

MARK — Who Is Jesus? God's Son

Ps Perry Burkholder

Mark 1:9-13

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw **heaven being torn open** and the **Spirit descending on him like a dove**. And a voice came from heaven: “**You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.**”

At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him

The New International Version. (2011). (Mk 1:9–13). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

We are making decisions about our identity at very young ages, and we choose directions that set the course of our life. If you think about who you could be in ten years, you can take a step back and realizing you're becoming that person right now.

Pastor Perry shared his story about when he got baptized about how that was an identity marker for him, saying "I choose to pledge my allegiance to Jesus and follow him for the rest of my life."

What about you? Have you been baptized?

Take some time to reflect on the reality that Jesus had awoken in you — to the reality of his calling you to the kingdom.

If you haven't been baptized, could you see yourself being defined by Jesus? How would your life be different if Jesus actually led your life? What would your life look like if you pledged your allegiance to Jesus?

Why Was Jesus Baptized?

It was the beginning of his ministry to reveal who he is to the world, and why his identity matters.

As Jesus rose out of the waters, he and the crowd saw something intended for a multitude to see. These things were markers of some of the writings of the Old Testament

Heaven Torn Open

This was a direct quote and prayer from Isaiah the prophet:

Isa 64:1-4

Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains would tremble before you!

As when fire sets twigs ablaze
and causes water to boil,
come down to make your name known to your enemies
and cause the nations to quake before you!

For when you did awesome things that we did not expect,
you came down, and the mountains trembled before you.

Since ancient times no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who acts on behalf of those who wait for him.

The New International Version. (2011). (Is 64:1–4). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

The cosmic significance of this moment as heaven is torn open is an answer to prayer: YHWH God is "rending the heavens" and that his rule is invading this world through Jesus.

The last days are now beginning as God begins to reclaim this world.

In this day and Western age, post-Christians and agnostics often ask, "Why doesn't God come down and show himself to me?" And little do they know that Jesus' followers first asked him that, and his answer was, "if you've seen me, you've seen the Father." And we have these four gospels introducing people to Jesus. And Jesus also said, they'll know me if you love each other.

What people need is not Jesus coming down from heaven to show himself to them, but for you to introduce yourself to them and work together to meet Jesus through the Word.

If people rejected Jesus in person then, and they'll reject the idea of him now. What they are less likely to reject is an invitation to a meal, getting to know you, and seeing Jesus in you.

Resting Like a Dove

Gen 3

Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the **Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.**

The New International Version. (2011). (Ge 1:2). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

In the beginning, a significant symbol preceding creation was the Spirit of God hovering over the waters. Here at Jesus' baptism, we see the Spirit descend like a dove over the waters and over Jesus. The significance?

A new creation is coming...

My Son In Whom I Delight

Psalm 2:6-12

I have installed my king
on Zion, my holy mountain.”

I will proclaim the Lord’s decree:
He said to me, “**You are my son**;
today I have become your father.

Ask me,
and I will make the nations your inheritance,
the ends of the earth your possession.

You will break them with a rod of iron;
you will dash them to pieces like pottery.”

Therefore, you kings, be wise;
be warned, you rulers of the earth.

Serve the Lord with fear
and celebrate his rule with trembling.

Kiss his son, or he will be angry
and your way will lead to your destruction,
for his wrath can flare up in a moment.
Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

The New International Version. (2011). (Ps 2:6–12). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

The voice from Heaven confirms Jesus' identity as the true Psalm 2 King of the world, to whom all the nations will give their worship.

Isaiah 42:1-4

Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen one in whom I delight;
I will put my Spirit on him,
and he will bring justice to the nations.

He will not shout or cry out,
or raise his voice in the streets.

A bruised reed he will not break,
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.
In faithfulness he will bring forth justice;

he will not falter or be discouraged
till he establishes justice on earth.
In his teaching the islands will put their hope.”

