

# Jesus's Baptism

## Introduction

In the Gospel of Matthew, the author recounts the following events:

And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and have no fear." And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. (**Matthew 17:1-8 ESV**)

This voice from heaven was certainly an uncommon event, but it was not without precedent. This is the second of two times that the gospels recount a voice from heaven—the voice of God himself—endorse Jesus of Nazareth. The first time this occurred was at the baptism of Jesus.

⇒ At Jesus's baptism, God the Father and God the Spirit, endorse the person and work of God the Son, Jesus Christ.

### Luke 3:21-22 ESV

<sup>21</sup> Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, <sup>22</sup> and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

⇓  
We ought to endorse God the Son as well.

- One of two divine testimonies: Jesus's baptism and Jesus's transfiguration
- Preparation point for Jesus's ministry
- Divine endorsement is received

## The Context of Jesus's Baptism

**Luke 3:21 ESV** Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened,

### Crowd

- “all the people” indicates a large crowd
- Many people were responding to John’s call to a baptism of repentance
- We know from Luke 7:30 that not every person responded
- So, this was a large crowd of people, many of which had heeded John the Baptist’s admonitions

### Baptism

- Minimal details because Luke recognizes that the divine endorsement is primal – a bare bones recounting of Jesus’s baptism
- Luke, himself, makes no point about why Jesus allowed John to baptize him, but it was not because Jesus needed to repent
- The NT is clear on this point, Jesus never sinned: **1 John 3:5 ESV** You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. **1 Peter 2:22 ESV** He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.
- Three reasons:
  - It is an endorsement of John’s ministry
  - It allows John to identify the one he was preparing people for
  - Jesus identifies with humanity
    - Jesus submits to John’s baptism of repentance to identify with Israel’s sin, foreshadowing the judgment he will endure at the cross where he so identifies with sin that the Apostle Paul would write, “<sup>21</sup> For our sake he [God] made him [Jesus] to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (**2 Corinthians 5:21 ESV**)

### Prayer

- Luke is unique in noting Jesus praying
- Jesus prayed at many key events: choosing the 12 (6:12), Peter's confession (9:18), Transfiguration (9:29), the Lord's prayer (11:1), Garden of Gethsemane (22:41)
- There is an indication of solemnity but also of anticipation; Jesus is beginning his mission!

Let us be people who pray at the onset of new endeavours!

*★ Church planting★*

### Open Heavens

Open heaven = God appears when the heavens are opened. And God speaks.

What does it look like?

**Mark 1:10 ESV** And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open

### Picture this:

- John – camel hair clothing, leather belt, locust legs, honey
- Calling out Pharisees and Sadducees, teaching tax collectors and soldiers
- Baptizing all sorts of people
- Telling people he's not the Messiah, because the Messiah is mightier, and a judge, and will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire
- Jesus arrives on the scene: "Behold the Lamb of god who takes away the sins of the world"
- Baptizes Jesus, who comes up praying
- The heavens open, are torn open...

Let's not miss the gravity of this moment.

## The Content of God's Testimony

**Luke 3:22 ESV** and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

### Visual

- God the Spirit descended on to Jesus
- Luke would later give commentary on this saying that "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power." (**Acts 10:38 ESV**)
- Bodily form = not a vision, but something tangible
- Not a dove, but like a dove; floating gracefully through the air
  - Not a hawk plummeting to earth; this would take time
- The significance and nature of the visual testimony is given by the audio testimony

### "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

### Audio

- The audio portion of God's testimony provides the explicit divine endorsement
- What is heard from the open heaven confirms all we have looked at in the Gospel of Luke so far and it initiates all that will follow in the Gospel of Luke
- God's speech indicates 3 things about the one whom had just been baptized and anointed with the Holy Spirit:
  - 1) He is the royal Davidic Messiah,
  - 2) his relationship with God is one in which he intimately close with God, and
  - 3) God takes great pleasure in him

Royalty – Jesus is the regal Davidic Messiah – “You are my ... Son”

