

A MINISTRY FOR HUNGRY SAINTS

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

✝ THE BOOK OF LUKE

WHAT WE MOST ASSUREDLY BELIEVE

WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRIES, ASSOCIATED

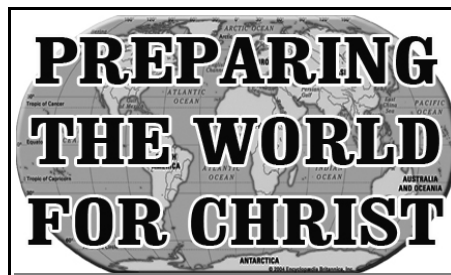
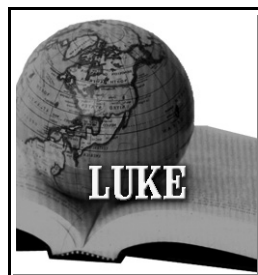
An overview of the Gospel of Luke, by Given O. Blakely

Lesson # 1 1

COMMENTARY ON: 3:1-21-23a

JESUS IS BAPTIZED

The baptism of Jesus was the place where He was revealed to be the Son of God, in whom, after thirty years of life, God was *"well pleased."* It was an activity Jesus Himself said was associated with fulfilling all righteousness. It was followed by the epochal temptation of Jesus during which Satan sought to turn Him from His work. Jesus' baptism was part of Him humbling Himself – He who was *"in the beginning,"* and as *"the Word,"* was *"with God, and was God"* (John 1:1). The fact that Jesus was baptized should forever stop the mouths of everyone who questions whether or not they should be baptized. All four Gospel writers, being inspired by God, have something to say about the baptism of Jesus. It was at this point that the entire Godhead was revealed at a single point of time, and in a particular place: **the Word** in the Person of Jesus, **the Holy Spirit** by appearance as a dove, and **the Father** by an audible expression from heaven. Something of that magnitude certainly ought to appeal to our interest, our hearts, and our thinking.

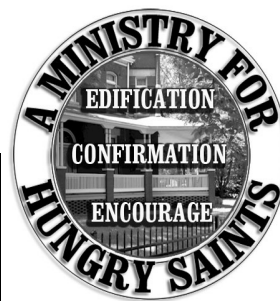


Since May, 1993, a ministry instituted for the encouragement of believers in Christ



The Book of Luke 2/6/2015

Lesson Number 11



A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE, ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

TRANSLATION LEGEND: ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED=Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot with Greek Interlinear (2003); ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), BRENT=Brenton's English Septuagint; CEB=Common English Bible (2011); CEV=Contemporary English Version (1995); DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), EMTV=English Majority Text (2002); ERV=English Revised Version (1885), ETRV=Easy to Read (1999), ESV=English Stand Version (2001), GENEVA=Geneva Bible (1599), GNB=Good News (1966), GSNT=Goodspeed (1923), GWN=God's Word (1995), IE=International English (1973), ISV=International Standard Version (1967), JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1917), JUB=Jubilee Bible (2003); KJV=King James Version (1611), LITV=Literary Translation of the Bible (1976), LIVING=Living Bible (1971), MESSAGE=The Message (1993), MKJV=Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY=Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD=Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB=New American Bible (2002), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV=New King James Version (1979), NLT=New Living Translation (1996), NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS=J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT=Bishop's New Testament (1959), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakh (1985), WEB=Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH=Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS=William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE=Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE=Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862)

GREEK LEXICON LEGEND

LEXICON LEGEND: FRIEBERG = Friberg Lexicon, UBS = Barclay-Newman, LOUW-NIDA = Louw-Nida Lexicon, LIDDELL SCOTT

PERSUADED OF THE NECESSITY OF KNOWING THE CERTAINTY OF THE THINGS WE BELIEVE, LUKE MAKES US MORE FIRM BY BUTTRESSING OUR FAITH, AND CONFIRMING WE HAVE NOT EMBRACED FABLES.

