean? How would Jesus being baptized by John fill up all righteousness? That's the trouble and so we'll be looking at that difficulty tonight and the significance of this baptism. Did you notice how many baptisms there were in this chapter? There are four baptisms in this chapter. So you better really understand baptism or you're going to be confused. What's the key to baptism? Identification. Those being baptized are being identified with someone and some message. All four of these baptisms are distinct. Verse 11, John's with water was based on repentance, identifying the people with him and his message; Jesus' with the Spirit to identify the believing remnant with Himself so that they could enter the kingdom and Jesus' with fire to identify the non-believing remnant with judgment. Then in verse 14 John's with water but no repentance for Jesus, identifying Jesus with something, that's the subject tonight. But four baptisms, all different, and none of them the same as Christian baptism, it's a fifth baptism and so this is just another thing that makes Matt 3 so difficult but the key to all of them is identification with someone and some message.

In verse 13, Matthew begins **Then Jesus arrived**. The adverb **then** is Matthew's way of signaling a shift in scene. John had been baptizing at the Jordan but the scene now shifts to the day when Jesus arrived. Where did He arrive from? **The Galilee**. No mention is made of Nazareth though we know Jesus grew up in Nazareth. Nazareth was the town but the region was **Galilee**. Anyone know where the **Galilee** was? It was in the north; Judea was in the south; at the time of Christ you had two regional divisions among the Jews; the Judeans in the south and the Galileans in the north. You see

Samaria right in the middle. They didn't follow the same schedule for Passover, they didn't see eye to eye, they had discrepancies among themselves even though they were all Jews. What did the Judeans in the south think of the Galileans in the north? That they were a bunch of materialists. Why did they think they were materialists? Because **Galilee** was the fertile land, it's where all the fruits and vegetables grew, it's where the fishing industry thrived, it's where all the trade routes passed through. So it was easy to get rich in the Galilee which is why the Jews had a saying that "if a man would be wise let him go to Jerusalem, if he wants to be rich let him go to Galilee." So the Judean Jews thought the Galilean Jews were materialists; that was their general impression.

Having noted that Jesus arrived from the **Galilee** observe how far the news of John's baptism had spread. John's baptizing down here. That's why I conclude this was a popular movement. Jesus had heard of John far north in the **Galilee**. And why did Jesus come? Verse 13 tells us why He came, **to be baptized by him**. That, in itself, seems very strange. Why does Jesus need to be baptized by John? What was the purpose of Jesus' baptism? That's the first half of our lesson tonight; the purpose of Jesus' baptism. The other half is the results of the baptism. So we distinguish between the purpose and the results.

Why would Jesus want to be baptized by John? That's the difficulty. If we look at John's baptism he required repentance but Jesus didn't have repentance, Jesus didn't need to repent, Jesus never followed the Pharisees and Sadducees in their system of sanctification. He always followed the Mosaic covenant as the rule of life for sanctification. So this points up that while His baptism by John is similar to everyone else's it's also different. Pentecost says, "The one baptizing was the same, but the baptism was not the same. The use of water was the same, but the significance was not...The baptism of Jesus by John was a special, unique kind of baptism."ⁱ I would argue that no one has ever been baptized for the purpose Jesus was baptized or with the results. It was a totally unique baptism. We don't get baptized as Christians because we are following in Jesus' footsteps. His baptism was accomplishing totally different things than a Christian baptism.

Now note, in verse 14, that John was very reticent to baptize Jesus. **But John tried to prevent Him**. The verb **prevent** is in the imperfect tense.

What is the function of the imperfect tense? It functions to show a repetitive action in past time. It means over and over and over. It does not mean John simply tried to stop Him. It means John tried to stop Him over and over and over. In other words, John was saying over and over and over. **I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?** So this was going on for some time. Did John recognize something about Jesus? He knew something of Him or he never would have tried to prevent Him from being baptized by him. We don't know all that John knew at this time or how he knew but we know from John 1 that he knew when He arrived that Jesus was the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Matthew doesn't record that but John does. So before Jesus ever came to John and Jesus is just walking up John pointed Him out to all the people and said, there's the Lamb of God. How did he know that before His baptism? We don't know. He could have suspected it or as a prophet God could have had it revealed to him. But however he knew, he did know and so he immediately says, **I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?** In other words, as far as John was concerned, there was no need for him to baptize Jesus but there was a need for Jesus to baptize him. With what baptism? What baptism did John need from Jesus? Scan back up to verse 11? What baptisms was the Messiah coming to administer? A baptism with the Spirit and a baptism with fire. Which one did John need? The baptism with fire was for identification with judgment. The baptism with the Spirit was for identification with Jesus. Which one did John need from the Messiah? The baptism with the Spirit. It was necessary John insists because John knew that the only way to enter the kingdom was to be identified with the Messiah and that identification was ensured by the internal dwelling of the Spirit. John didn't have that yet so he says, **I have need to be baptized by You.** Now he did have the filling of the Spirit, he had that from his mother's womb and I would say while yet in the womb and that John was a full soul in the womb even though some bible students disagree with that. So he was filled with the Spirit from the womb but he was not baptized with the Spirit and that shows that being filled and being baptized are not the same thing. If they were the same thing John could not say **I have need to be baptized.** So keep those ministries distinct. Don't make a mess of theology and throw all these things together. The Bible is very precise.

