

### Synopsis 015c The Baptism of Jesus part 3

[Matthew] We've been looking at the Scriptures and some of the things that are said about baptism. One of the things that are shown to us is that baptism is a decision that is to be made by mature believers. There may be some 12 year olds who are prepared to make that commitment, and there are many 40 year olds (or 50 or 60) who are not.

We have also been shown that baptism is significant if we expect to rule and reign. Tradition has baptism associated with salvation. Jesus Christ was baptized. Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh. Did he need to be saved? He was baptized as an example unto us.

Mark 1:15 says, "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." Repentance has to do with a change of lifestyle. What it's saying is, "If you're living in sin, stop it!" Then what? Start living a righteous or clean life. You can't do that without believing the gospel. Here in Mark 1:15, "believe" and "repent" are both in the present tense. You have to keep doing it. Once is not enough, particularly if the sin comes back, which it usually does. Therefore, you need to repent again and confess it unto God. You have to change. Do what is necessary to prevent doing it again.

How do you do that? Claim the shed blood. Hebrews 9:22 says, "without shedding of blood, there is no deliverance, or no remission, or no liberty." "Remission" means deliverance, liberty, or freedom. It's essential for us to appropriate the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, if we want deliverance from sin.

We also need to believe the gospel. Believe the gospel of what? The gospel of Kingdom. That has to do with ruling and reigning with Jesus in his coming Kingdom.

In Acts 16:31, we have the word "believe", but it's not the same as "believe" in Mark 1:15. When asked, "What must I do to be saved?" they replied, "believe on the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved". "Believe" is in the aorist tense. Punctiliar. Once. It's an event in your life. You have to keep on believing to stay saved, right? No, you don't.

The gospel of the Kingdom requires that you keep on believing in the present tense; it requires faithfulness. It requires faithfulness on your part and my part, whereas being born from above into the family of God is based on the aorist tense of the verb "believe".

In John 3:3, it says, "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be ~~born again~~ [born from above], he cannot see the kingdom of God." If you're born from above into the family of God, you're going to see the Kingdom. But, let me tell you one thing: When you see others entering the Kingdom, you're going to want to do the same thing. There's a difference between seeing the Kingdom and entering the Kingdom.

A good example is that Moses was not allowed to enter the land flowing with milk and honey, but he got to see it. He was already in the promised land, which was the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that stretches from the Nile to the Euphrates. But, he was not going to get to enter into the better part of the inheritance; the land flowing with milk and honey; a type of the Kingdom. The Lord took him up to Mt. Pisgah, and he said, “Look around, and you can see what I’m going to give to the children of the children of Israel, but you’re not going to enter in because of your sin of striking the rock.”

[Matthew 7:21: every one – every child of God] There are plenty of those who are in the family who don’t care what the will of the father is, and they show it because they don’t study and read their Bible. I don’t want to sound legalistic, because the Lord understands that there are those times that you just can’t spend the time you want in the Scriptures, but you have an attitude of “I want to know the will of the father, so I can do it.” If you’re not interested in reading the Bible and going to a church that teaches the Word of God, then you’re not interested in doing the will of the father. One day, you’re going to stand there and say, “Lord, Lord, I used to go to church every week, what’s wrong?” There are going to be those who say, “Lord, Lord”, and he’s going to say, “I’m sorry, but you’re not going to enter with me into the Kingdom; you can’t rule and reign”. That’s what entering the Kingdom is all about.

When you enter into a football game, you don’t sit in the stands; you play your position on the field. It’s the same in the Kingdom. One day, Jesus Christ will be the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings. You will either be a king, or you will be a servant. You will either serve now, or you will serve then. You’re going to serve God, either willingly now and be blessed in his Kingdom, or he’s going to make you do it in the Kingdom, and you’re going have tears on your face because you didn’t do it to begin with.

