

## **1Yr05 – It’s ON, Now! Matthew 3:1-17**

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Open your Bibles. Title of the message today, “It’s ON, Now!” Subtitle: “The Ministry begins.” The scripture for the message is Matthew Chapter 3 but we are going to Luke 2 first.

In our last message we met the first responders as Jesus Christ arrived into our world as the God/Man, the Savior. This message we go from him being in essence three years old to the beginning of his ministry as the God/Man at thirty years old. So we are going to hop, skip and jump from three years old to thirty years old in the life of Jesus Christ.

Let me ask you a question before we start. If you were God (hopefully it’s NOT news to you that *you’re not God*) but if you were God how would you introduce the most important work of eternal life to the world? How would you introduce the beginning of your work of salvation to the world? All of the host of heaven is available to you at your beck and call. You can easily break open the sky and absolutely force by your sheer “Godness” everyone on earth to believe and prove who you are. Wouldn’t that be the best way to go about it? If you were God, wouldn’t it be like, look, I want all these people saved so I’m just going to break open heaven, show them what’s really going on, and they will all have to believe. Would you do it that way?

Why did the real God do it so differently? So uniquely and subtly? We’ve already seen God’s incredible humility and his incredible poverty in coming to save the world. So low, so humble, in such abject poverty at his incarnation (his birth), it’s shocking. We’re going to continue to see his humility, his poverty, his meeting our poverty needs at a poverty level. I’m not talking about financially. I’m talking about the poverty of our souls. The poverty of the world, the place that we’re in. He is going to come down there and meet us there in a way that we would not do it if we were God.

And so let me just share with you right now something that you have to continually remind yourself of. Continually, maybe daily. Here it is, Isaiah 55:8-9. Memorize it, use it. Every time God says something different than you think, quote this verse. Every time you want to do something that you know is contrary to God’s will, quote this verse.

### **Isaiah 55:8–9 (NLT)**

***8 “My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,” says the Lord. “And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine.***

***9 For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.***

We have got to change our mind set, which means crush everything we think and say God your ways are not my ways. How did you do it? How did you begin the only crucial, eternal work of salvation that there is? Because it's not how I would have. And you can say that in every area of your life.

Let's pray. *Heavenly father please show your way. God forbid us from taking on that fleshly nature that matches Lucifer's nature far too much where we say "I will make the decisions, I will be like the most high, I will sit on the seat of decision, I know best." Lord crush that in us please and show us how you came. Show us the way you chose to bring salvation to us personally. And help us to be in awe at your plan and your process to make us your children. Open it up to us now we pray, in Jesus' name, amen.*

The Bible says almost nothing about the life of Christ between three years old and thirty years old. That's a pretty big stretch. We're going to do a hop, skip and jump message today. So, here's the hop. I want to share with you what we do know about his childhood years. What the Holy Spirit gives us is what I believe is a summary even, that kind of conveys what it was like growing up – Jesus. Turn to Luke Chapter 2. We ended last week with Joseph and Mary coming back from Egypt and taking the child Jesus to Nazareth. That becomes his town of youth, growing up.

**Luke 2:40 (NLT)**

***40 There the child grew up healthy and strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God's favor was on him.***

That's all true, that's all great, that's all you would expect for the God/Child. But it doesn't really tell us much about his childhood, does it? So, I believe the Holy Spirit inserts one event that kind of summarizes the childhood of Jesus. It starts in the next verse.

**Luke 2:41 (NLT)**

***41 Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Passover festival.***

The Passover was the most important festival of the year and all Jewish males were to attend three festivals, this being the most important one. The Passover was to commemorate the Exodus from Egypt, the final tenth plague, this killing of the Passover lamb, the blood covering the home and the Angel of Death passing over the homes that were covered with the blood of the innocent lamb. Which they made in the shape of a cross, by the way, as they marked their doors with the hyssop and the blood.

So Christ is the focus of the Passover. Everything about the Passover celebration points to Jesus. It blows your mind. If you want to hear what that looks like, go to the Bible teaching website, wordbymail.com and just search “Christ in the Passover.” And it is just a killer message about how the entire Passover celebration points to Jesus Christ.

Continuing in Luke 2:42.