Now we'll mention as an aside that some people think John's saying he needs Jesus to baptize him with water. The problem with that is Jesus didn't

baptize anybody with water, otherwise they would have called Him Jesus the Baptizer. But they never call Him that. And in fact, this baptism with water is never repeated once Jesus arrives and is baptized. Why? Because there's no need. The purpose was over. John's baptism with water had two purposes. What's the first one? Prepare the people for the King's arrival. Those who received it were prepared and they were saying that when the King arrived they would transfer their trust from the general promise of the coming King to the specific person who was the King. What just happened in verse 13? The King arrived. So no more need for John's baptism with water. What was the second reason John came baptizing? John's Gospel tells us this. To draw out the Messiah so John could make Him known to Israel. Did John already know Jesus was the Messiah? It's hard to say. He definitely knew when He arrived and he may have suspected it but we don't know for sure. Did Jesus know that He Himself was the Messiah? I would say yes, but just when He came to Messianic consciousness I don't know, as far as His humanity is concerned. In His deity He always knew but we don't know about His humanity. All we know is He did learn and grow in His humanity. There's not much recorded about His life from the time of His departure from Egypt into Nazareth as a child until He comes out to John to be baptized. There are just a few inspired reports about His upbringing, the most prominent one being his interaction with the law professors at the Temple when He was 12 years old. And then we know He was already very advanced in theology, this kid, 12 years old, not even old enough for His bar-mitzvah and He's asking questions the law professors don't even know the answers to! So He may have come to Messianic consciousness quite early but we don't know the exact time. Surely by this time He knew His mission. He's coming to be baptized by John. So it's on this occasion that the Messiah is made manifest to Israel. What is Matthew's purpose then? To show the formal presentation of the King. And John realizes it's the formal presentation too but his vision of the presentation is a little different, **I have need to be baptized by You**. Ok, true enough, but Jesus had something else in mind, baptize Me John.

Verse 15, **But Jesus answering said to him, permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness**. So what's the purpose of Jesus' baptism by John? That together they would **fulfill all righteousness**. Notice it's not just Jesus that is going to **fulfill all righteousness**. It's Jesus and John, **us**; Jesus and John together. And at this point John permitted Him. So did John understand what Jesus said?

Evidently. Do you understand Him? Everybody agrees that John understood Him. Everybody agrees that Jesus had to be baptized to fulfill all righteousness. But how could Jesus and John together fulfill all righteousness? What does that mean? There are legions of views. Glasscock says, “Jesus’ response in v. 15 has led to volumes of theological discourse.”ⁱⁱ Some of these views we will entertain because some of them have elements of truth and even if they’re wrong in the overall the rebuttals provide sound biblical instruction. So we’re trying to uncover the purpose or the meaning of the purpose statement, **to fulfill all righteousness**. Toussaint says, “Generally the confusion arises over a failure to differentiate between the *purpose of* Christ’s baptism and its *results*. The purpose was to fulfill all righteousness; the results were manifold.”ⁱⁱⁱ So what does **fulfill all righteousness** mean?

