

The Historical Jesus

The best way to know someone – their actions

The baptism of Jesus – undisputed, historical fact

“It is historically certain that Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan.” – John Dominic Crossan

“The historicity of the baptism of Jesus... commands nearly universal assent... it ranks so high on the almost impossible to doubt or deny scale of historical facts that it is used as the starting point for the study of the historical Jesus.” – James Dunn

The importance of finding truth

“You have your truth, I have my truth” versus “True Truth!”

Truth means “that which corresponds to the facts”

Why was Jesus baptized?

Identification

The sinless one is baptized for forgiveness of his sins?

“Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.” Heb. 2:17-18

“... that is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers.” Heb. 2:12

“It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, ⁸ but it is because the LORD loves you...” Dt. 7:7

You see the beautiful humility of Christ

Attitudes of superiority are out of bounds in Christianity!

How have you/do you identify with the lowly?

Access

Jesus succeeds where Israel failed – “Forty days in the wilderness”

Jesus on earth is heaven torn open – “He saw the heavens being torn open.” – Isa 64:1

A foreshadowing of Mark 15:38

“³⁷ And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. ³⁸ And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.”

Acceptance

God accepts people prior to their productivity

“You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

Questions for Personal Study

1. What sorts of people do you feel superior to? How is this out of step with the Gospel?
2. Why did Jesus get baptized, even if he has no sin to repent from?
3. Are there times when you think God won't hear you, or doesn't accept you?
4. What can you do this week to make Jesus, the Bible, our faith, etc., ... beautiful to someone?