

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

TEXT: MARK 1:9-11

Introduction:

1. Two weeks ago, we looked at the ministry of John the Baptist, and we focused on his message. His was a message of repentance (cf. 1:4, 5).
2. After people repented of their sins they were baptized by John in the Jordan River. The mode of baptism was immersion (1:9, 10).
3. John 3:23 says, “And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there.”
4. While John’s message was more important than his baptism, nevertheless his baptism was also very important as we shall see from tonight’s text.
5. Because while John the Baptist was performing his appointed work and preaching his strong message of repentance, the Lord Jesus Christ appeared, requesting that John baptize Him (cf. Matt. 3:13-15).
6. This is an unusual situation. Here is the spotless, sinless Son of God requesting to be baptized, when baptism is associated with repentance from sin.
7. Tonight we will study this passage and I will attempt to answer these three questions:

I. WHY SHOULD OUR SINLESS SAVIOUR BE BAPTIZED?

II. WHY DID THE HOLY SPIRIT DESCEND AND ABIDE UPON HIM IN CONNECTION WITH HIS BAPTISM?

III. WHY DID HIS BAPTISM BRING FORTH SUCH MARVELOUS EXPRESSIONS OF GOD’S APPROVAL?

I. WHY SHOULD OUR SINLESS SAVIOUR BE BAPTIZED?

1. At first, John the Baptist hesitated and that is understandable (Matthew 3:13, 14)?
2. John was a humble preacher. John the Baptist said, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30).
3. John preached hard against sin. Those who confessed their sins and got right with God were baptized (Mark 1:5). But our Lord was sinless. He did not need to get right with God because He *is* God.
4. Then why was it necessary for our Lord to be baptized? Please allow me to give a few reasons:
 - (1) Because the baptism of Jesus by John validated John’s office and ministry. John was not part of the religious establishment. He did not wear the elaborate robes and costumes that the Pharisees and Sadducees wore (Mark 1:6). He did not graduate from one of their schools. He did not travel in their circles or attend their meetings.

In fact, he rebuked them and called them a “generation of vipers” (Matt. 3:7). Therefore, he was criticized and many people questioned his credentials. But along comes our Lord and He asks John to baptize Him. This sent out a message that John’s ministry was ordained by God (cf. Matt. 21:23-27). John the Baptist received the best possible approval from the Lord Himself. When our Lord was baptized by John He was declaring to the world that John’s ministry was ordained by God.

- (2) Another reason why our Lord was baptized by John the Baptist: by submitting to John’s baptism, our Lord was putting His seal of approval upon the proper mode of baptism: immersion. Our English word “baptize” comes from the Greek word *baptizo* and means “immerse, submerge, dip, etc.” There are many examples of baptism in the NT and they are always by immersion. For example, in the book of Acts every time you see someone get saved, they get baptized by immersion immediately afterwards. This is all very important, but even more important is the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ Himself went down into the Jordan River and was baptized by John the Baptist. I cannot understand how someone can get saved and read their Bible and see how important baptism is and then ignore it.
- (3) Thirdly, by being baptized by John, our Lord was identifying with the ministry of John the Baptist. When a person gets baptized, he is identifying with that church and their doctrine. It has been pointed out that our Lord walked approximately 60 miles from Galilee to the lower Jordan River to be baptized by John (Mark 1:9). Surely this indicates the importance which our Lord attached to the ordinance of baptism as well as the ministry of John the Baptist. It also indicates the importance of baptism for believers today.
- (4) Fourthly, our Lord’s baptism typified His baptism in the waters of God’s judgment at Calvary (cf. Luke 12:49-51). Baptism is a picture of the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord. “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:3, 4). Only baptism by immersion properly pictures burial and resurrection.

(5) Finally, our Lord Himself told John why it was necessary for Him to be baptized. He said to John, “Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness” (Matt. 3:15). These are the first recorded words of our Lord in the NT. (Chronologically, Luke 2:49 comes first. This is when our Lord appeared in the temple.) But what does this mean, “to fulfil all righteousness”? It means to bring in God’s program, to make actual God’s program of perfect righteousness. The righteousness aimed at by the law and the prophets and demanded by John in his preaching is the righteousness of the Kingdom of heaven and is to be realized upon the earth.

