

Illuminating Waters

- Introduction

Matthew 3:13-17(NRSV)

Tension: Why did Jesus get baptized? No sin

V.13-14

- John
 - Humility, lesser than Jesus
 - Previous verses, v. 11 “but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals”
 - He will say in the gospel of John “he must increase and I must decrease”
 - Understood that not only Jesus didn’t need a baptism of repentance= No sin, He (John) needed Jesus’ baptism= v.11 “He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire”

V.15

- “Fulfill”
 - Matthew intentional about Jesus fulfilling prophets/scripture/law
 - Righteousness
 - Being ‘right’
 - Jesus was without sin, so why?
 - Fully human, identify with us
 - The writer of Hebrews addresses this multiple times
 - Hebrews 4:15 (NRSV) ‘For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin.’
 - Must be this way so he knows what it is like to be us
 - Answer to why Jesus needed to be baptized= fulfill righteousness, OT, Human

V.16

- Greek words for baptism= bapto and baptizo
 - Bapto- to dip
 - Baptizo- to immerse
- Bible Study Magazine published an article a few years back that talked about a Greek poet and physician Nicander, who lived about 200 B.C. and his recipe for making pickles. In the recipe, the physician uses two forms of the word baptize. Nicander says that in order to make a pickle, the vegetable should first be ‘dipped’(bapto) into boiling water and then ‘baptised’ (baptizo) in the vinegar solution. Both verbs concern the immersing of vegetables in a solution. But the first is temporary. The second, the act of baptizing the vegetable, produces a permanent change. When a pickle is ‘baptizo’ in the vinegar solution, there is a union that happens, a real, permanent change. When we are baptizo’d, (preferably not in vinegar) there is a union that we undergo in Christ, and a real change occurs, like in the case of the pickle!
- Baptized into the same baptism
 - Paul says this later on in Romans 6:3-4 (NRSV)3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.
 - Do the things Jesus did, we get to share in this act as a remembrance of our baptism and his
- How exactly does a cucumber turn into a pickle? It’s a mystery. How does baptism lead to a changed spiritual condition (and sometimes a changed physical condition)? Same
- It is not my intent to detract from the sacredness of baptism by paralleling to the process of pickling - my intent is to emphasize the fact that there are positive, significant, lasting, spiritual benefits that are associated with baptism that are supernatural in nature, and that for our advantage and good.

- As the physical act of immersing in water is completed, John fades into the background; Father, Son & Spirit come to the foreground
- Beginning, Jesus=ministry, Us=follower of Jesus/disciple
 - Initiation into a movement
 - Covenant/commitment
 - Story of redemption
 - Lifelong journey, 'calling', live it out over a lifetime=process
 - Another answer to why Jesus needed to be baptized= Beginning of ministry
- Spirit
 - Don't lose sight of this significance
 - One event but two actions, 1=baptism, 2= Spirit descending
 - Here a tranquil scene, Mark=heavens rip open
 - God comes down, the seminary professor story
 - Another answer to why Jesus needed to be baptized= Trinity

V.17

- This is MY Beloved Son
 - MY
 - God's son before human=Galatians 4:4
 - Sonship relationship= John 20:17
 - Nicene council in 325 AD "very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance which the Father"
 - Equality with God=One w/Father, unity of substance=John 10:30
 - Reveals the Father= John 14:6-9
 - Similar words in Matt.17:5 at the Transfiguration
 - The difference is 'Hear Him'
- Child of God, everyone, seeing that in others
- Another answer to why Jesus needed to be baptized= Son, Identity

A lot of people say that Jesus was only baptized in order to provide us an 'example' - that we are to be baptized - and we are, but I think Jesus' baptism was more than that

- Post Baptism, Jesus tempted in wilderness - how did he remain steadfast?
- Despised - try to push off a cliff - how did he endure?
- Loved one minute, huge following; hated the next minute, people left, couldn't handle his teaching - how did he make it through?
- Shouts, "Glory to God, Hosanna; blessed is He" one day, shouts, "Crucify Him!" the next day - how did he do stomach it?
- Chunks of flesh torn from his body...crowns of thorns shoved into his scalp...how did he brave it?
- On the Cross, "How did Jesus 'Forgive them'..." How able to humble himself?
- How did Jesus endure everything he went through so that He could die for us?
 - I believe He had already died once...the day he was baptized
 - Through His baptism, Jesus died to his own desires, surrendering His entire life, death, ministry and will of the Father

Jesus' baptism also equipped Him with the on-going power and presence of the Holy Spirit - which enabled Him to what lied ahead...and that it was also an act of dying to Himself, His will, His desires, His appetites, His life and living for what the Father desired

- I only say what the Father tells me to say
- I only do what the Father tells me to do
- My food is to do the will of the Father

Closing