DISCLAIMER: The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

..Luke 3:21 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, ²² And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. ²³ And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age . . . " Luke 3:21-23a

INTRODUCTION

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

The baptism of Jesus was the place where He was revealed to be the Son of God, in whom, after thirty years of life, God was "well pleased." It was an activity Jesus Himself said was associated with fulfilling all righteousness. It was followed by the epochal temptation of Jesus during which Satan sought to turn Him from His work. Jesus' baptism was part of Him humbling Himself – He who was "in the beginning," and as "the Word," was "with God, and was God" (John 1:1). The fact that Jesus was baptized should forever stop the mouths of everyone who questions whether or not

they should be baptized. All four Gospel writers, being inspired by God, have something to say about the baptism of Jesus. It was at this point that the entire Godhead was revealed at a single point of time, and in a particular place: **the Word** in the Person of Jesus, **the Holy Spirit** by appearance as a dove, and **the Father** by an audible expression from heaven. Something of that magnitude certainly ought to appeal to our interest, our hearts, and our thinking.

ANYTHING JESUS DID IS IMPORTANT

When it comes to "the record God has given of His Son," **nothing**

unimportant or disconnected from His commission, is related. No report of Jesus is mere history. Nothing is incidental. Nothing happened by happenstance. Ponder, for example, what is reported of Jesus.

- ⇨ Before He was made flesh (John 1:1-3; John 17:5; Col 1:16).
- ⇨ His birth (Matt 1:18-25).
- ⇨ The announcement of His birth (Lk 2:8-11).
- ⇨ His birth revealed to wise men from the East (Matt 2:1-2).

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- ▶ INTRODUCTION
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- ▶ JESUS WAS THIRTY YEARS OLD (3:23)
- ▶ MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT OF JESUS' BAPTISM (Matt 3:13-17)
- ▶ MARK'S ACCOUNT OF JESUS' BAPTISM (Mark 1:9-11)
- ▶ JOHN'S ACCOUNT OF JESUS' BAPTISM (John 1:31-34)

- ⇒ Him being worshiped as an infant (Matt 2:11).
- ⇒ His life being threatened (Matt 2:13,16).
- ⇒ Him, as a child, being taken down into Egypt (Matt 2:13-14).
- ⇒ Him being taken to Nazareth where He was raised (Matt 2:23).
- ⇒ His experience in the Temple when He was twelve years of age (Lk 2:42-51).
- ⇒ His eagerness to know the things of God when He was young (Lk 2:42-47).
- ⇒ His attendance of John's preaching and baptizing (John 1:26-27).
- ⇒ His baptism (Matt 3:13-17; Mk 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-23; John 1:31-34).
- ⇒ His concentrated and extended temptation (Matt 4:1-11; Lk 4:1-13).
- ⇒ His attendance of a wedding feast with His disciples (John 2:1-2).
- ⇒ His first miracle (John 2:3-11).
- ⇒ Accounts of His preaching and Teaching (Matt 4:17,23; 5:2; 9:35;

- 13:54; 21-23; 26:55; Mk 1:21-22; 4:2; 10:1; Lk 4:15,31; 13:10,22; John 6:59; 8:2; 18:20 . . . etc.
- ⇒ The response of religious leaders to His preaching and teaching (Matt 9:3; John 10:20-21).
- ⇒ The response of the common people to His preaching and teaching (Mk 12:37).
- ⇒ His response to a person with faith (Matt 8:10; 15:28; Lk 7:9).
- ⇒ His response to unbelief (Matt 13:58; Mk 6:6; 16:14; Lk 8:25).
- ⇒ His compassion (Matt 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 20:34).
- ⇒ His response to people doing business in the Temple (John 2:14-16; Matt 21:12-13).
- ⇒ His response to those seeking mercy (Matt 9:27-29; 15:22-28).
- ⇒ His statements about what was required to be His disciple (Lk 14:26,27,33).
- ⇒ His response to Jerusalem's ignorance of their visitation (Lk 19:42-44).
- ⇒ His response to one asking Him to settle a family dispute (Lk 12:13-14).
- ⇒ His custom of going into the synagogue on the Sabbath day (Lk 4:16).
- ⇒ His teaching in the Temple (Matt 21:23; 26:55; Lk 19:47; 20:1).
- ⇒ His teaching in synagogues (Matt 13:54; Mk 1:21; Lk 6:6; Lk 6:59).
- ⇒ His attendance of a feast prepared for Him (Lk 5:29-33).
- ⇒ His response to someone who inconvenienced himself to see Him (Lk 19:2-6-10).
- ⇒ What He said to someone who came to Him by night (John 3:1-21).