Entering the Kingdom. [Matthew 5:20] The Scribes and Pharisees were saved Jews. Paul was a Pharisee. Paul was saved before the Damascus experience, I think. I’ve heard people say, “If God will give me what he gave Paul, I will get saved right now”. It doesn’t happen that way. A person gets saved today by believing in the work that Jesus did on the cross. Paul was a Pharisee, and the Lord says, “If your righteousness isn’t exceeding that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you won’t enter”. What does it mean to exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees?

[Philippians 3:5,6] Paul had the righteousness of the law. He says that in Philippians, not back in Acts 9. What does that mean? It means that Paul was just. He was being obedient to God’s commandments. He was just. The Scribes and Pharisees were just. They were just doing that which was their duty to do. They were just getting by. There are children of God today who are just getting by, and that doesn’t cut it with the Lord.

[Philippians 3:9] To exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, means that you have to live by faith; you must live a life pleasing God. Did Jesus have that testimony at his baptism? [This is my beloved son and I am well pleased with his life.]

What had Jesus done before that? He did not heal one person, he did not preach one sermon, he did not teach one lesson... What was he doing for the last 18 years? He was being subject to his parents. That pleased God. He had died to self by subjecting himself to his parents for 30 years. "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased."

Paul said, "What we need is the righteousness which is by faith". In Galatians 2:20, Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me". Paul lived by faith. If you live by faith, you're righteousness will exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, which was of the law.

You have to have that righteousness in order to live by faith. No drunk can live by faith. No one living in sin can live by faith. Don't tell me that you can live in sin and please God, because you can't. But if you're obedient and you live by faith, you will please him. Hebrews 10:38 tells us, "Now the just shall live by faith". Who are the just? The Pharisees. "Shall live by faith." That was Paul. The Pharisees needed to live by faith and they wouldn't do it. They could do it, but they wouldn't. The rest of Hebrews 10:38 tells us, "but if ~~any man~~ the just one draws back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him". The drawing back is not from being just, and certainly not from salvation, but it's a drawing back from living by faith.

Paul went on in [Philippians 3:10]. Death to self. Paul wanted to live for the Lord, having died to self, and the life that he would live in the flesh, he would live by the faith of the Son of God who died and gave himself for him. The first step for us is repentance. Jesus didn't need to repent, but he was baptized to show that he was dead to self.

[Matthew 3:15] The phrase "all righteousness" is found in only one other place in the NT. [Acts 13:8-10] "Thou enemy of all righteousness." Do you know what the Devil wants you to do? He wants you to stop pleasing God. The Devil is the enemy of all righteousness. He is the enemy of all that Jesus was teaching us when he was baptized. He wants to subvert the right ways of the Lord. What are the right ways of the Lord? Living in the narrow ways. Living by faith. The Devil has lit up the broad way. It's easy to live that way. You can do whatever you want to do. Repentance is not involved. You just wander down the broad way to death and destruction. Not the lake of fire, just simply not entering the Kingdom, and becoming a servant.

It's interesting what happened in the gospels. [Matthew 10:5-7; saved Gentiles and Samaritans; sheep who are perishing.] Sheep are those who believe in the present tense and hear in the present tense and follow in the present tense, but the nation of Israel, who were considered sheep, had quit all of those. You can quit doing things in the present tense.

A good example of "believe" in the present tense involves Paul when he was saved and he was preaching in Damascus and he came to Jerusalem, and he thought to himself, "Man! I'm going to have some good fellowship with the disciples and apostles in Jerusalem!" Did he? No. Acts 9:26 tells us, "And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he

assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.” They all believed [present, active] that he was not a disciple, and they avoided him. That’s “believe” in the present tense. It changes your attitude and lifestyle about something. They didn’t want to be around Paul because they believed that if they were, then Paul would be around them with bonds, carrying them back to be executed like Stephen.