**Luke 2:42 (NLT)**

***42 When Jesus was twelve years old, they attended the festival as usual.***

This may have actually been (scholars have differing opinions on this) Jesus’ BAR MITZVAH. Bar Mitzvah is not really Biblical, per se; there is not a ceremony or rite in the law about it. Bar Mitzvah means Son of the Commandment. And it occurs now, today, when Jewish males are thirteen years old. But in the time of Christ, it was either twelve or thirteen. And so Jesus may have been going to the temple – for the first time. The God/child going to the temple for the Passover for the first time. It’s a very, very big deal. Because all of Jerusalem, maybe a million people packed into Jerusalem, celebrating the Passover lamb. And the Passover Lamb was there. He was twelve. And he was in the temple, maybe for the first time. And he is watching all of the ceremonies that point to him. And you’ve got to imagine his heart as he watches all these people and he says to himself, you don’t understand, this is about me. This entire event, this entire ceremony is about what I’m here to do.

So the Shekinah Glory, the Glory that was above the Ark of the Covenant in the Tabernacle in the first Temple, Solomon’s Temple, wasn’t there. Because they lost the Ark. They misplaced it. Well, it probably got taken in a battle, but they lost the Ark. So the Shekinah Glory of God wasn’t there. But listen, God, HIMSELF, was in the room! God, himself, was on the Temple grounds. God, himself, the Passover Lamb was there and he would have been moved by it.

Continuing in Luke.

**Luke 2:43-45 (NLT)**

***43 After the (Passover) celebration was over, they started home to Nazareth, but Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents didn’t miss him at first,***

***44 because they assumed he was among the other travelers. But when he didn’t show up that evening, they started looking for him among their relatives and friends.***

***45 When they couldn’t find him, they went back to Jerusalem to search for him there.***

In other words, he ditched his parents. But it wasn't sinful. Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His Parents didn't miss him at first because they *because they assumed he was among the other travelers*. They traveled in large groups from Galilee to Jerusalem, large family and even village groups. When Jesus didn't "show up for dinner," they went looking for him.

Now these are the verses that great fun, humorous sermons are made up of, by or from. You could just live on this all day and tell joke after joke. Remember we almost left one of our children in the car seat outside of the car? We were switching cars, and like, did you get the car seat... with the baby in it? You could tell those jokes. But I don't have time to tell these jokes.

They couldn't find Jesus, they went back to Jerusalem. In essence, here's what's going on. These young parents who are now around thirty years old, they've been told by the Angel of God, "This is the Messiah. Name him Jesus. He will save his people from their sin. He will rule the eternal kingdom."

They lost him. Uh-oh. We lost the Messiah. They are headed back to Jerusalem and they are pretty freaked out. Verse 46 of Luke 2 says,

**Luke 2:46-47 (NLT)**

***46 Three days later they finally discovered him in the Temple, sitting among the religious teachers, listening to them and asking questions.***

***47 All who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.***

Jesus now would have been considered a man, if this was indeed what is called today, his Bar Mitzvah. Now he is considered a man, and he is allowed to sit with the Rabbis, to be instructed and to talk with the Rabbis. Can you imagine the Rabbis in the temple that day? "Hey! Who is this kid? Where are his parents? And why has he been sitting here giving us a hard time for three days? Who's picking this kid up? We can't stand another day of this kid sitting here quoting the law to us." I mean, you can imagine it, right?

**Luke 2:48-49 (NLT) – (after they find him)**

***48 His parents didn't know what to think. "Son," his mother said to him, "why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been frantic, searching for you everywhere."***

***49 "But why did you need to search?" he asked. "Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?"***

***50 But they didn't understand what he meant.***

That seems to be a great summary illustration of what it was like “Growing up Jesus.”  
Finally, Luke 2:51,

**Luke 2:51-52 (NLT)**

*51 Then he returned to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. And his mother stored all these things in her heart.*

*52 Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and all the people.*

Mary’s always storing things in her heart. She has to figure it out and take it in. She will put it all together at some point, and she did, probably at the Passion Week, she began to work it all out. She stored things up in her heart.