- ⇒ How He responded to someone seeking prominence (Mk 10:37-40).
- ⇒ How He responded to a rich man who wanted to know what to do to inherit eternal life (Lk 18:18-24).
- ⇒ His intercession (Lk 22:31-32; John 17:9-12).
- ⇒ His response to cities that were indifferent to His miracles (Matt 11:20-24).
- ⇒ His response to religious professionals (Matt 23:1-36).
- ⇒ Special people that He loved (Mk 10:21; John 19:26).
- ⇒ His reaction to Divine withdrawal (Matt 26:39; 27:46).
- ⇒ His determination to do the will of God.
- ⇒ His preference for His disciples (Lk 22:15; Matt 13:11; 15:32; John 17:9).
- ⇒ The choosing of those He would use (Lk 6:13-16).
- ⇒ His knowledge of, and involvement with, the temptation of His servants (Lk 22:32).
- ⇒ His death (Matt 27:33-50).
- ⇒ The time between His death and resurrection (Acts 2:27; 1 Pet 3:18-19).
- ⇒ His resurrection (Matt 28:2,8-10).
- ⇒ His post resurrection appearances (Mk 16:9,12,14; Lk 24:17-31; 36-40; 1 Cor 15:4-8).
- ⇒ His ascension into glory (Lk 24:51; Acts 1:9-11).
- ⇒ His position in glory (Mk 16:19; Eph 1:20; Heb 1:3).

To what other person are we exposed so extensively? And, this does not even take into the account the

types and shadows that pointed to Him, and the prophecies of Him that spanned a period of nearly four thousand years—from Eden through the life, of Malachi. It is no wonder that Jesus told His critics, *"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me."* (John 5:39). The Scriptures are all about Him! Salvation is all about Him! The will of God is all about Him! The purpose of God is all about Him! What God is doing is all about Him! Life itself is all about Him!

A great transgression has been committed when any person, any group of persons, any church, or any country relegates Jesus to a place of non-

The Scriptures are all about Jesus! Salvation is all about Him! The will of God is all about Him! The purpose of God is all about Him! What God is doing is all about Him! Life itself is all about Him!

significance. When preaching, teaching, and leading can take place without continual references to, and expositions of, the Lord Jesus Christ, men are tottering on the brink of eternal disaster. God Almighty, who has made all "places," has not made a place of

true benefit in which Jesus is not the preeminent person!

Now, with these things in mind, we will review the baptism of Jesus. It, like everything associated with the Son of God, has profound meaning.

WHEN ALL THE PEOPLE WERE BAPTIZED

^{«Luke 3:21a} **Now when all the people were baptized . . . "**

Other versions read, *"when all the people were being baptized,"* ^{NIV} *"all the people had been given baptism,"* ^{BBE} *"When everyone was being baptized,"* ^{CEB} *"While all the people were being immersed,"* ^{CJB} *"One day when the crowds were being baptized,"* ^{NLT} *"And that fortune as all the people received baptism,"* ^{TNT} *"Then one day, after the crowds had been baptized,"* ^{LIVING} and *"Now after all the people had been baptized."* ^{MONTGOMERY}

The point here is not that everyone John was going to baptize had been baptized. John continued to baptize for some time after Jesus was baptized (John 3:23). This had to do with Divine timing.

