

Resources:

David Thompson. *Christology #16-17*. Texas Corners Bible Church
Lewis Sperry Chafer. *Systematic Theology Vol. 5*. Pg. 56-73.
Swindoll and Zuck. *Understanding Christian Theology*. Pg. 345-347
S. Lewis Johnson. *The Baptism of Christ Sermon*

What I'm sure we will discover tonight is this:

**THE LORD JESUS CHRIST'S BAPTISM IN WATER WAS VERY UNIQUE AND
UNLIKE ANY OTHER WATER BAPTISM.**

1. Matthew 3
2. Mark 1:1-11
3. Luke 3:1-22

1. John 1:15-34
2. Matthew 22:23-27
3. Acts 10:37-38
4. Acts 19:1-7
5. John 3:22-4:4

Fact #1 - John the Baptist's ministry involved preaching and baptizing.

His message included a call to repent, which means to change your mind. His message included an announcement that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, meaning that the program of God was about to change. His message included announcing that a person would come after him who was greater than him. His message promoted confession of sins. His message indicated that His baptism was with water, but the one who would come after would also baptize, but it would not be with water, it would be with the Holy Spirit and fire. His message included producing fruit that is worthy of repentance, such as living a holy, righteous, and content life. His message included illustrations of fruitless trees being cut down and an illustration of Jesus having a fan in His hand that would separate the chaff from the wheat. His message involved the coming Kingdom and the coming King. His message involved preparing people, mentally and spiritually, for that kingdom and its arrival.

John's baptism included all kinds of people from all walks of life. Average, ordinary people were coming to him as well as Pharisees and Sadducees. The text is not clear as to whether or not he was actually baptizing those religious leaders, but at the least bit, they came out to see the show.

Fact #2 - Jesus went and was baptized by John.

Jesus agreed with John and his message to the extent that Jesus saw it necessary for Him to be baptized. Now, the issue with this is that Jesus had no need to change his mind in repentance. He

had no need to confess guilt of sin. He had no need to have sin removed from Him. He was sinlessly perfect, and yet, He still went to be baptized by John. That raises a big question, namely "Why did Jesus get baptized by John if He was not in need of repentance?" And hopefully, as the evening goes on, I'll be able to explain that to you.

Fact #3 - God the Father announced from heaven that Jesus was His pleasing Son and the Spirit descended on Him in the form like a dove.

This fact alone declares that Jesus' baptism was in a class all by itself. This is not like any water baptism we see today. No one is coming out of the water and then the whole crowd hears a thundering voice from heaven. Jesus' baptism was clearly something unique.

Fact #4 - Jesus told John He needed to be baptized to "fulfill all righteousness."

Whatever it means to "fulfill all righteousness," Jesus needed to be baptized for that to happen. The biggest problem we face is pinpointing what Jesus meant when He said that.

Fact #5 - John the Baptist learned that Jesus was the Son of God when he baptized Jesus.

John said that Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, would be revealed to Israel through His baptism. This is the reason why, according to John, he came baptizing - that the one who was greater than John would be revealed.

Fact #6 - John said he was sent to baptize in order to reveal Jesus Christ to Israel.

John's hindsight perspective for his baptizing ministry was in order for him to baptize Jesus. At this baptism, Jesus would be revealed as the anointed one of God - the Messiah. Upon John seeing the Spirit descend on Jesus and remain, he testified that Jesus is the Son of God.

Fact #7 - The apostle Peter declared that Jesus was anointed by God with the Holy Spirit in connection with John's baptizing ministry.

Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit at His baptism. For those of you who have been following this study, you'll remember that we went into detail regarding anointing on lesson #17 of this Christology series when we talked about Jesus the Messiah.

Fact #8 - The apostle Paul stated that John's baptizing ministry pointed to faith in Jesus.

Paul made clear that John the Baptist was telling people to believe on Jesus, who would come after him. Being baptized by John did not supply people with the Holy Spirit. Being baptized by John should have led people to eventually place their face in Jesus in order to receive the Holy Spirit and eternal life (John 3:34-36).

Fact #9 - Jesus and His disciples had a baptizing ministry as well.

I bring this up because there were two types of baptisms taking place. John was baptizing with the emphasis that Israel must be prepared for the Kingdom and to believe in the one who would come after Him - Jesus. Jesus and His disciples' baptism emphasized identification with Jesus. These people were coming to Jesus and they were being baptized, most likely to indicate their trust in Him and that they are aligning themselves with Jesus and His teaching.

Question #1 - What does baptism mean?

The word "baptize" comes from the Greek word *Baptizo*. This word means "to sink or immerse." It means "to be placed into." In other words, it means to be placed into and immersed into something, like how a rock can be placed into water, being completely immersed in that water, and then sinking to the bottom, with no thought of bringing it back up to the surface. It is forever in that water.

