

Sermon, January 8, 2012
“The Baptism of Jesus”, Matthew 3:11-17
Pastor Thomas P. Bellhy

The 27 Books of the New Testament

- **Gospels**: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John
- **Early Church**: Book of Acts
- **13 Letters of Paul**: Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon
- **8 General Letters**: Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude
- **Prophecy**: Revelations

The Gospels

- Gospel comes from the Greek word **εὐαγγέλιον** (euaggelion) evangelism, bearer of good news; specifically the good news of Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior, **ΙΧΘΥΣ**
- Matthew, Mark, Luke and John write about Jesus birth, life, ministry of healing, ministry of teaching, miracles, passion, death, and resurrection.
- Each gives a slightly different view of the life of Christ written for different audiences and together give us a clear picture of the life of Christ.
- Matthew writes to the Jews in narrative
- Mark writes to the Romans in narrative
- Luke writes to the Greeks in narrative
- John writes to all people in a greater theological context
- The gospels give a significant portion of their chapters to the last week of Jesus life (Matthew-25%, Mark-31%, Luke-21%, John-43%).
- Each gospel is too extensive to give just one sermon on...will go through the different aspects of the life of Christ in each Gospel.

Overview of Matthew :

- The Apostle Matthew is the author; his name means “Gift of the Lord”.
- The time of the writing is around 50 AD.
- He was a despised tax collector named Levi prior to his calling to follow Jesus.
- Matthew wrote to and for the Jews.
- Quotes the Old Testament more than 60 times and emphasizes Jesus as Messiah and King.

Overall Outline of Matthew:

- I. The birth and early years of Jesus (1:1-2:23)
- II. The beginnings of Jesus ministry (3:1-4:11)
- III. Jesus ministry in Galilee (4:12-14:12)
- IV. Jesus withdrawal for Galilee (14:13-17:20)
- V. Jesus final ministry in Galilee (17:22-18:35)
- VI. Jesus ministry in Judea and Perea (19:1-20:34)
- VII. The passion of Christ (21:1-27:66)
- VIII. The resurrection of Jesus (28:1-20)

Major Themes of Matthew¹:

- Jesus as Messiah, the King of the Jews,
- In the opening genealogy Matthew shows that Christ is the heir of the kingly line.
- He demonstrates that He is the fulfillment of dozens of OT prophecies regarding the king who would come.
- Matthew records **5 major discourses**: the Sermon on the Mount (chaps. 5–7); the commissioning of the apostles (chap. 10); the parables about the kingdom (chap. 13); a discourse about the childlikeness of the believer (chap. 18); and the discourse on His second coming (chaps. 24, 25). Each discourse ends with a variation of this phrase: “when Jesus had ended these sayings” (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1).
- Matthew is keen to show the error of the **Pharisees** for the benefit of his Jewish audience.

¹MacArthur, John Jr: *The MacArthur Study Bible*. electronic ed. Nashville : Word Pub., 1997, c1997, S. Mt 1:1

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- Matthew also mentions the Sadducees more than any of the other gospels. Both Pharisees and Sadducees are regularly portrayed negatively, and held up as warning beacons. Their doctrine is a leaven that must be avoided (16:11, 12).
- The rejection of Israel’s Messiah is another constant theme in this gospel. The shadow of rejection is never lifted from the story.
- Yet Matthew portrays Him as a victorious King who will one day return “on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (24:30).

As we continue on the life of Christ from His birth let’s look at the next important phase...
His baptism and its meaning.

The baptism of Jesus heralds the King of Righteousness who washes away your sin.

1. John, the last OT prophet, and his baptism of repentance ...

- **Matthew 3:11; 1-3**
- God’s work is coming, repent, change your ways back to God for the King is coming who will save
- John’s ministry as the last Old Testament prophet was pointing forward as all the previous prophets to the Messiah whose coming was imminent.
- John message still calls the world to Christ...repent
- However, John’s baptism by water was only a symbol of repentance and purification that would pass away...there would be a greater baptism to come

2. The baptism of Jesus to come...

- **Matthew 3:11-12**
- The baptism of the Holy Spirit and with fire describes the supernatural baptism of God as opposed to water baptism.
- The fire of the Spirit renews the people of God and consumes the wicked as chaff
- John witness to Jesus as the King to come who will baptize with the Spirit and execute judgment
- There is a need in worldly lives for Godly change...not just outward but inward.

3. Jesus baptized by John...

- **Matthew 3:13-15**
- John was reluctant to baptize Jesus; he recognized that Jesus had no need for repentance.
- But in order “to fulfill all righteousness” Jesus had to be identified with His people.
- **2 Corinthians 5:21** ²¹ *He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*
- John’s baptism of the washing away of sin pointed to Christ’s death on the cross that would wash away sin.
- Christian baptism is symbolic of union with Christ in His death and resurrection. Part of the people of God!
- Repent and be changed, and be clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

4. The Theophany and the “coronation” of Jesus,

- **Matthew 3:13-15**
- Jesus Son of God, the Holy Spirit, and God the Father all proclaim the Messiah.
- Here is the King of righteousness, savior of souls, Lord of believers.

Conclusion

- Jesus takes on our sin and washes us clean so that we can come before a holy God clothed in Christ’s righteousness.
- **Ephesians 4:22-24** ²² *that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,* ²³ *and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,* ²⁴ *and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.*
- ***The baptism of Jesus heralds the King of Righteousness who washes away your sin.***