Matthew 3C

**Matt. 3:13-17**

**13***Then Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John.*

**14***But John tried to talk him out of it. “I am the one who needs to be baptized by you,” he said, “so why are you coming to me?”*

**15***But Jesus said, “It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires.” So John agreed to baptize him.*

**16***After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him.*

**17***And a voice from heaven said, “This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy.”*

**John 1:29-34**

**29***The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*

**30***He is the one I was talking about when I said, ‘A man is coming after me who is far greater than I am, for he existed long before me.’*

**31***I did not recognize him as the Messiah, but I have been baptizing with water so that he might be revealed to Israel.”*

**32***Then John testified, “I saw the Holy Spirit descending like a dove from heaven and resting upon him.*

**33***I didn’t know he was the one, but when God sent me to baptize with water, he told me, ‘The one on whom you see the Spirit descend and rest is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’*

**34***I saw this happen to Jesus, so I testify that he is the Chosen One of God.”*

* John didn’t know Jesus was the Messiah until the baptism happened
  + He only learned the truth because he saw the sign God foretold of the Holy Spirit descending like a dove after he baptized Jesus
  + Jesus was a , upright man
* Jesus wasn’t coming to receive a baptism of repentance
  + - Jesus had no need to repent
    - Jesus was obeying the command of His Father and ensuring that John would also obey his calling
  + Specifically, Jesus says *we must carry out all that God requires*
    - In other words, Jesus is saying, “in doing this, we will be displaying righteousness as we obey the Father”
    - Jesus didn’t need to be baptized for repentance, but He did need to receive John’s baptism to be obedient to the Father
    - And that meant it was required
* Jesus’ baptism served as the capstone moment in John’s ministry of the coming Messiah
  + - It was time for John to step aside, to retire so to speak, and handoff to Jesus
    - That handoff would take place through a baptism moment
    - The act of John lowering Jesus into the water and raising Him up, symbolized John’s passing the baton to Jesus
* Secondly, Jesus’ baptism served as the moment the Father unveiled Jesus as Messiah,

Him to begin His public ministry

* + In v.16. Matthew says that as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens opened
    - And at that moment, John saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and coming upon Jesus
    - The resting of the Spirit of God on Jesus is the moment Jesus obtained supernatural power
    - The Holy Spirit empowered Jesus to accomplish the miracles He used to authenticate Himself to the crowds
  + This the mystery of God taking on flesh
    - Paul describes it this way

**Philippians 2:5-7**

**5***You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.*

**6***Though he was God,   
    he did not think of equality with God  
    as something to cling to.*

**7***Instead, he gave up his divine privileges;  
    he took the humble position of a slave  
    and was born as a human being.  
When he appeared in human form,*

* Jesus assumed the form of a man, a of God
* Jesus didn’t just look like a man, He was a

**Hebrews 2:6-7**

**6***For in one place the Scriptures say,*

*“What are mere mortals that you should think about them,  
    or a son of man that you should care for him?*

**7***Yet for a little while you made them a little lower than the angels  
    and crowned them with glory and honor.*

* This is what it meant for Jesus to become man…it meant entering into the very **‘**

He made

* + And by entering into it, He chose to become limited by it
* If Jesus were to perform miracles to authenticate His ministry and message, where would the power for those miracles come from?
  + The answer is, the
  + The Third Person of the Godhead came upon the Second Person of the Godhead to empower Him for His ministry on earth
  + By the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus validated His claims as the Messiah, the Son of God foretold in Scripture
  + Every time Jesus performed a miracle before the people, it was actually a work or testimony of the Holy Spirit
  + The Holy Spirit that Jesus was the Messiah
* We can see multiple examples in Scripture confirming this understanding:
  + First, the Gospels make frequent mention of the Spirit’s role in and Jesus’ ministry
    - In Matthew 4, we’ll see Jesus led into the wilderness by the Spirit
    - In Matthew 12, we’ll see Jesus Himself crediting the Spirit for His power to cast out demons
    - In that same chapter, Jesus says that when the Pharisees tried to discredit His miracles, they were guilty of blaspheming the Holy Spirit
  + Also, Luke reports that Jesus’ with the Father while He lived on earth was made possible by the Holy Spirit
    - It was as if the Spirit served as a conduit connecting Jesus with the Father in Heaven
    - And this conduit operated in both directions
    - In Acts, we’re told that God revealed His will to Jesus and the apostles by means of the Holy Spirit

In Mark’s gospel when Jesus could not perform miracles in His hometown, Nazareth:

**Mark 6:1-6**

**1***Jesus left that part of the country and returned with his disciples to Nazareth, his hometown.*

**2***The next Sabbath he began teaching in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. They asked, “Where did he get all this wisdom and the power to perform such miracles?”*

**3***Then they scoffed, “He’s just a carpenter, the son of Maryand the brother of James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon. And his sisters live right here among us.” They were deeply offended and refused to believe in him.*

**4***Then Jesus told them, “A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and among his relatives and his own family.”*

**5***And because of their unbelief, he couldn’t do any miracles among them except to place his hands on a few sick people and heal them.*

**6***And he was amazed at their unbelief.*

* Finally, it’s notable that there is no record of Jesus performing any miracles prior to His

* + Jesus’ very first miracle was turning water into wine at the wedding in Cana
  + That event happened in the week following His baptism with John
* In taking on flesh, Jesus voluntarily relinquished His form as God along with His