First, the most common view is that Jesus was baptized in order to identify Himself with the godly remnant of Israel. Many godly men hold this view. It is certainly true that His baptism by John would identify Him with the others who had been baptized by John and it is fitting that the leader of the group would identify with the group. So there is an element of truth here. However, it is not clear how this would fulfill all righteousness. Second, others hold the view that Jesus was baptized as a Messianic anointing. This is also true. Acts 10:38 does say that Jesus was anointed at His baptism. However, this was a result of the baptism when the Holy Spirit descended upon Him and not the purpose of it. Again, the purpose and the result are not the same. The purpose was for the fulfillment of all righteousness but one of the results was the anointing, that was not the purpose. Third, Chafer claimed the view that Jesus was being consecrated to the priesthood. According to Leviticus 16:4 the Levitical priest would be washed in water in order to be consecrated into the priestly office. This usually occurred at the age of 30 and Jesus was about 30 at this time (in my estimation He was probably 33). However, Jesus was not of the tribe of Levi and He could not serve in the Levitical order of priests. His priesthood was of the order of Melchizedek. According to Hebrews 7:11-22 Jesus entered into His Melchizedekian priesthood at His resurrection and not before. Therefore for many reasons Jesus was not being consecrated into the priesthood at His baptism by John. Fourth, another view is that Jesus was baptized to fulfill the Law of Moses. However, there is no Law of Moses that required anyone to be baptized by another. All the baptisms in the OT were self-baptisms. So

John baptizing Jesus could not be fulfilling any requirement in the Law of Moses. Therefore this could not be the reason. Fifth, English claims that His baptism was a foreview of His death at the hands of others and His resurrection. This is an interesting thought but it would not at all be clear to those watching that this was happening. This view is probably only suggested in hindsight when reflecting on Christian baptism which does picture His death and resurrection. Further, it still leaves unclear just how the foreview of His death and resurrection itself fulfilled all righteousness, rather than His actual death and resurrection later. Sixth, A. T. Robertson claimed that the baptism linked the two ministries of John and Jesus. This clearly does have an element of truth. Jesus said to John, "Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for *us* to fulfill all righteousness." John and Jesus are tied together in the fulfilling of all righteousness," not Jesus alone. However, this true statement does not really explain how their ministries linked together fulfilled all righteousness. Seventh, Toussaint claimed that the purpose was to fulfill all ordinances of God, both religious and secular, as executed by men.^{iv} However, it is unclear how being baptized by John would fulfill ordinances which belonged to the religious or secular sphere since these ordinances have no requirements of being baptized by someone else. An eighth view, which is my view, hinges on the meaning of the words **fitting** and **fulfill**. "Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." The word **fulfill** is the same word used in Matt 2 where Matthew quotes the OT as being fulfilled in the four different ways. We learned from this that the word fulfill has a broader meaning than most English speakers allow. In the Sermon on the Mount the word is used in opposition to "abolish" (cf Matt 5:17). It meant to do or keep the Law. Jesus said He did not come to abolish the law but to keep it. In a similar way what Jesus is saying to John is that His baptism by John would be "in keeping" with **all righteousness**. The participle **fitting** means to be "suitable," "proper." Certainly it was suitable for Jesus to be baptized by John because it identified the King with John's message of the 'at hand' kingdom. This kingdom was to be a **righteous** kingdom. Since the King was to be preceded by the prophet then John and Jesus would now be linked together in their ministries. So the purpose of Jesus' baptism by John was to identify with John in keeping with his righteous kingdom message. It was therefore a unique baptism.

Having stated the purpose we now turn to the results which are several. Starting in verse 16, **After being baptized.** The implication of the word **after** is that now we will see the immediate results of the baptism. **After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water.** The emphasis is on the immediacy but what picture do you have in your mind from that statement 'Jesus coming up out of the water?' Some have argued that it's the picture of Jesus having been immersed and they use this as an argument for immersion as the proper mode. What's the problem with that argument? It's not really the picture. He almost certainly was immersed but the picture is of Jesus coming up on the shore **from the water.** Now Luke tells us that Jesus was praying and I take it that He was praying on the shore (Luke 3:21). I don't know the subject of His prayer but I suspect His prayer was one of separation and dedication to His work which He was to accomplish as the Messiah. What happened as He was praying? **And behold, the heavens were opened.** When the heavens are opened up what takes place? Someone is seeing a vision. They were opened up for Ezekiel in Ezek 1:1, for Stephen in Acts 7:56, for Peter in Acts 10:11 and for John in Rev 19:11. In every case it was descriptive of seeing a vision and so I take it that what was seen here was a vision.

Who saw it? The nearest antecedent of **he saw** is **Jesus** and so **he** should probably be capitalized. And it's clear that **Jesus** did see this but John 1:32, 33 and 34 says that John also saw this and that the reason he saw was so that he could testify that this One was the Son of God. When we say Jesus is the Son of God, what do we mean by "Son of?" "An equal" since a son has the same nature as his father. So following the principle that like begets like Jesus was the Son of God, that is, He shares the same nature as His Father. He's not less than the Father; He's co-equal with the Father. How did Jesus say it elsewhere? "I and the Father are One." That is, we share the same nature or essence. That's the idea of the Son of God and I take it that only John and Jesus saw the heavens opened and heard this declaration of Jesus as the Son of God. There may have been other people standing around but I don't think they saw and heard what Jesus and John saw and heard. And for John the prophet it authenticated that Jesus was the King and released him to point out the King the nation was to believe in.