The New International Version. (2011). (Is 42:1–4). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

The voice from Heaven confirms that Jesus is the suffering servant who will bring justice to the nations through YHWH God's Spirit.

Why Again Did Jesus Get Baptized?



YHWH God is using Jesus' baptism moment as an identity marker to define Jesus' ministry, what his calling is, and what Jesus will go on to do.

Matthew 3

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, “***I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?***”

Jesus replied, “**Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.**” Then John consented.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on

him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased

The New International Version. (2011). (Mt 3:13–17). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Jesus as the one true Israelite was the one coming to represent all of humanity to save us from the powers of darkness and to save humanity from their sins. Jesus submitting to this baptism is Jesus symbolically stepping into our place, filling up the cup of righteousness so that he may then drink the cup of wrath (Jer 25:15)

Jesus is baptized to fill the cup of your righteousness and drinks the cup of wrath that was originally given to you.

YHWH God affirms that the divine human one that could do this for you was indeed this same Jesus who walked into the waters of baptism.

We are not saved by our own obedience or goodness, or performance, but by the one who fulfilled your righteousness and walked in your shoes and lived your life correctly.

The voice that says to you, "Work harder, & do better you failure," is not the voice of God, but of the accuser.

Upon his death, Jesus proclaimed, "***Paid in full***," every debt you owed, transgression you made, and cleared your ledger. *Do you believe that, or simply mentally assent to that?*

How do you live your life? Can you rest in that?

How different would you be if you began your days resting in the truth that your ledger was paid in full, rather than working to clear your ledger?

Why Does Any of This Matter?

Because you have voices clamoring to place their identity markers on your life, and you sit at the foot of a tree of knowledge of good and bad, and you make decisions on which voices to listen to that will shape your identity and who you become.

- Voices of media
- Voices in your head
- Voices of peers
- Voices of parents
- Voices of friends

All of these voices will shape where you find your security and significance. Do you let every voice in without discretion? Do you let every voice shape your narrative and shape how you act?

Do you let every voice disciple you and do you allow yourself to submit to them?

Or do you submit to God's voice?

Because in the end, you either submit to the voices out there (or in your head) or to God's voice? *"You are my daughter, my son, in whom I am well pleased?"*



Christian, you are either being disciplined by the media and the culture, or you are being disciplined by Jesus. Jesus calls you to be a disciple of him, which means not submitting to the media or to culture. If you are not tuning the other voices out, then you are not listening to Jesus because you can't listen to Jesus.

Pastor Perry is calling us to tune out the other voices and choose to listen to Jesus.

This isn't a call to never listen to media or culture again; Jesus lived in a culture that had other writings and media, propaganda (Pax Romana), and dissenting culture. He heard those voices, but he didn't *listen* to them. Jesus *listened* to the Father, YHWH God, and that is what we are calling you to: tuning into Jesus.

Don't let the wilderness and temptations to beat you down and make you subservient to the culture. It is tempting to get angry at God for leading us into the wilderness, with the wild animals. Some grumbled and rebelled against God in the wilderness.

But the wilderness is for refinement and for learning to depend on Jesus more fully. Jesus went into the ultimate wilderness on our behalf so that you can be free to follow him.

In Summary...

Jesus' baptism was a revelation of his identity to the world: that he is YHWH God that broke open the heavens to be with his people, & bring justice; that the Spirit is hovering over the waters to restart creation and make it new; that the Spirit is anointing this suffering servant who will bring justice and redemption to the nations.

Why does this matter? Because if you are in Jesus, this calling shapes you as well. And just as Jesus' identity was revealed by God, your identity as a Christian is necessarily shaped by God also. However, we don't always live like that. When our thoughts and meditation is on the voices of the world, we will look like the world instead of looking like Jesus.

As you consider where you are, we are challenging you to be baptized and choose to mark your identity in Christ, rather than with the world. God tore open the heavens to come down and shape your identity, and the choice is yours to accept His identity or accept the world's.