II. WHY DID THE HOLY SPIRIT DESCEND AND ABIDE UPON OUR LORD IN CONNECTION WITH HIS BAPTISM?

1. Mark 1:10 says, “And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him.”
2. In the OT, persons and things were consecrated for a sacred purpose by “an holy anointing oil” (Ex. 30:25-30). This oil was a picture and type of the Holy Spirit. And our Lord was anointed Messiah by the Holy Spirit.
3. This was prophesied in the OT by the prophet Isaiah (cf. Isa. 11:1, 2; 42:1).
4. Our Lord had to have the power of the Holy Spirit upon His ministry in order to accomplish His divinely appointed program as the Son of God.
5. Think about this: if our Lord, who is God manifest in the flesh, needed the power of the Holy Spirit, how much more so must we?

III. WHY DID OUR LORD’S BAPTISM BRING FORTH SUCH MARVELOUS EXPRESSIONS OF GOD’S APPROVAL?

1. The heavens opened up – that was a marvelous expression of God’s approval (Mark 1:10). The Spirit of God descended and lit upon Him – that too was a marvelous expression of God’s approval (1:10).
2. But then “a voice from heaven” said, “Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (1:11). This is the first time we see the Trinity in the NT – one God manifested in three distinct Persons (cf. Isa. 48:16, 17).
3. The prophet Isaiah distinguishes between the Redeemer, the Lord God, and his Spirit (Isa. 48:16, 17). The Redeemer, also called “the Holy One of Israel” is obviously the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Isa. 59:20; Rom. 11:26).
4. Illustration: “Humble,” the “Oneness” (United Pentecostal Church) Pentecostal could not explain Mark 1:11.

5. Let me stop here for a moment and state that “Oneness Pentecostals” are heretics who deny the Trinity. TD Jakes is very popular but his doctrine is contrary to Scripture.
6. Unfortunately, many Baptists are going along with people like Mr. Jakes. This is another sign of the terrible apostasy prevalent today. Ed Young, a very popular SBC radio preacher and mega-church pastor has had TD Jakes preach at his church.
7. TD Jakes played the pastor in the “Left Behind” movie. Many other examples could be cited as well.
8. Judaism’s basic confession of faith is, “Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God is one LORD” (Deut. 6:4). This proclaims the unity of God but also intimates the Trinity. The Hebrew word for God, *Elohim*, is a plural word, peculiar to the O.T. and appears in no other Semitic language.
9. The Hebrew word translated “one” denotes a compound unity, not a simple unity (cf. Gen. 2:24 for a similar usage of the word “one”).
“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”
10. Whereas the O.T. emphasizes the unity of God but intimates the Trinity, the N.T. emphasizes the Trinity as well as the unity of God. “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. 28:19).
11. In the O.T. God frequently speaks of Himself with plural pronouns:
 - “And God said, Let us make man in our image” (Gen. 1:26).
 - “And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us” (Gen. 3:22).
 - “Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech. (Gen. 11:7).
 - “Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” (Isa. 6:8).
12. One day Daniel Webster and an unsaved friend were passing by a church when the friend asked, “How can you reconcile the doctrine of the Trinity with reason?” The great statesman replied by asking, “Do you understand the arithmetic of heaven?”
13. “The mind of man cannot fully understand the mystery of the Trinity. He who would try to understand the Trinity fully will lose his mind. But he who would deny the Trinity will lose his soul” – Lindsell and Woodbridge, *A Handbook of Christian Truth*.

14. This is one of three occasions when God the Father spoke from heaven in delighted acknowledgment of His “beloved Son” (cf. Matt. 17:5; John 12:28).

CONCLUSION:

1. Our first question tonight was, “Why should our sinless Saviour be baptized?” and the answer is “identification.” He identified with you and me when He submitted to the baptism of John.
2. Our second question was, “Why did the Holy Spirit descend and abide upon our Lord in connection with His baptism?” and the answer is “anointing.” Our Lord was anointed Messiah by the Holy Spirit.
3. And our third question was, “Why did our Lord’s baptism bring forth such marvelous expressions of God’s approval?” and the answer is “authentication.” Our Lord’s ministry as the Messiah was authenticated by God the Father (1:11).
4. Our Lord in His baptism received the seal of divine approval. God the Father would sustain Him. And of course, He will sustain you and me too if we do His good will.