

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS *Matthew 3:13-17 (HCSB)* “Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. 14 But John tried to stop Him, saying, “I need to be baptized by You, and yet You come to me?” 15 Jesus answered him, “Allow it for now, because this is the way for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he allowed Him [to be baptized]. 16 After Jesus was baptized, He went up immediately from the water. The heavens suddenly opened for Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on Him. 17 And there came a voice from heaven: This is My beloved Son. I take delight in Him!”

I. INTRODUCTION-

- a. Luke tells us that the public ministry of Jesus began...when He was “*about thirty years of age.*” (*Luke 3:23*)...the first event in the ministry of Jesus...was His baptism by John the Baptist.
- b. Tonight we are going to look at: THE PERSON WHO BAPTIZED JESUS...THE PURPOSE OF JESUS’ BAPTISM...THE PHENOMENA THAT OCCURRED AT JESUS’ BAPTISM...THE PROCLAMATION OF JESUS’ BAPTISM.

II. THE PERSON WHO BAPTIZED JESUS-

- a. The person who baptized Jesus was John the Baptist...remember that John was miraculously born to a priest named Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth ...even though they were well beyond child bearing years.
- b. The Bible says that Elizabeth and Mary the mother of Jesus were related...which would make John the Baptist and Jesus related as well.
- c. John the Baptist was the “forerunner”...which the Old Testament promised God would send to Israel...to prepare the nation for the arrival of the Messiah.
- d. When ancient kings would visit areas of their kingdom...they would send forerunners ahead of them...to announce and prepare the way for their coming.
- e. For 400 years...since Malachi...there had been no prophet in Israel...during that time Israel had been oppressed by conquering nations...and spiritually the people had become lethargic, lifeless and legalistic.
- f. The mission of John the Baptist was to wake and shake the people up...and announce and prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah.
- g. To get ready for the Messiah...John called on the people to repent of their sins and get right with God.

- h. As a symbol of their commitment...John would baptize those who responded to his message.

III. THE PURPOSE OF JESUS' BAPTISM-

- a. At the end of one His sermons...John was surprised to see his kinsman Jesus coming forward to request baptism.
- b. John resisted baptizing Jesus for two reasons...(1) John had an idea that Jesus was the Messiah...if Jesus was the Messiah...John knew that he was the one who needed to be baptized by Jesus...(2) John's baptism was a baptism of repentance ... if Jesus was the Messiah...He had no sin to repent of.
- c. But Jesus told John that baptizing Him was the right thing to do...why?...(1) it was Jesus' way of endorsing John's ministry and validating John's eventual witness that He was the Messiah...(2) to identify Himself with the lost humanity that Jesus came to save... (3) to foreshadow His own death, burial and resurrection ...(4) to set an example that we too should always do the right thing.
- d. *Why should those who receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior be baptized?...* because the Bible commands it and it is the right thing to do...*Why should those who receive Christ make a public profession of faith, join a local church and become active in the life and the ministry of a local church?...*because the Bible commands it and it is the right thing to do.
- e. The mode of John's baptism and His baptism of Jesus...was clearly total immersion into water...the original word that is translated "baptize"...literally means to cover or immerse in water.

IV. THE PHENOMENA THAT OCCURRED AT JESUS' BAPTISM-

- a. The Bible says that after Jesus was baptized...two extraordinary phenomena occurred ...one was visible and the other was vocal.
- b. (1) The Holy Spirit visibly descended on Jesus in the form of a dove...(2) God the Father spoke from heaven saying...*"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*
- c. What was the meaning of this phenomena?... (1) It was the endorsement and witness of God the Holy Spirit and God the Father of the divine and eternal nature of the Lord Jesus Christ...(2) It confirmed to John the Baptist that Jesus was indeed the Messiah.

- d. *John 1:33-34 (HCSB) “I didn’t know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The One you see the Spirit descending and resting on—He is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ 34 I have seen and testified that He is the Son of God!”*
- e. This is a Trinitarian passage...one in which all three members of the triune God are presented...the Bible teaches we do not worship three Gods...we worship one God Who is the perfect union of three equally divine persons...God the Father ... God the Son...God the Holy Spirit.

V. THE PROCLAMATION OF JESUS’ BAPTISM-

- a. Jesus once asked His disciples “Who do men say that I am?”...the true identity of Jesus has always been debated in this world.
- b. Secular society says that at best Jesus was a good man...a wonderful teacher...an important religious leader...but He was not God.
- c. Cults deny, twist, pervert and blaspheme...the biblical truth of the true identity of Jesus.
- d. New Age doctrine teaches that Jesus is just one of many throughout the ages ... who have achieved perfect enlightenment...and the consciousness of the "godness" which lies within us all.
- e. Judaism says that Jesus was an important prophet...but He is not Israel's Messiah ... He is not divine...and He is not Lord and Savior.
- f. Islam says that Jesus was a major prophet...but it denies His deity...and it denies that He is the only Savior and the only Lord.
- g. But at the baptism of Jesus...God the Father declared that Jesus is God...God the Son...Who came into the world to provide salvation for lost mankind.
- h. *Who is Jesus? Jesus is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of mankind from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion.*

He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever-present Lord.

VI. CONCLUSION-

- a. Are you doing what is right? Who do you say that Jesus is?
- b. Dottie Rambo: *Master, Redeemer, Savior of the world. Wonderful, Counselor, Bright Morning Star. Lily of the valley, Provider, and Friend, He was yesterday, He'll be tomorrow, Beginning and End. Jehovah, Messiah, Mighty God and King. Bread of Life, lasting words of love that I sing. Light and darkness, Door to heaven, my home in the sky, The Fountain of Living Water that never shall run dry. But the angel called Him Jesus, born of a virgin. Mary called Him Jesus, but I call Him Lord.*