

## Synopsis 15a The Baptism of Jesus part 1

[Matthew 3] As we're continuing our chronological study, we're going to read about the baptism of Jesus. What is baptism? Often, baptism is thought of as being associated with salvation, but it's not because Jesus Christ was baptized and he obviously didn't need to be saved. We also don't see children being baptized. The children were invited to "come unto him and forbid them not", but we don't have any instances of children being baptized in the Bible.

Baptism is associated with the coming Kingdom; it's associated with a change of lifestyle and attitudes; it's associated with one dying to self. It's a burial. It's taking someone who has died to their own will and dipping them in water and raising them up to a new lifestyle, which does not serve sin.

This morning, I want us to look at this from the Scriptures, so we can see the significance. [Matthew 3:13-17] Here we find the Lord desiring to accomplish all righteousness. The word "fulfill" means to complete or accomplish, and Jesus wanted to complete or accomplish all righteousness, so he's setting an example for us to complete or accomplish.

Another example that he set was that he was well pleasing to the father. Jesus had demonstrated in his life that he was pleasing the father by what he did. In Luke, we see that there were those who were coming to John to be baptized, and John said, "bring forth therefore fruits worthy for repentance". Obviously, Jesus did not need to repent, but we find that there are those who do need to repent and change their lifestyle. If you're living in sin, you need to quit. You can't fulfill all righteousness and actively live in sin.

In Luke 3:10, "the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?" If we need to bring forth fruits, what are those fruits? Verse 11 tells us, "He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise." Part of the fruits is, "don't have too much security". You only need one coat; you only need food for how many days? [Think of the example of Manna.]

He also talked to the publicans (the tax collectors): "And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you." The publicans had a habit of overtaxing and the Lord said, "Don't do that". Tax the proper way. He didn't say don't tax. He's not opposed to taxes. We may be, but he told them, when you tax, don't take too much.

"And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content with your wages." That's a good testimony for us. Maybe we are not in a place where we can do violence to or prosecute a man, but we can be satisfied with what the Lord provides us. That's the attitude we need to have. The Lord can provide us with a coat if we need one. The Lord is the one who provides us with food, shelter, clothing, and other needs, when we need it. We need to be fair, and we need to be content.

[Matthew 4:17] The baptism of Jesus the Christ actually began his ministry. Before that, he was not preaching anywhere. But, when he went to be baptized, he began his ministry, and in [John 4:34]. Baptism is an outward expression that you are going to do the will of the father in your life. That's your food; you can live on that.

Before his ministry or before he began to preach, Luke 2:49 tells us, "And he said unto them [his parents], How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" He knew that he had a purpose because he was the Son of God and he said, "Don't you know that I am to be about my father's business?" yet Jesus did not begin his ministry when he was 12. What does it tell us in verse 51a? "And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them." He was subjecting himself to God by subjecting himself to his parents. But there came a time when he subjected himself to his heavenly father, and that is the time that his ministry began.

But, we don't find young people being baptized. 12 year olds aren't ready for preaching. Jesus Christ was 30 years old when he was baptized and began his ministry.

[Romans 6:4] Baptism has to do with those who are dead to self. We bury the dead with anticipation of resurrection, and this is not talking about physical death, but death to one's self. With being raised from a life of death (sin) to walk in a new life.

[Romans 6:5] The likeness of his resurrection is that Jesus the Christ is at the right hand of God the Father's throne and will one day rule and reign from the heavens. If we will die to self and do the will of the Father, we too will enter into the resurrection life as the Lord Jesus Christ has entered into it. Right now, Jesus Christ is not ruling from the heavens. Do you know who is? Satan. He's the god of this world; he's the judge. Ephesians 2:2 tells us that he's the prince of the power of the air.