This is a great summary idea of what it must have been like in Jesus’ childhood. Fully God and fully child. I know it’s hard to make sense of. A normal boy, but to say normal would probably be a bit of a push, wouldn’t it? But here’s the thing I think it is important for us to say (before we take the skip, the next jump) everything about Jesus’ life was one hundred percent real. Everything. One hundred percent God. One hundred percent man. I know that makes two hundred percent. I know. As the one hundred percent man, Jesus lived through everything you and I will ever live through. He experienced everything that you and I would ever experience. That’s why Hebrews 4:15 says:

**Hebrews 4:15 says (NLT)**

*15 This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin.*

He understands our weaknesses because he faced all the same things, all the same trials we face, yet he did not sin. The next verse says that we can come to him with confidence in our time of need, for the mercy and the grace that we need. Because he understands. He has been there. He has experienced the testings, yet without sin.

That’s the first hop, now we are going to skip from twelve years old to thirty years old. And the point today is to see that it is “on” now. This is our fifth message, and it’s on! The ministry begins this message. However, before we make that jump we have to introduce John the Baptist.

John the Baptist was the incredible messenger that God sent before the Lord to prepare the way of the Lord. John was six months older than Jesus, and they were cousins. In essence I think you would call them second cousins because their mothers were cousins. The birth of John the Baptist was also miraculous, not like by the Spirit, the incarnation of Christ, not like that, but still a very miraculous birth. His mother Elizabeth couldn’t get

pregnant and his father didn't believe God, and it was kind of like the Abraham and Sarah story with Isaac. You can read about it all in Luke Chapter 1 and you should. Get an idea of Elizabeth and Zechariah and the birth of John the Baptist. So all we can do today is just point at it for you, as we are skipping ahead towards the beginning of the ministry of Jesus. Here's what the angel says in Luke 1 verse 15 when he visited Zechariah, John the Baptist's father:

**Luke 1:15–17 (NLT)**

*15 for he will be great in the eyes of the Lord . . . He will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even before his birth.*

*16 And he will turn many Israelites to the Lord their God.*

*17 He will be a man with the spirit and power of Elijah. He will prepare the people for the coming of the Lord. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and he will cause those who are rebellious to accept the wisdom of the godly.”*

John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus Christ. He went before him. He prepared the people to receive the King. Listen, he prepared the people to receive the King. How did he do this? *He did it by preaching repentance.* Now I don't know if you see that a bit different than what people use today to receive the King, but let me give you a little bit of contrast. John the Baptist says “Repent! For the Kingdom of God is near. The Kingdom of God is coming... repent of your sins and show proof of your repentance.” Today it's “Slip up a finger, repeat these three words and Jesus will give you everything you ever wanted for the rest of your life.”

I don't know if you can see a contrast there. But John the Baptist did it God's way. Repent! Repent of your sin! It means to turn from your sin to make your heart ready to receive Christ, because light and darkness can't inhabit the same place. You can't follow Jesus if you're following sin. And so John the Baptist came first and said, “Turn from your sin so that your heart will be ready to receive Christ.”

We don't hear that much in church today. That's bad. Because God did it this way. This makes it clear that if you are ready to receive Christ, that the way to prepare your life is to repent of your sin. Because sin has a hold on you. It's a shackle on you. It's bondage. It's got you chained up to darkness. And if you're tired of the darkness, break the chains and turn to the light. And as soon as you do, Christ will be there and he will come into your life and he will transform you.

John the Baptist preached repentance like no one else in the New Testament. He's is Elijah style. Turn to Matthew Chapter 3 verse 1.

### **Matthew 3:1-2 (NLT)**

***1 In those days John the Baptist came to the Judean wilderness and began preaching. His message was,***

***2 “Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.”***

Repent, because the Kingdom of Heaven (speaking of Jesus) is just around the corner. So get ready. Turn from your sins. The Kingdom of Heaven is near. John was saying you can't follow sin and Jesus so make a choice now so that your heart is ready when he shows up.

### **Matthew 3:3 (NLT)**

***3 The prophet Isaiah was speaking about John when he said, “He is a voice shouting in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord’s coming! Clear the road for him!’ ”***

John's radically proclaiming this. Clear out the sin in your life! Recognize that sin leads to destruction; you've got some, start clearing it out. And make a way for Jesus Christ to come rushing into your life. Everything John did he did in a radical way. Verse 4 of Chapter 3 helps us get a picture of him.

