



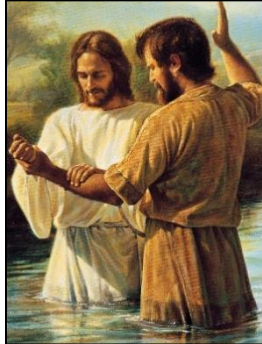
THE KING AND HIS KINGDOM

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PART 2: KING JESUS BEGINS HIS MINISTRY



Central Question: Why was Jesus baptized?

At first glance, it seems that Jesus' baptism has no purpose. John's baptism was the baptism of repentance (Matthew 3:11), but Jesus was sinless and had no need of repentance. Even John was taken aback by Jesus' coming to him. So why was Jesus baptized?

MATTHEW 3:1-4:25 (NIV)

A. John the Baptist prepares the way (3:1-12)

"In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ² and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." ³This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" ⁴ John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. ⁶ Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹ And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ¹⁰ The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. ¹¹ "I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

B. The baptism of Jesus (3:13-17)

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. ¹⁴ But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" ¹⁵ Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. ¹⁶ As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

C. The temptation of Jesus (4:1-11)

"Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." ⁴ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" ⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶ "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" ⁷ Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" ¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him."

D. Jesus begins his ministry (4:12-17)

"When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he withdrew to Galilee. ¹³ Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali-- ¹⁴ to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah: ¹⁵ "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles-- ¹⁶ the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned." ¹⁷ From that time on Jesus began to preach, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.'"

E. Jesus calls his first disciples (4:18-22)

"As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." ²⁰ At once they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, ²² and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him."

F. Jesus ministers to great crowds (4:23-25)

“Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. ²⁴ News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed; and he healed them. ²⁵ Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) What does the word “repent” mean and why do you suppose it was one of the first things John the Baptist proclaimed (3:2)? Hint: See <https://www.christianity.com/jesus/following-jesus/repentance-faith-and-salvation/what-does-it-mean-to-repent.html>



- 2) What do you suppose John meant when he said the “kingdom of heaven has come near”(3:2)?

- 3) What kind of a response was there to John the Baptist's preaching (3:5-8)?

- 4) Why was Jesus baptized (3:6, 13-17) since he never sinned? What was the significance of this act? (Hint: <https://www.gotquestions.org/Jesus-baptized.html>).



5) In addition to Jesus himself, in what ways were God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit involved in his baptism (3:16-17)?

6) In each of these three temptations how did Jesus resist Satan? How does this relate to Christians today (4:1-11)?

7) There will be times when you as a Christian will be weak when tempted. What does Hebrews 4:15-16 tell you about those times? What does 1 Corinthians 10:13 tell you?

8) What was Satan's response to Jesus in Matthew 4:10-11? What does James 4:7 instruct you to do when Satan tempts you?

9) Optional discussion leader question(s).

APPLICATION

When facing temptations, we are to...

R_____ the devil's tactics (exploits our natural desires).

R_____ like Jesus did (use scripture).

R_____ on Jesus, especially in times of weakness.

R_____ that we are most vulnerable when we are hungry, angry, lonely, or tired (H.A.L.T).