In His teaching Jesus said, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise"* (John 5:19). That applied to His baptism as well as His miracles.

John had been told that the reason he was sent to baptize, was because the Messiah was going to be revealed in baptism. That revelation was for an appointed time, for that is the way the Lord works. What this text means is that the time had come for the Son of God to be baptized, and that is what would now monopolize John the Baptist's attention. We assume John also commenced his ministry at thirty years of age, and had therefore been ministering for about six months, for he was six months older than Jesus (Lk 1:36).

OPINIONS ON WHY JESUS WAS BAPTIZED

"Bishop Wordsworth sums them up well in his words: *"He came to baptize water, by being baptized in it."* Ignatius ('Ad. Eph.,' 18, beginning of the second century) writes, *"He was baptized that, by his submission to the rite, he might purify the water."* Jerome, in the same strain, says, *"He did not so much get cleansing from baptism, as impart cleansing to it."* ^{PULPIT COMMENTARY}

All of the baptisms required to prepare for this event had been accomplished. The importance and necessity of baptism had also been established, as well as the necessity of repentance. Now, within the framework of that understanding, the Messiah Himself will be baptized. The stage had been set for this epochal event.

JESUS WAS BAPTIZED PRAYING

^{" 21b} . . . **it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened. . . "**

IT CAME TO PASS
" . . . it came to pass . . . "

Other versions read, *"it came*

about," ^{NASB} *"it happened that,"* ^{NJB} and *"Then Jesus came."* ^{IE}

The word translated *"came to*

pass" [ginomai] means, "TO BECOME, I. E. TO COME INTO EXISTENCE, BEGIN TO BE, RECEIVE BEING: ABSOLUTELY; HAPPEN," THAYER "AS WHAT COMES INTO EXISTENCE *BECOME, COME TO BE, ORIGINATE*, WITH THE DISTINCTIVE SENSE ARISING FROM THE CONTEXT," FRIBERG AND "BE BORN OR PRODUCED." GINGRICH

This word [ginomai] is used four hundred and fifty-six times from Matthew through Revelation. It is a word that denoted Divine government,

Other versions read, "*while He prayed*," NKJV "*while He was praying*," NASB "*and was praying*," RSV "*was in prayer*," BBE "*after His own baptism was at prayer*," NJB "*was still praying*," WILLIAMS "*was praying after his own baptism*," PHILLIPS and "*and [while He was still] praying*." AMPLIFIED

The idea here is that Jesus was praying while He was being baptized,

He was praying. In my opinion, this is a good thing to encourage – praying while one is being baptized, and continuing to do so afterward, when thanksgiving should be offered. It is a good way to strengthen one's faith in "*the operation of God*," which occurs during one's baptism (Col 2:12).

THE HEAVEN WAS OPENED
" . . . the heaven was opened. . . "

Other versions read, "*heaven was opened*," NASB "*the heaven being open*," BBE "*the heavens were opened*," MRD "*the heavens opened*" NLT "*the sky opened up*," IE "*the heaven was opened*," ASV "*Heaven opened*," PHILLIPS and "*the [visible] heaven was opened*." AMPLIFIED

In the Greek, the words are in the singular:—i.e. "*the*" (tov) "*heaven*" (ouranon).

I understand this to be the "*heaven*" associated with creation (Gen 1:1), as well as the removal of the entire temporal order (2 Pet 3:12-13).

This "*heaven*" is a kind of line of demarcation beyond which men cannot peer. It is the celestial realm, populated with heavenly bodies (1 Cor 15:40-41). God has so arranged this section of the creation that men know there is more than they can see – even with magnificent physical helps. However they magnify the sight of heavenly bodies, they never see an end to them. If they improve their viewing apparatus, it only confirms there is more than men can see.