### **Matthew 3:4-6 (NLT)**

***4 John’s clothes were woven from coarse camel hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey.*** (He was – In Fact - the First Jesus FREAK)

***5 People from Jerusalem and from all of Judea and all over the Jordan Valley went out to see and hear John.***

***6 And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River.***

Where John was baptizing is Bethabara, across from Jericho. He was baptizing in the same spot that we were baptized in Israel, and when we go again we will have baptism in that area again, as long as water is flowing, in Bethabara. Right where John was baptizing, right where Jesus is about to be baptized, right where Joshua brought the children of Israel across the Jordan River into the Promised Land. It's a big deal.

***And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River.*** The people from Jerusalem, all over the wilderness area were coming to see John. And this is the kickoff of the ministry. Consider it for a minute. This is a guy that, not only does he not have a church, he doesn't have a building. Not only does he not have nice clothes on, he is wearing camel hair. He's eating whatever he can pick up off the ground and today we would say, that's one crazy guy, we gotta keep him out of church. This, though, is God's way of starting the ministry of Jesus Christ. “Give me one crazy screaming guy in the

desert, dress him in camel hair, have him eat locusts, make him the most radical Jesus Freak around, and that's how I'm going to begin my ministry." Do you see it? How much have we cleaned that up? John the Baptist is bringing the message, he's bringing the heat. And we need to see it because the message of Jesus Christ is radical.

Living for Jesus is radical. It is supernatural. It is contrary to normal. The people were listening to John the Baptist; the religious leaders were listening too, only with an eyebrow raised about the whole thing. So the Pharisees had to come see John. They wonder what's going on. They get in their camel train and come down twenty miles or so from Jerusalem. They come to see the trouble maker, and John the Baptist was ready for them.

### **Matthew 3:4-6 (NLT)**

***7 But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming to watch him baptize, he denounced them. "You brood of snakes!" he exclaimed. "Who warned you to flee God's coming wrath?***

***8 Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God.***

These were the religious leaders. They were the top of the religious food chain. And outwardly they were very religious. But inwardly they were corrupt to the core. They had zero integrity. They were hypocrites, they were self-righteous, self-focused, self-protecting.

That's how Jesus handled them. If you want to be a religious leader, be afraid. Be very afraid, because Jesus gave grace and mercy to everyone but the religious leaders. To the religious leaders he just said if you mess with my people I will send you back to your father, the devil.

In verse 8 John challenged these religious leaders to prove by the way they live that they have repented

Then in verse 11, John explains to the entire crowd the difference between his ministry and the ministry of Jesus.

### **Matthew 3:11 (NLT)**

***11 "I baptize with water those who repent of their sins and turn to God. But someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I'm not worthy even to be his slave and carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.***

John the Baptist knew his correct position. His position was as a sign-twirler. He was showing us the way to repentance. You take the road to repentance and get ready for the



Kingdom of God that's coming. John the Baptist was a door-holder. Let me just open this door. You walk through the door of repentance and you'll find Jesus Christ. John knew his position, and they tried to make him something, and they continued to try to make him something but he would never be anything but a door-opener and a sign-twirler. And that's what we want to be. *We want to pave the way for people to find Christ.* John paved it with repentance to make people ready. We want to do the same thing. So the contrast is John was saying repent. But when Jesus would come he would not baptize with water for repentance he would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

So the Holy Spirit is speaking of the baptism of the Holy Spirit that was poured out in Acts chapter 2 on the church and is still poured out on the church today. It's an answer to the prophecy in Joel 2:28-29 (write that in your margin) Jesus will also baptize with fire. This is a unique thing, fire. Fire speaks of both judgment and refining. Listen, do you want to be a pure Christian? Get ready for the fire. When you tell Jesus to "Purify the dross out of me. Purify the sin out of me." Get ready for the fire. Because that's how he does it. And then fire used ultimately for the judgment, for those who reject Christ. The prophecy there that Jesus is fulfilling is Malachi 3:1-5. (Write it in your margin.)

So Jesus is about to show up on the scene and John is trying to get the people ready and say when he comes he is going to baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire and I am not even worthy to untie or carry his sandals. And guess what? Jesus did come. Jesus came all the way to John the Baptist.