What exactly did John and Jesus see? **The Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him.** This was a visual confirmation. There was also

an audible confirmation in verse 17. So it was audio-visual but the visual confirmation in verse 16 was **the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him**. I want to highlight the fact that they saw a Person, **the Spirit of God** is a Person and by that I mean He has a mind, a will and He's not an it. He's a person. And here this Person is seen **descending as a dove**. Note the comparative adverb, **as**. What figure of speech is in view when we use like or as? A simile. John is using a simile to make a comparison. Is this saying the Spirit appeared like a dove? No, it's saying the **Spirit** was **descending as a dove**. John's describing the manner of descent that he observed, not the way the Holy Spirit looked. I'm not at all convinced that He appeared **as a dove** but many people are. As far as the four Gospel writers are concerned they all use the same simile, the Spirit was descending as a dove. Only Luke gives the appearance and he says the Holy Spirit descended in 'bodily form' (Lk 3:22). This doesn't mean God has a body. This was a vision John was seeing. But the word means some kind of physical shape. We don't know what physical shape the Holy Spirit took. No gospel writer identified the shape but I suspect a human shape. I don't think God can be depicted by any shape other than a human shape. Why do I say that? Because we are made in His image. In other words, if God were to project Himself down to finite size He would appear as a human. How do we know that? Jesus Christ! God in the flesh! So I see a human shape coming out of the sky like **a dove** and resting upon Him and remaining on Him. Once the Spirit came upon Jesus He remained on Him, He did not depart. So that's the imagery my mind sees when I read this. And of course, the Spirit here is authenticating that Jesus is the Messiah and empowering Him for His work. As we'll see Jesus is going to demonstrate how to depend upon the Holy Spirit, how to be led by the Spirit. Indeed in chapter 4 what's the first thing you see? Jesus being led out into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit. So the visual confirmation to John that Jesus is the Messiah is verse 16, a physical form of the Holy Spirit descending in the manner of a dove and resting upon Him.

We come to verse 17 and here we find the audible confirmation. **And behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."** John and Jesus heard this but the main person this is directed to is John. He's saying John, Jesus is the Messiah. **My beloved Son** is a Messianic title. Why was John given this revelation? Because the prophet was always given the revelation of who the King was and then the prophet

was to present Him to the nation for recognition and enthronement. So John is getting the nod here, go ahead John, it's time to make the Messiah known to the nation. He didn't see anyone speaking, he just heard **a voice** and I don't think anyone else heard the voice, it was just John and Jesus. Whose voice? The Father. So who do we see in verses 16-17? The Father, the Son and the Spirit. Don't tell me the Trinity is an obscure doctrine or sort of a side issue. Here we are at the beginning of Jesus' ministry and who's present authenticating Jesus? The Trinity. The Godhead is involved. There is but one God yet there are three Persons and each Person has a distinct role. The Son is the one coming for baptism, not the Spirit; the Spirit is the one descending upon Him for empowerment, not the Father; and the Father is the one audibly identifying Him as His beloved Son. So the Father, Son and Spirit are one in essence but as far as their Person they are three. And when you see their distinct involvement with respect to creation and history we're referring to what is known as the economical trinity. That's what we're seeing here, that the Father, Son and Spirit have a distinct role to play with respect to creation and history. If we talk about their involvement with one another independent of creation and history we're talking about the ontological trinity. But that's not in view here. What is in view is the three distinctive Persons of the Trinity as they relate economically, that is, with respect to creation and history.

Alright, let's look at what the Father said, "**This is My beloved Son.** This is a Messianic title. Note the adjective **beloved**. What does He mean beloved? What kind of love is this? It's the love of a father for an only son, when you have only one son all your love is tied up in that son. Abraham had an only son, Isaac, his beloved son. And the Father **of the heavens** has only one Son, Jesus. Jesus is His prize, Jesus is His superstar. He's His everything. From all eternity He has loved His Son in this way. He's always been His **beloved**.

