

JESUS WAS BAPTIZED

CORE PASSAGE: MATTHEW 3:13-17

CONTEXT

Jesus's baptism in the Jordan River followed on the heels of John the Baptist's announcement concerning the arrival of the long-awaited Messiah. John's ministry was the fulfillment of various Old Testament prophecies concerning a "forerunner," one who was to come before the Messiah announcing His arrival and calling God's people to repent from their sins.

KEY CONCEPT

Jesus, the Second Person of the divine Trinity, set an example for us in humility.

As you examine Matthew 3:13-17:

- Understand that though He is sinless, Jesus knew His baptism would validate both His and John's ministry.
- Recognize that a voice—the Father—called Jesus His beloved Son and gave evidence of His authority.



TIMELINE

John the Baptist Is Born to Prepare the Way for the Messiah (Luke 1:57-80)

John the Baptist Calls People to Repentance in Preparation for Jesus (Matthew 3:1-12)

Jesus Is Tempted in the Wilderness (Luke 4:1-13)

Jesus, the Son of God, Is Born and Grows in Favor with God and Man (Luke 2:1-52)

SESSION STUDY: John Baptizes Jesus in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:13-17)

Jesus Calls Disciples to Follow Him (John 1:35-51)

Daily Readings

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 1: Mark 1:9-11 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 4: John 1:1-18 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 2: Luke 3:21-38 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 5: John 1:19-34 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 3: Matthew 3:13-17 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 6: Psalm 146 |



Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

MATTHEW 3:13-15

JESUS SET AN EXAMPLE FOR US IN BAPTISM.

As you read the passage below, circle any words or phrases that are repeated.

13 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 John allowed him to be baptized.

VOICES FROM THE CHURCH

“Our culture seeks validation through achievement. Jesus, however, shows us that true validation comes through obedience to the Father’s will, even if that means taking a lower place or associating with the ‘wrong crowd.’”¹

–Mike Leake

Key Concept: Jesus, the Second Person of the divine Trinity, set an example for us in humility.

This passage represents a pivotal moment in Jesus's life: the inauguration of Jesus's public ministry, confirmed in the act of baptism. These verses lay important groundwork for considering the truth about Jesus's identity as the Son of God, the extent of His obedience to the Father, and the nature of His mission on earth.

The scene opens along the banks of the Jordan River, where John the Baptist has been busy baptizing those who responded to his announcement concerning the arrival of the Messiah. But things took an unexpected turn when Jesus Himself showed up and, to John's great surprise, requested to be baptized.

What reasons might John have had to stop Jesus from being baptized by him?

Initially John was hesitant with Jesus's request. He was aware of the gravity of the moment and of his own unworthiness to perform the task. What is more, John understood that the power and authority to forgive sins rested with Jesus alone. So Jesus, John thought, should be baptizing him! Upon Jesus's insistence, however, that His baptism by John was necessary in order to fulfill an aspect of God's redemptive plan, John obliged and would baptize Jesus.

In partaking in the act of John's baptism, Jesus would "fulfill all righteousness" and fully embrace the mission for which He was sent into the world (v. 15). Jesus, being the perfect Son of God, did not need to repent of sin, so that was not His purpose in this baptism. But being the One sent to save us from our sin, Jesus identified Himself with repentant sinners in this act. He humbled Himself to become like us so that we might be saved and exalted with Him.

What should we learn and emulate from Jesus's example in being baptized by John?

GOSPEL CONNECTION

Jesus needed to be fully God and fully human to be able to save humanity. As the Second Person of the one triune God, He humbled Himself to dwell among us and to identify Himself with sinful humanity, yet He was without sin.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

MATTHEW 3:16-17

JESUS'S BAPTISM DISPLAYS THE TRIUNE GOD.

Circle the specific mentions of the distinct Persons of the Trinity.

16 When 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 a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased."

THEOLOGY CONNECTION

GOD IS ONE IN THREE PERSONS: While the Bible affirms that God is one (Mark 12:29; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6), it also affirms that God exists as three Persons—Father, Son, and Spirit. Each Person of the Trinity is fully divine—the Father is God (John 6:27), the Son is God (Philippians 2), the Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4)—and each Person is distinct from the others (Matthew 11:27; John 10:30; 14:16). This perfect unity within the three Persons of the Trinity is a first-order doctrine.

Key Concept: Jesus, the Second Person of the divine Trinity, set an example for us in humility.



The doctrine of the Trinity—the belief in one God who exists in three distinct Persons—is arguably the most foundational belief of the Christian faith. The Bible contains no mention of the word “Trinity,” yet the pages of Scripture are filled with evidence of God’s triune identity.

The record of Jesus’s baptism is one of the clearest and most-referenced examples in the Bible of God’s triune identity and activity. Jesus, the Son and the Second Person of the Trinity, was baptized. Immediately following the Son’s baptism, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him and the Father’s voice was heard from heaven.

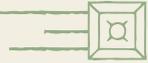
Why is it significant that all three Persons of the Trinity were active at Jesus’s baptism?

Jesus’s baptism inaugurated His earthly ministry and served as confirmation of His identity as the Messiah, the Son of God and the Second Person of the Trinity sent on mission to save people from their sins. The voice of the Father, heard as Jesus emerged from the waters, was key in confirming Jesus’s identity as the One chosen and sent to fulfill God’s redemptive purposes.

What does it mean to be well-pleasing to God?

The Holy Spirit’s descent upon Jesus also served as confirmation of Jesus’s messianic identity. The Gospel of John recorded the baptism event in greater detail from John the Baptist’s perspective. There we find it previously had been revealed to John that the Messiah would be the One upon whom the Spirit descended and rested (John 1:32-34). The events surrounding Jesus’s baptism confirmed for John the nature of Jesus’s identity and His mission. Observing the activity of our triune God at Jesus’s baptism through our reading of Scripture serves to bolster our confidence as those who believe today.





ROLES IN JESUS'S BAPTISM

Using Matthew 3:13-17, identify each person's or Person's role in Jesus's baptism.

GOD THE FATHER

GOD THE SON (JESUS)

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

JOHN THE BAPTIST

How did Jesus humble Himself in this scene?

What are some ways we can humble ourselves and walk in obedience to God?



Key Concept: Jesus, the Second Person of the divine Trinity, set an example for us in humility.



HEAD

How is each Person of the Trinity significant and active in your life?

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

Read and pray through Psalm 146, noting all of the Lord's works, many found in the ministry of Jesus. Praise God for how He loves and saves those in need, those who put their hope in the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 5).

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES



HEART

What significant changes has Christ made in your life as you continue to walk with Him?



HANDS

What are some ways you will set aside your privileges to obey the Lord and humbly serve others?