### **Matthew 3:13 (NLT)**

***13 Then Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John.***

You might think that's just around the corner. No. It's sixty plus miles, walking. It was sixty miles, minimum from the Galilee, maybe ten miles more from Nazareth, walking to the southern Jordan valley, across from Jericho to Jordan to where John was baptizing. How important was it that Jesus was baptized by the forerunner who preached repentance? It was important enough that Jesus Christ walked sixty miles to be baptized there by John. Important enough, you're going to see in a minute, that not only did Jesus walk there, but the Father God and Holy Spirit God both came personally to be there in attendance when Jesus Christ was baptized. I told you, it's "on" now. Ministry starts now. We are on the very verge of it.

So the Godhead, all three, are about to converge. Where? At the temple? No. At the temple during Passover when there could be up to a million people? No, didn't bother. Where? In the wilderness. In the wilderness on a riverbank. The Godhead shows up

visibly and audibly in a wilderness riverbank with some followers standing around, waiting to be baptized. That doesn't seem very productive. Let's get the word out a little bit.

Jesus walks out of the crowd toward John; you might say John gets "cold feet" there in the river. The Godhead knew what was going on. John the Baptist was clueless. Verse 14 of Matthew 3:

**Matthew 3:14 NLT**

***14 But John tried to talk him out of it. "I am the one who needs to be baptized by you," he said, "so why are you coming to me?"***

Isn't it reassuring that so often God uses the people who are most clueless about being used by him? John the Baptist wonders what's going on, and Jesus says in Matthew 3:15:

**Matthew 3:15 (NLT)**

***15 But Jesus said, "It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires." So John agreed to baptize him.***

Listen, John knew that Jesus had no sin. John knew that he was baptizing for repentance. Jesus had no need to be baptized for repentance because he had no sin. John knew who Jesus was from the beginning. Luke 1 verse 41 (write that down.) When Mary comes, pregnant, to Elizabeth her cousin's house, Elizabeth's baby (John the Baptist) jumps in the womb and is filled with the Holy Spirit. At that time in the womb, these guys knew each other. So John knew who this was, knew he didn't need to be baptized. Jesus said, Listen we have to carry out all that God requires.

Here's a question. What is Jesus talking about here? There was no requirement for baptism in the Mosaic Law. No requirements. What is he saying? **We must carry out all that God requires.** If you have a literal Bible it says ***to fulfill all righteousness.*** There was no requirement of God for people to be baptized. There were mikvah baths; I could get into that, which the Jews developed for Temple. But there was no law in the Law of Moses to be baptized. What is Jesus talking about? What is it that God requires?

Listen, there are two reasons we believe that Jesus was baptized. First, if you've been around here awhile you know the Greek word for baptized used most often is BAPTIZO. This actually means "to be identified with." It means to become one through identification. Now, in Romans 6 and when we use it for baptism we say that we say that we become so identified with Jesus Christ that a permanent change takes place. So that permanent change part didn't happen with Jesus. God needed Jesus Christ to be identified

with someone. And so his baptism was for identification. Who? Who was Jesus baptized to be identified with? US. It was me and it was you. Not to take on your sin nature, but to be *identified with* your sin nature. He was baptized to be identified with sinners. Not to take on our nature but so that one day he could take our sin to the cross. His baptism was to be identified with you so that he can pay for your sin in your place. That's when the ministry started. When he said "I will become like them, as a baby. I will be identified with them in baptism. I will die in their place on the cross." That's the God we serve. That's a pretty big deal. It's overwhelming to see that the God/Man was baptized to share an identification without his own sin, but share an identification with your yuck, and your mire, and your sin.

The second reason we see in our last verses as we wrap up.

**Matthew 3:16-17 (NLT)**

***16 After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him.***

***17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy."***

I told you this was a monumental moment! The entire Godhead is there, visibly, personally, tangibly. The Godhead is on the banks of the Jordan River in the wilderness. And so first Jesus is identified with sinners, with you and with me. And identified with the death and the burial and the resurrection that he'll experience on our behalf in order to pay the full penalty for our sin in our place. And then if you can imagine it, you've got to think slow motion, right? Think slow motion. Jesus is under water and his eyes are open and he looks out over the water, through the water, and he sees the heavens start to crack open while he is still under water. And he comes up from being baptized in slow motion and the heavens are split and the Holy Spirit "like a dove" is coming down and settling upon him. And everybody on the banks has their mouths hung open in awestruck wonder. And then a voice thunders out of heaven "***This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy.***"

It's just like the shepherds only bigger, only the shepherds got the host of heaven. This is the entire Godhead in full visible and audible form. And so the Holy Spirit comes down over the Son, Jesus, the Father speaks and then heaven zips closed again! And everyone is there in wonderment! And I imagine all you hear is a single frog. Ribbit! And you can hear a pin drop. And Jesus is standing there wet and the Holy Spirit is upon him. And it is *on!* At this moment it is *on!* *The ministry begins right here.* That is what is happening!