* The Holy Spirit’s arrival was portrayed as a landing on Jesus
  + The choice of a dove was significant:
    - The first mention of the Spirit of God in Genesis 1:2 uses a Hebrew verb translated as “fluttering”
    - It is commonly used to describe a mother bird hovering over her nest
    - Jewish rabbis had concluded that the Spirit took the form of a dove as it fluttered in Genesis 1:2
    - So to a Jew, the dove was a clear symbol of the Spirit
  + Then to make sure John got the message, the Father from Heaven testifying that Jesus was the Son of God, the Messiah
    - He was the One in whom the Father is well-pleased
    - To be well-pleased is a typical biblical understatement…the Father is saying He couldn’t be more pleased than He is in His Son
    - This is the first of three times the voice of the Father is spoken audibly from Heaven in support of His Son
* This vision and the voice were only witnessed by
  + John alone was told to look for such a vision as confirmation of the Messiah
    - No one else in that moment was privy to this vision
    - Notice in v.16, the text says “he” (singular) saw the heavens open and the dove descend, not “they"
    - And in John’s Gospel, John the Baptist says that he saw this sign and he testifies that Jesus is the Son of God

**Luke 7:19** *and he (John) sent them to the Lord to ask him, “Are you the Messiah we’ve been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?”*

* Could it be that John had been influenced by a misunderstanding of Scripture by the Jewish rabbis of that day?
  + Over the centuries, the rabbis of Israel had read Old Testament passages that foretold a Messiah dying for the sins of Israel
    - They had concluded God was sending a suffering prophet to die for the sins of His people
    - But they also read OT passages declaring a Messiah would reign over a worldwide Kingdom
    - They also concluded that God would send Israel a conquering King to sit on the seat of David
  + Since they couldn’t understand how one Messiah could both die and conquer, the rabbis concluded that God would send Messiahs
    - One Messiah would be a suffering servant sent to die, while another Messiah would come as a conquering, reigning King
    - Obviously, we know the rabbis came to the wrong conclusion
    - There would not to be two coming Messiahs…there would be one Messiah, who would arrive twice
  + Jesus came the first time as a suffering to die for our sins and He will return to earth a second time in power and glory to reign over all the earth as
    - In the meantime, He lives to intercede for us with the Father as our High Priest
* Jesus’ baptism established a for all of Jesus’ followers to repeat so we can identify with Him

**Matt. 28:18-20**

**18***Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth.*

**19***Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.*

**20***Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

* The Greek word translated “baptize” means “to dip”
  + The concept of baptism is to be immersed or into water
  + Notice also that in the text in v.16. Matthew describes that Jesus “came up” from the water
  + You don’t come up out of a sprinkling experience
  + Plus, if all John wanted to do was “sprinkle” people with water, he wouldn’t have needed to travel all the way to the Jordan river to baptize
* From all evidence, the biblical act of baptism is always of the entire body into water
  + Sprinkling some part of a person’s body does not constitute a baptism
  + That is merely a manmade ritual with no spiritual significance

**Romans 6:3-5**

**3***Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death?*

**4***For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives.*

**5***Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was.*

* Paul says that at baptism we are with Christ
  + By our faith, what is true for Christ has been to our heavenly account
    - Beginning with His death on the cross
    - Paul explains that we have been baptized by our faith into Christ’s death, so that when the Father looks upon us he no longer sees our sins
    - By the arrival of the Holy Spirit, we are united with Christ in His death so that our sins rested on Christ as He hung on that cross – they died with Christ
  + Paul says we have also been with Christ in His resurrection
    - Because the Holy Spirit has come to live in us, we will follow in Christ’s footsteps
    - Though Christ died, He lives again, rising from the dead
    - So will those who have placed their faith in Him
  + When we are baptized we are demonstrating that we in His death and in His resurrection
    - We don’t need to die to pay for our own sins
    - Christ’s death has paid that price for us
    - And we don’t need to worry that the death of our body will be the end of us
    - Because the same Spirit Who raised Jesus’ body will raise us
  + The water of our baptism represents the , the ground in which we bury dead bodies
    - So as a believer is lowered into the water, we’re picturing the burial of a body
    - And as we raise that person up out of the water, we’re picturing resurrection
    - That’s a physical picture of what has already happened by the Spirit in our hearts
  + Just as Jesus was immersed in water to represent His immersion by the Holy Spirit, we too are called to do the same
    - We enter water to testify that we have been baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ’s death and resurrection

The baptism Jesus commanded for His Church follows in His footsteps:

* It’s an act to fulfill righteousness, meaning to God
  + Secondly, water baptism is a coming-out of sorts
    - It associates us with Jesus, declaring us to be followers of the Messiah
  + Thirdly, our water baptism our public service in the body of Christ, just as it began Jesus’ public ministry
    - Our opportunity to serve Christ is set loose when we obey the call to be baptized
* Finally, just as Jesus’ baptism marked a transition between John’s ministry and Jesus’ ministry, so does our baptism mark a
  + Every believer has an old life and a new life, an old self and a new self
    - Depending on when you came to know Jesus, that old life might have been brief or it might have been decades
    - But regardless, every believer has a before and after story
    - The moment of your faith in Jesus is a private dividing line between those two worlds
    - Your water baptism is the public dividing point, the moment when you embraced your new life and declare it is all you want
  + Every believer is expected to follow the Lord’s footsteps in baptism, as in everything else
    - That’s why we’re called Christians…the word literally means “little Christs”
    - It was originally coined to mock Jesus’ followers, but the Church soon embraced it because it’s a perfect description of what we want to be
  + If you have placed your faith in Jesus Christ but you have never walked into the water to be baptized as Jesus commanded, then you still owe Jesus a baptism
    - We would love to help you obey that command, to fulfill all righteousness in your walk with Christ
    - SCC will hold a baptism this summer, and we want to include anyone who has placed their faith in Jesus, but has yet to receive baptism
    - If that’s you, then please see me so we can add you to the list of those who are following Jesus’ commands to be baptized