Satan is still under the control of God. Satan still has to get permission to touch God's property. But, Satan still is in charge of this world. He is still in charge of the Prince of Persia. He has emissaries over all the nations of the world, except for one: Israel. God has the archangel over Israel. Since Satan can't control Israel like he can control the rest of the nations, do you know what he's doing? He's turning all his emissaries against the one people he hates the most; the Jews.

But, if we plan to enjoy the likeness of his resurrection, we need to die now. We need to die to ourselves.

[Romans 6:6] Obviously, we're not to literally destroy our bodies, but we are not to serve sin. As Christians, we have the choice to serve sin or serve the Lord. If we die to self, we will be able to serve the Lord.

[Romans 6:7-8] This is a reference to ruling and reigning with him in his coming Kingdom. When Jesus began his ministry in Matthew 4:17, he was preaching to "repent for the Kingdom of the Heavens is at hand". The Kingdom of the Heavens is the rule of the heavens over the Earth, and that is what we are (should be) anticipating. Ruling and

reigning with Christ is talking about his coming Kingdom. And if we are dead with him, we believe that we shall also live with him, ruling and reigning in his coming Kingdom.

[2 Timothy 2:11-12] If you are in the habit of denying the Lord Jesus Christ; if you are in the habit of denying him his will in your life, you're not dead to yourself. You're not ready to be baptized. If you are denying him, he will deny you, so you need to submit your will to him and not deny his will in your life.

[2 Timothy 2:13: "believe not" – faithless] What this is saying is, "You deny the Lord, he's going to deny you the privilege of ruling and reigning with him in his coming Kingdom", and let me tell you one thing: I want to rule and reign with him in his coming Kingdom!

Jesus had a testimony at his baptism of, "This is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased". Every person here should desire to hear, "Well done thou good and faithful servant..." If you deny him, you won't hear that. You will be denied ruling over anything. Instead of ruling and reigning, you will be a servant.

One thing that happens when you die to self today is you become a servant. We are going to be servants, one way or another, and now is the best time. "How long do I have to be a servant?" Some of us will serve for many years, some of us for fewer. Think about the parable in Matthew 20 about the householder who went out to hire laborers for his vineyard. He hired some in the morning for a penny. At the third hour, he hired more, and at the sixth and the ninth hour. He even hired some at the eleventh hour. He started paying those who came in the latest before the others, and do you know how much he paid them? A penny. They were all servants, but some worked all day. Some worked most of the day, some worked half the day, and some only worked an hour, but they were all paid a penny. God can do that, because we're all his; everything is his. Matthew 20:15-16 says, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen."

But, if I deny myself being a servant now, I'm going to be one in the Millennial Reign for a thousand years. Do you see the difference? I would rather be a servant now for three score and ten years and receive honor and glory for a thousand years, than to do my own will and fulfill my own pleasure now, and serve for a thousand years in the Millennium. Baptism is associated with the Millennium, and we need to die now!

Little children can't comprehend that. That's why we don't have any records of any children in the NT being baptized. [Notes for infant and child baptism.] We need to deny ourselves and take up our cross and follow him.

[John 12:24] How do we glorify the Father according to John 15? By bearing much fruit. How can we be fruitful Christians? By doing our own things and calling our own shots, right? No. We have to die to self.

A grain of corn or a grain of wheat can't bear additional grains without dying first' that's just the law of the harvest. Remember, the law of the harvest means that you reap more than you sow, so be careful how you sow wild oats. (That's a freebie, I'm not going to charge you for that one.) You have to be careful; you may not like what you reap. Although we may find ourselves having to pray for crop failure, I can't find a passage to support that, but I don't think the Lord would mind you asking that to pass.

[John 12:25a: He that loveth his life shall lose it.] That simply means that if you love your own way now, you're going to lose the life you want in the Millennium. But, [John 12:25b: he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.] But if you hate your life in this age, you will keep it and have life in the coming age. [John 12:26a: If any man serve me, let him follow me.] If you have put yourself to death in this world, you're going to serve the Lord now and you're going to follow him now, [John 12:26b: and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will *my* Father honour.] I want the honor of the Lord. You should want the honor of the Lord. Baptism is associated with that honor.