Here, we find three groups of people: Saved Gentiles, saved Samaritans, and Saved Israel. Jesus said, “Don’t go tell this to the Gentiles and Samaritans, tell the gospel of the Kingdom to Israel only.” Is that talking about the plan of salvation? God provided all the world with the ability to be saved. Adam wasn’t a Jew. Rahab wasn’t a Jew. There were no Jews at Ninevah. Gentiles have always been able to be saved! But, the gospel of the Kingdom; the offer of ruling and reigning was only offered to Israel for a short period of time (3 ½ years). That was the ministry of Jesus, the twelve, and the seventy; the message was to the nation of Israel that they could rule and reign as kings in the coming Kingdom.

When you read the gospel of the Kingdom in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, it is a message to saved people; it’s offering them something better than an earthly inheritance here on this Earth, which the nation of Israel was offered. He wasn’t going to those who weren’t in the family and telling them how to get in the family, otherwise, you work your way into being saved. That’s what the gospel of the Kingdom has to do with: Works.

He tells them, “As you go, you preach ‘the Kingdom of the Heavens is at hand’”. Then, in [Matthew 16], we find something that is very interesting. Peter has said that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God, and Jesus said, “upon this rock, I will build my church”. [Matthew 16:19] “I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of the Heavens.” The Kingdom has a lock on the door! There are some folks who are shut out and they don’t have a key. Who are those folks who are locked out? They are the Gentiles and Samaritans. But, Jesus says to Peter, “I’m going to give you some keys”.

After the Lord’s ministry, Peter found out the Jews were shut out because they wouldn’t produce the fruits thereof. Remember what Jesus said to the Scribes and Pharisees? “I’m going to take the Kingdom that I’ve been offering to you, and I’m going to give to someone who will produce the fruits thereof.” (Matthew 21:43) Fruits worthy of baptism because they had died to self. But, Peter has some keys.

[Romans 1:16; gospel – gospel of the Kingdom; no Christ; “believe” – present; all the ones believing] The gospel of the Kingdom has also been referred to as being saved. That word “saved” has to do with deliverance and other applications.

When Peter was preaching, who did he preach to first? In [Acts 2], he used the keys to the Kingdom to the nation of Israel. That’s the first time he used the keys, and it was to the Jew first. [Acts 2:38, 39] The gift that he was talking about was the promise. The promise that was made to them, to their children, and to all that are afar off (Gentiles), even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Remember, the Lord Jesus Christ taught his disciples that many are called, but few are chosen. The calling is unto his Kingdom and glory, according to 1 Thessalonians 2:12, and not to get saved. If many are called to be saved, boy I sure hope I'm a part of that many! But, that's not the way it works. He died for all. Anyone can be saved. But, when it comes to the Kingdom, it's select; it's few. Because of foreknowledge, he knows who is going to live a life pleasing unto him and who isn't. He can call many, but even out of those, there will be some who will fail. There are many who are called unto his Kingdom and glory, but only few have been chosen (called out) unto that Kingdom. But, that's another study for another time.

Peter used the keys first in Acts 2. When did he use them again? [Acts 8:12, 14] They sent unto them Peter, and Peter had some keys, and who did he have a key for this time? The Samaritans. John was with him. [Acts 8:15, 17] There are people today who want to exercise these same gifts of laying hands on people and giving them the Holy Ghost. What they were doing was giving them the sealing of the Holy Spirit, and these were evidences to prove that, not to those who received the preaching of Philip, but for Peter. Peter was a doubter. He had already been taught by the Lord that Samaritans couldn't do it, and he already knew that Gentiles couldn't do it. Peter was a doubter, so it had to be confirmed to him that Samaritans could enter the Kingdom. They received the Holy Spirit. Notice that they were baptized before they received the Holy Spirit. Notice also that they didn't speak in tongues. Tongues was not an issue in this place.