But that's not all, there's an OT passage your mind should be drawn to from the expression "You are My Son." Anyone know what it is? Psalm 2. Let's turn to Psalm 2, verse 7. What's the subject of the Psalm? You should have a heading to the Psalm. Mine says *The Reign of the Lord's Anointed*, an excellent title. For context look at verse 6, "But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain." What are we looking at here? What time period? The Kingdom. The King ruling in His kingdom. Verse 7, "I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I

have begotten You.” The Father is speaking and when did the Father beget the Son? I’ll give you a hint, it’s not at the incarnation; this is at the installation of the Messiah in His reign! The Messiah is begotten at the installation of His reign in the kingdom. What does that tell you about the term ‘begotten?’ It doesn’t refer to physical birth; it refers to something else. What’s the something else? Verse 8, ‘Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the *very* ends of the earth as Your possession.” Receiving an inheritance! Who always received the inheritance in the OT Jewish family? The firstborn! Who’s the firstborn of God? His only Son. Jesus Christ. It has nothing to do with Jesus’ physical birth. The term begotten has to do with His uniqueness as the only Son of God who is the heir of the kingdom! Looking back now at what the Father says in Matt 3:17 you should see rich imagery of Jesus; He’s the Son of God, co-equal with the Father and heir of the kingdom to come.

And note the final encouraging words that the Father gives His beloved Son, **in whom or with whom I am well-pleased.** *Ευδοκew*, to say good things, The Father is saying I only have good things to say about the heir. Jesus had always pleased the Father up to this point in His life. He had always lived a righteous life. Since the Father is righteous then Jesus to be pleasing to God had to be righteous. This is the confirmatory note from the Father that His Beloved Son had lived a perfectly righteous life and was therefore fit to serve as Israel’s Messianic King.

Alright, let’s spend the rest of our time highlighting the four results of his baptism by John. We pointed out that the purpose of the baptism and the results are distinct. There is but one purpose and that is for Jesus to identify with John’s message of the righteous ‘at hand’ kingdom. But the results of the baptism are many. First, and most importantly, it resulted in the divine affirmation that Jesus was the Messianic King. The allusion to Psalm 2:7 by the Father’s voice out of heaven affirmed that Jesus as His Son was the heir of the kingdom. The fact that He was well-pleased with Him affirms that He was perfectly righteous and fit to rule as Adam failed to do. Second, and also very important, according to Acts 10:37-38 it resulted in the anointing of Jesus with the Holy Spirit to empower Him for His ministry. The anointing refers to a setting apart for the work of the Messiah. As a result of His baptism Jesus was set apart for His Messianic work. This work included both resisting temptations as well as the doing good to all by signs, miracles and

wonders. The temptations and the healings will now begin in Matthew as means of proving that indeed He is the Messiah. Third, His baptism by John resulted in His affirmation that John's message was true. John had been proclaiming the 'at hand' kingdom. Jesus, by being baptized by John verified that the kingdom was 'at hand.' This linked their two ministries inextricably. John's message was Jesus' message. The nation should be prepared for their King. Fourth, His baptism by John resulted in Him being identified with the remnant who had also been baptized by John. If the King had not identified with His subjects it would have sent the wrong message. As it was, however, Jesus was baptized, thus identifying with His subjects, all of whom would be active participants in the kingdom to come.

In summary, the purpose of Jesus' baptism by John was to identify with John's message of the 'at hand' kingdom. This was fitting or proper at that time as it was in keeping with all righteousness. The results of Jesus' baptism by John are four. First, to receive divine affirmation from the Father that Jesus was indeed the Messianic king. Second, to anoint the Son with the Spirit in order to be set apart for His Messianic work. Third, to affirm that John's message was true, the kingdom was 'at hand.' Fourth, to identify Himself with His subjects in the kingdom to come.

What was Matthew's purpose in including this event in his gospel? To show the formal presentation of the King. The King had now been divinely authenticated. The question now was whether the King could prove Himself by withstanding the temptations that Adam failed to withstand. If He failed to live by the Spirit then the kingdom would be lost forever to Satan; if He proved to live consistently by the Spirit then the rights to the kingdom would be regained by a genuine member of the human race. If Israel would receive him as her King then the kingdom would come. Matthew's narrative progresses next to Jesus' temptations in chapter 4.

ⁱ Pentecost, *Words and Works*, p 93.

ⁱⁱ Glascock, *Matthew*, p 77.

ⁱⁱⁱ Toussaint, *Behold the King*, p 73.

^{iv} He says, "His voluntary subjection to the ordinances which belonged to men, whether they were religious or secular." Because God had led John to baptize, it was proper for Christ to receive the ordinance at the hands of the Baptist." Toussaint, *hold the King*, p

Copyright (c) Fredericksburg Bible Church 2014