[Matthew 5:20] The message of the Kingdom has to do with not simply seeing the Kingdom, but entering the Kingdom. To see the Kingdom means you are going to serve in the coming Kingdom. If you are born from above (if you have believed on the Lord Jesus as your personal savior), you will see the Kingdom. To **enter in** to the Kingdom means that you are going to rule and reign in the coming Kingdom.

Notice that it is the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees here. What does it mean when he says, "Except your righteousness exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees"? It doesn't mean getting saved. The righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees is the righteousness that Paul had. Paul had somewhat to brag about it, but he said, "I've given all that up". Philippians 3:5-6 says, "Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, **blameless**." The righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees was the righteousness of the Law, or commandments, given to Moses.

Obviously, we don't have to obey the ceremonial laws because Jesus Christ was our ceremonial Passover lamb, and we don't have to obey the dietary laws because the Lord did away with that in the NT, but we do have to obey "thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not commit adultery"... There are certain things in the OT we do need to obey. We are to love the Lord with all our hearts. He taught that in both the OT and the NT.

For our righteousness to exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, we have to go beyond simple obedience. The Lord told his disciples that if you've done that which is your duty to do, you're unprofitable servants. If you've only done that which I've told you to do you're just getting by. If you want to rule and reign, you have to do more than just get by. What do we have to go beyond just getting by? What do we have to do to go beyond being an unprofitable servant?

First of all, we do have to do that which is our duty, but after we do that, we have to live by faith, because the just (those who have done their duty) shall live by faith. To live by faith simply means I can trust God if I ruined my life today for his honor and Glory. If I don't have a big portfolio and a big bank account with a lot of funds... If I ruin my life along these lines, then God will take care of me in this life and in the life to come.

So, the righteousness of the Pharisees was that of the Law and obedience to it, but we need to go beyond being obedient to the law, and what we need is to live by faith; we need to be trusting him; we need to be living a life of dying to self.

[Hebrews 10:38] Jesus pleased the father. This verse says, "The just shall live by faith". What is the drawing back here? It's not drawing back all the way, it's drawing back from living by faith. The Lord says, "If you draw back from living by faith, my soul will have no pleasure in you, because without faith, it is impossible to please him", as we are told in Hebrews 11:6. If you don't live by faith; if you don't trust him to take care of you, you're not going to hear "well done".

[Matthew 19] What gets you into trouble? It's the deceitfulness of riches that can get you into trouble. I just think about the rich young ruler. Verse 20 says that he had kept the law, but we are told plainly that the rich ruler did not want to live by faith, for he had many possessions. [Matthew 19:23-24] It's hard for a rich man to enter the Kingdom, but it's just as easy for a rich man as anyone else to see the Kingdom.

How do you see the Kingdom? John told Nicodemus in John 3:3 that, "except a man be born from above, he cannot see the Kingdom." If you're saved, if you're born from above, you will see the Kingdom; if you die to self, you will get to enter the Kingdom to rule and to reign. Death to self means doing the will of the father.

What happened to Moses when God took him up on Mt. Pisgah in Deuteronomy 3? God told him to look around and he said, "All that you see belongs to Israel, but you're not going over into the land". God forbade Moses from entering into the land flowing with milk and honey.

He wanted to teach us today that just keeping the law will not give you a better inheritance. Just keeping the law will not give you honor and glory in the coming Kingdom.

There are many people today who don't understand what baptism is. They associate baptism with salvation. They also associate getting saved with having everything in the coming Kingdom, but that's not true. You have to die to self today if you expect to have honor and glory in the coming Kingdom.

Therefore, you need to appreciate the dying to self, and baptism is associated with that death to self; being raised symbolically from baptism, to live a life today that honors him, and in the coming Kingdom, entering into ruling and reigning with him.