[Acts 10] Here, we find that Peter was visiting Cornelius. Cornelius was a drunk and a bum and a real sorry guy, right? No. Cornelius was a child of God through Judaism. He was a proselyte. That's the way a Gentile was saved: He accepted the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob for himself. [Acts 10:22; a just man; feareth God] When Peter came down, he said, "You know, I ought not to be here, because no Jew is supposed to be hanging out with a Gentile." "I shouldn't be here, but I had no choice!" The Lord said, "Don't you call dirty what I have cleansed!" [Acts 10:37] What Peter came down to the house of Cornelius with was the message of the Kingdom. He was not telling Cornelius how to be born from above. He was telling him that he now had an opportunity to rule and reign with Christ, whereas before, he didn't.

Just like with the Samaritans. "He said, you Samaritans could not rule and reign in the Kingdom, but now you can", and that's the message that he's giving to Cornelius here. [Acts 10:43-45; believeth – present, active; remission – deliverance] They were astonished! "What's happening to them is what happened to us at Pentecost! If I hadn't seen it with my own eyes, I wouldn't have even believed Peter!" God is careful to provide witnesses to events in the lives of his people to establish the Word. Remember, at that time, the Word of God was not written; it was oral. It was given by the Holy Spirit when the Holy Spirit came upon a prophet or a preacher.

But, here we do find them speaking in tongues. When we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as our savior, we receive the Holy Spirit. When we believe on the gospel of the Kingdom, we are sealed by the Holy Spirit. I don't have any evidences of either one, and

I don't need any. What I have to do to please God is to read that it happened to me and accept it! Do you know what that's called? Faith! I read it, I believe it, and I don't have to speak in another language to prove it. If you do what it says, you've got it! If you quit doing what it says, you're going to lose it. You're going to lose the Kingdom. You are not going to lose salvation; you're going to lose ruling and reigning because of sin in your life.

Peter says, "Can anyone forbid water that these should not be baptized?" No, they couldn't. Notice that no children are pictured here as being baptized.

[Acts 16] There's another interesting event that I want us to look at. This has to do with Lydia, the seller of purple. Peter met them at the river, and they were worshipping God, [Acts 16:14b; "heard us"; attended – responded, heeded]. How do I know someone is a candidate for baptism? It's the way they respond to the gospel of the Kingdom. That's what Paul did. In verse 15, she says, "If you judge me faithful, then come to my house and stay there a while. Sit a spell." So, Paul and his entourage went to her house and stayed a while. But, notice that it was the Lord who opened the heart of Lydia. You can't force this door open to those who are not called. John Milton once said, "Christ exercised force but once, and that was to drive profane ones out of his temple and not to force them in." The Lord has to open that door. The Lord has to open that calling. The Lord opened her heart, and she responded to the things that Paul spoke and she was baptized and her household and there were no tongues and no laying on of hands. It was just an event. Paul knew she had responded to this message as well as the others. You don't need any display of tongues. You don't need that.

I'm telling you that that because most of us in here, including myself, have never spoken in tongues. I don't want to speak in tongues. I want to speak so you can understand me. Speaking in tongues ministers to the flesh, and I don't want to minister to my flesh, I want to minister to my spirit. That is, the spirit of adoption. Trusting him; trusting his word.

The same thing happened with the Philippian jailer in Acts 16:30-31. The Philippian jailer got saved, and in [Acts 16:32], it says, "he spoke unto him the word of the Lord". Paul taught him, "Now that you're saved, you can enter the Kingdom". I think the jailer said, "I want some of that", because they were baptized, just like Lydia was baptized. What Lydia experienced, I believe is what he experienced, and it had to do with his response to the gospel of the Kingdom.

Baptism has to do with the gospel of the Kingdom. Baptism has to do with ruling and reigning. Baptism is a commitment to living for the Lord and is symbolic of dying to self and being raised to a newness of life. It's a sign of obedience. It's not something to be entered into lightly, and there needs to be a change in lifestyle. Produce the fruits thereof, and you won't be sorry; you'll be rejoicing and you'll be ruling and reigning in the coming Kingdom of our Lord.