**Psalm 2 ESV**

↑ allusion to Psalm 2

- <sup>1</sup> Why do the nations rage  
and the peoples plot in vain?
- <sup>2</sup> The kings of the earth set themselves,  
and the rulers take counsel together,  
against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying,
- <sup>3</sup> “Let us burst their bonds apart  
and cast away their cords from us.”
- <sup>4</sup> He who sits in the heavens laughs;  
the Lord holds them in derision.
- <sup>5</sup> Then he will speak to them in his wrath,  
and terrify them in his fury, saying,
- <sup>6</sup> “As for me, I have set my King  
on Zion, my holy hill.”
- <sup>7</sup> I will tell of the decree:  
The Lord said to me, “You are my Son;  
today I have begotten you.
- <sup>8</sup> Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,  
and the ends of the earth your possession.
- <sup>9</sup> You shall break them with a rod of iron  
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.”
- <sup>10</sup> Now therefore, O kings, be wise;  
be warned, O rulers of the earth.
- <sup>11</sup> Serve the Lord with fear,  
and rejoice with trembling.
- <sup>12</sup> Kiss the Son,  
lest he be angry, and you perish in the way,  
for his wrath is quickly kindled.
- Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

- The divine endorsement that God makes indicates, first of all, that Jesus is the royal, Davidic Messiah

*Allusion to Isaiah 44*

Relationship – Beloved – “You are my beloved Son”

- The divine speech addresses the relationship between God and Jesus; Jesus has a uniquely close and intimate relationship with God
- Beloved is an allusion to **Isaiah 41:8 ESV** But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend;

- **Jesus is Israel**

*⇒ Neither beloved nor Son is used in this verse ???*

**Hosea 11:1 ESV** When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.

**Matthew 2:13-15 ESV** <sup>13</sup> Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” <sup>14</sup> And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt <sup>15</sup> and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

**Isaiah 41:8 ESV** But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend; [my friend = beloved]

- Secondly, the divine endorsement indicates the nature of Jesus’s relationship with God; their relationship is intimate

Pleasure – God delights in him – “with you I am well pleased

**Isaiah 42:1 ESV** Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.

- Finally, the divine endorsement indicates that God takes great delight and pleasure in Jesus

*SON*

*BELIEVED*

## In Christ, God endorses us!

In Christ we have a divine endorsement as God's children, as God's beloved, as God's delight

**Children:** **John 1:11-12 ESV** He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,

**Beloved:** **1 John 3:1-2 ESV** See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now,

**Delight:** **Romans 2:29 ESV** But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

- **ESVSB:** "True Jewishness and true circumcision are matters of the heart. They are the work of the Holy Spirit. ... Therefore, it is not the obedience of the unregenerate that is in view here but rather the obedience of those who, by the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, have repented of their hard hearts, who have received the Holy Spirit, and who are being enabled by the Spirit to live a new life characterized by obedience to God."

GOSPEL - The endorsement of God through the work of Christ

① Communion ⇒ Work of Christ

② Baptism ⇒ emphasizes the results of that work ⇒ divine endorsement

## Similarities to our ordinance of baptism

Definition: ***Baptism is a church's act of affirming and portraying a believer's union with Christ by immersing him or her in water, and a believer's act of publicly committing him or herself to Christ and his people, thereby uniting a believer to the church and marking off him or her from the world.***

### Similarities

#### Endorsing and Affirming

- Jesus endorses John's ministry
- God endorses Jesus
- Church endorsing and affirming a believer's profession of faith

#### Identifying

- Jesus's baptism was a way he could identify with sinful humanity
- Our baptism is a way we identify with sinless Jesus – death and resurrection
- Our baptism also identifies us with the church

#### Separation

- God's particular endorsement of Jesus marked him off from everyone else
- Baptism marks the believer off from the world

#### Indicating

- God's endorsement indicated that Jesus was the royal, Davidic Messiah and Isaiah's suffering servant
- Baptism indicates that a believer is in union with Christ



## Takeaways:

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Let's read Luke with the knowledge of who Chris is

Let's rejoice in what Jesus has accomplished towards our relationship with God

Let's celebrate the ordinance of baptism