He was identified with us as sinners, he was confirmed by the Godhead as the Messiah, he was immersed, and he was baptized in the Holy Spirit and confirmed by the Father. God the Father himself and the Holy Spirit. It's on!

I have to speak about the baptism of the Holy Spirit and Jesus. Because you would say if I would say "Hey did Jesus need to be baptized with the Holy Spirit before he began his ministry?" And you couldn't say, because it's not said. Here's what I believe. What I know is this. This is what the Bible teaches us.

Jesus was one hundred percent God and one hundred percent man. As one hundred percent God did he need to be baptized with the Holy Spirit to begin his ministry? NO. As one hundred percent man, did he need to be baptized with the Holy Spirit to begin his ministry? He absolutely did. He is in the process of not just being confirmed by the Godhead, but being identified with sinners, and when he comes up as one hundred percent man – as one hundred percent God the Godhead is there to confirm him – the Holy Spirit baptizes him with power. And next message we are going to see him immediately step into the cage (like cage fight) with the devil himself. And God is like, not without the power of the Holy Spirit. You don't take one step. Jesus did not do one thing ministry-wise until he was baptized in the Holy Spirit.

And if he needed it, how much more so do we? How much more so do we need the Holy Spirit to come and settle on us? The NLT says the Holy Spirit settled on him. The literal translations say the Holy Spirit came to rest upon Jesus. Don't go out there without the Holy Spirit because you don't have it. You don't have anything to offer. You don't have the power of God in you, unless it is God in you. And the primary member of the Godhead that works in and through you in the world today, his name is the Holy Spirit. And so we have to say, "Okay Lord. I have to get up again. I need your Holy Spirit." Just like Jesus did when he came up out of the water. More so. How much more so do we need the Holy Spirit to rest on us?

So, what have we learned today?

#1) Jesus had a real childhood. He was real, just like us. Including ditching his parents, but somehow for him it wasn't sin.

#2) God sent a radical messenger ahead of Jesus who said "Repent! Get ready for him, turn from your sin." And if you want to be ready for him turn from your sin and have an open door for him.

#3) Jesus was identified with us so that he can take his with us to the cross, pay our sins in our place, die, be buried and raised from the dead in our place through identification.

So when we talk about our identification with Christ in Romans 6, this is Jesus' identification with us, in Matthew Chapter 3, at the baptism.

Finally, he was confirmed by God the Father and he was baptized by the Holy Spirit and now it's on! From this point on Jesus is moving in the power of God, in the power of the Spirit transforming lives and setting the path to the cross. From this moment to the cross, to the resurrection, Jesus never slows down. We will see that as we continue.

Let's pray. *Lord, what a life. God so much of the next year will be wrapped up in these three years of Jesus' ministry. And God we just surveyed some twenty-seven years of your life. Every day Lord you were identified with us. Every day you were real. One hundred percent man and yet one hundred percent Deity. Setting aside your rights of Deity Lord, to live as a man, sinless. To be identified with us. To prepare the way to pay for our sin in our place. Lord today we say we want to know you.*

(If that's you, just say to the Lord:) *Jesus, I want to know you. I want to know you like Paul wanted to know you when he said that he had given up everything to know Jesus, that he had willingly thrown overboard everything in his life for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. Lord Jesus I want to know who you are. I want to know why you came the way you came. I want to know what it means Lord. I want to know the power of you living inside of me. I want to know the power of being identified with you. I want to feel the power of the Holy Spirit resting on me. Lord, Jesus, I want to be baptized with both your Holy Spirit and with fire. Fill me with your power and refine my life. Refine my life that the dross would come up and that you would purify me, day to day, until I see you face to face. Make me yours Lord in every way, in Jesus' name, amen.*