

“The Baptism of Jesus”

Luke 3:21-22

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I. Introduction

- A. We come this morning in our study of Luke’s Gospel to the inauguration of Christ for His public ministry
 - 1. *“The thirty years of privacy merge into the three years of publicity by the way of solemn and significant ceremony.”* – G. Campbell Morgan
 - a) The solemn ceremony was the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist
- B. The baptism of Jesus by John is recorded in all three of the synoptic gospels (Matthew 3, Mark 1, Luke 3)
 - 1. Of the three, Luke’s is the briefest
 - 2. Luke’s focus was on the facts (vv. 21-22)
 - a) The Son is baptized and praying (only in Luke)
 - b) The Heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit descended (a vision)
 - c) The Father’s voice speaking (“You are my...”)
 - 3. It’s the testimony of the Father to the Son
 - a) It’s the divine confirmation of Christ
 - 4. This is an important event in the life of Christ
 - a) Why?
 - b) For many reasons, but one of the most important is:
 - 1) The tri-unity of God is seen
 - 2) The Bible teaches that there is “one God,” but that one God is three persons
 - 3) It’s the doctrine of the Trinity
- C. I want to break down this passage by looking at each person of the Trinity
 - 1. The baptism of God the Son
 - 2. The descending of God the Spirit
 - 3. The voice of God the Father

II. The Baptism of God the Son (Luke 3:21)

- A. When Jesus was baptized
 - 1. “Now when all the people were baptized...” (v. 21)
 - 2. At the same time as everyone else (sinners coming)
 - 3. “Before John was put in prison” (v.20)
- B. Why would Jesus be baptized?
 - 1. Not because He sinned and needed to repent
 - a) “...who knew no sin...” (2 Corinthians 5:21)
 - b) “...who committed no sin...” (1 Peter 2:22)
 - c) Baptism cannot forgive sin
 - 2. To show His approval of John’s ministry
 - 3. For John to know who He is
 - a) “I would not have known Him except...” (John 1:33-34)
 - b) “Behold the Lamb of God who...”
 - 4. To identify with sinners (sympathetically)

5. To fulfill all righteousness
 - a) “Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, “I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him” (Matthew 3:13-15).
 - b) Jesus came to fulfill all righteousness
 - 1) Jesus came to live a sinless life and die a substitutionary death
 - 2) At the cross, He took our sin and rose from the dead to impute unto us His righteousness.
 - 3) Jesus, the incarnate Son of God
 - 4) “Substitution” and “imputation”
 - a. “For He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Corinthians 5:21).
 - 5) Jesus was praying, and the heaven was opened (v. 21)

III. The Descending of God the Spirit (Luke 3:22a)

- A. “Jesus was praying” (v. 21)
 1. “The heaven was opened” (v. 21)
- B. “The Holy Spirit descended” (v. 22)
 1. Who is the Holy Spirit?
 - a) A person (a divine person)
- C. The vision of our manifestation of God, the Holy Spirit
 1. In bodily shape, like a dove upon Him
 2. The only place the Spirit is likened to a dove
 3. “Lighting upon Him” (Matthew 3:16)
 4. Illustration- (Genesis 12)
- D. What’s the significance?
 1. So John would know Him
 - a) “It’s the Spirit’s testimony to Jesus” (John 1)
 - b) Only the Holy Spirit can show you Jesus
 - 1) It’s His number one job
 2. To anoint and empower Jesus for His Messianic mission
 - a) Remember, Jesus was truly man, as well as God
 - b) The Spirit came to anoint Him
 - c) Illustration- prophet, priest, king
 - d) It’s not Christ’s only encounter with the Spirit
 - 1) “full and led” (4:1)
 - 2) “And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit” (4:14)
 - 3) “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me” (4:18)
 - e) “I have put my Spirit upon Him” (Isaiah 42:1)
 - f) “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power” (Acts 10:38)
 - g) (Ephesians 5:18)
 - h) Jesus prayed, was baptized, and was empowered by the Holy Spirit

IV. The Voice of God the Father (Luke 3:22b)

- A. “Thou art my beloved Son”
 - 1. God the Son submitting
 - 2. God the Spirit descending
 - 3. God the Father confirming
 - 4. From the vision of the Spirit to the voice of the Father
- B. “In you I am well pleased”
 - 1. “In you I have found delight”
 - 2. These two statements splice together two remarkable messianic Old Testament texts
 - a) “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee” (Psalm 2:7)
 - 1. Jesus is the Son of God
 - 2. Illustration- Gabriel’s word to Mary (Luke 1:35)
 - 3. It’s the title of deity
 - 4. “But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne O God” (Hebrews 1:8)
 - 5. The Father called the Son of God
 - b) “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth, I have put my spirit upon him” (Isaiah 42:1).
 - 1. What exactly is the Father pleased with?
 - a. In retrospect (with the Son’s coming suffering on the cross)
 - b. The suffering servant (Isaiah 53:10)
 - 2. Jesus’ baptism was a picture of His death and resurrection

V. Conclusion

- A. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places” (Ephesians 1:3).
 - 1. The Father chose us by His grace
 - 2. The Son redeemed us by His blood
 - 3. The Spirit regenerated us and sealed us