Biblically speaking, baptism has that very same idea. A person is being sunk into or immersed into that which they have placed their faith in. It has the idea of identification. When a person was baptized by John, they were physically displaying their mental and spiritual condition of being fully immersed into what John was saying. They believed what John was saying and sank themselves into it. They outwardly express this through physically being baptized in water. That water has a cleansing representation to it. That person says, "whatever I used to think how I used to live and believe is all washed away. I now think differently. I have changed my mind and now I want to live in a way that reflects my new belief and thought. I am expressing that internal reality through outwardly and being physically immersed in water."

Question #2 - Why did Jesus get baptized?

Lewis Sperry Chafer points out that in relation to Jesus' baptism, there are four major views of why He was baptized.

(View #1) - Jesus was baptized to identify Himself with sinful humanity who needed salvation, and He would later be the sacrifice to save them.

According to Chafer, there are 3 problems with this view.

#1 - This view does not have Scriptural support. No where does the text teach us that Christ was identifying Himself with sinners and therefore He went through John's baptism.

#2 - Christ's substitutionary redemptive work was restricted to the sufferings and death of the cross.

#3 - This baptism is far more in relation to Him and Israel and not Him and the whole world of sinful humanity.

(View #2) - Jesus' baptism was to set Him apart as Messiah of Israel by His baptism.

Chafer said, "in this connection it is suggested that as the kingdom in which Messiah is to reign will be ushered in by the bringing in of everlasting righteousness (Dan. 9:24), there is some reference to this in Christ's words to John about fulfilling all righteousness. This theory is especially weak in that there is no real connection between these two verses to righteousness, nor is there a Biblical ground upon which the theory might rest."

(View #3) - Jesus was baptized to identify himself with the godly remnant of Israel who responded to the preaching of John.

Chafer notes though, "there is no well defined basis for this supposition that by so doing Christ fulfilled all righteousness."

(View #4) - Jesus was baptized in order to be appointed as a priest of God.

There are 5 reasons for why people hold to this view.

#1 - There are three times in the life of Jesus where God the Father announces something pertaining to His three messianic offices. Ps 2:6-7 refers to a future time when the Father will announce Jesus King. Matthew 17:5 is a past time when God the Father announced Jesus as a prophet ("hear Him"). And Matthew 3:16-17 was a time when God the Father announced Jesus as priest.

#2 - According to Luke 3:21-23, Jesus began His public ministry at about the age of 30. 30 is the age where priests were appointed to their office, according to Numbers 4:3.

#3 - Because Jesus was of Judah and not Levi. He could not be a priest as a descendant of Aaron. In order for Jesus to be appointed as a priest, He needed to have a unique and public appointment to that office. That is where His baptism comes into play.

#4 - According to Lev. 8:1-6 and Exodus 29:1-9, every priest needed to be ordained. Jesus was ordained at His baptism.

#5 - Jesus was announced by God the Father to be His Son in whom God is well pleased, noting that Jesus was being sanctioned to His office of priest in a proper ordination and consecration by God the Father.

The preferred view of Chafer is view #4. This is also the view that pastor David Thompson takes. Jesus Christ was receiving a baptism that signaled that He is the Priest who had been appointed by God.

Question #3 - What is Charlie's view regarding Christ baptism?

Well, I would say that Chafer makes a very good argument regarding Jesus and His Priestly work. He did not even mention the fact that priests in the Law age were required to be washed with water when they were appointed to their office as priests (Lev. 8:6). I think that would only

increase the argument that Jesus, in His water baptism, was being appointed to His office as Priest.

So I would agree with Chafer regarding the announcement of Jesus as priest because he makes such a good case for it, but I also would not limit it to just that. I believe there are 5 reasons for why Jesus was baptized.

(Reason #1) - Jesus was baptized because Jesus knew that John's message and ministry was of God, and Jesus aligned Himself with John's God ordained ministry (Matthew 22:23-27).

Jesus' act of being baptized by John declared that John was a true prophet of God with a God given ministry and message.

(Reason #2) - Jesus was baptized because John's ministry involved him learning of the revealing of the Messiah of Israel through baptism (John 1:32-34).

(Reason #3) - Jesus was baptized to righteously and properly be declared a priest (see view 4 above).

(Reason #4) - Jesus was baptized because it would have been unrighteous of Him to not be baptized (Matthew 3:15).

What exactly "fulfill all righteousness" means, I don't actually know, but I tend to think that Jesus, as a law age Jewish man, needed to do what God's will was for law age Jews. It was God's will that those who were preparing themselves for the coming kingdom would identify themselves with John's message and would be baptized. Jesus submitted Himself to God's will in perfect righteousness.

(Reason #5) - Jesus was baptized to publicly begin His Messianic ministry (Mark 1:7; John 1:29).

John the Baptist no longer needed to say, "there is one coming after me that you should listen to" after he baptized Jesus. After baptizing Jesus, John was now able to say, "look, the lamb of God is here who will take away the sin of the world."

So those five reasons are my answer to the question, "Why was Jesus baptized?"

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