In this text we are reading of a confirmation that there are realities beyond the natural creation. It is as though there was a passage created in the natural heaven so that a gift descending from the heaven in which God's throne exists (Psa 11:4; Rev 4:2), could be detected. Something came from the highest realm, through a high realm, to the lower realm.

It is interesting to observe that Jesus is the only person of record whose baptism includes extensive details. There are other accounts of people being baptized with water.

It is as though there was a passage created in the natural heaven so that a gift descending from the heaven in which God's throne exists could be detected.

and the fulfillment of the purpose of God. Jesus only did what God directed Him to do (John 5:36; 8:28-29; 14:31), and that included His baptism.

JESUS ALSO BEING BAPTIZED

" . . . that Jesus also being baptized . . . "

Here Jesus identified with the people, as well as confirming the legitimacy of John's baptism. Although Jesus had no sin, and thus could not "*repent*," He still submitted to this ordinance. In the doing of this, He would be revealed as the Son of God. One can only imagine how this makes those appear in heaven who balk at baptism, when Jesus Himself submitted to it. It is my persuasion that Philip recounting the baptism of Jesus is what prompted the Ethiopian eunuch to ask, "*See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?*" (Acts 8:36). I do not see this as the eunuch's response to being told what to do to be saved. Philip "*preached unto Him Jesus*" (Acts 8:35), and Jesus' baptism is part of that preaching. Perhaps if this was more faithfully preached, there would be less controversy over baptism.

AND PRAYING

" . . . and praying . . . "

and that He continued praying until the heavens opened.

Luke records eight times when Jesus prayed.

- ⇒ When He was baptized (Lk 3:21).
- ⇒ When multitudes came to Him to hear and be healed of their infirmities (Lk 5:15-16).
- ⇒ Before choosing the twelve (Lk 6:12-13).
- ⇒ When He asked His disciples who men said He was (Luke 9:18-20).
- ⇒ When He was transfigured (Lk 9:28-29).
- ⇒ When His disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray (Lk 11:1).
- ⇒ When He prayed for Peter, that his faith would not fail (Lk 22:32).
- ⇒ On the eve of His betrayal (Lk 22:41-45).

I have long been identified with those who teach and practice baptism, but do not believe I have ever heard someone point out that when Jesus was baptized,

- ⇒ The devout Jews on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41).
 - ✦ Added to the disciples (Acts 2:41)
 - ✦ Continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and the breaking of bread, and prayers.
- ⇒ The city of Samaria (Acts 8:12,16).
 - ✦ No details
- ⇒ Simon the sorcerer (Acts 8:13).
 - ✦ Continued with Philip
- ⇒ The Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:38-39).
 - ✦ Went on his way rejoicing (Acts 8:39)
- ⇒ Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:18).
 - ✦ Received meat, was strengthened, and straightway preached Christ (Acts 9:19-20)
- ⇒ Those at Cornelius' house (Acts 10:47-48).
 - ✦ No details
- ⇒ Lydia and her household (Acts 16:15).
 - ✦ Constrained Paul and company to abide in her house for a time (Acts 16:15).
- ⇒ The Philippian jailor (Acts 16:33).
 - ✦ Brought Paul and Silas into his house, fed them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.
- ⇒ Crispus and "many Corinthians" (Acts 18:8).
 - ✦ No details
- ⇒ Certain disciples in Ephesus who had only been baptized with the baptism of John (Acts 19:5).

✦ Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

To this point, here is what is associated with the baptism of Jesus.

- ⇒ Jesus has come forward to be baptized.
- ⇒ John, at first, refused to do so.
- ⇒ Jesus persuaded him to do so, saying it was becoming to fulfill all righteousness.
- ⇒ Jesus was baptized.

IT IS TRUE THAT JESUS WAS IDENTIFIED WITH THE RACE OF MEN

2:2).

- ⇒ Unique in receiving worship as a "young child" (Matt 2:11).
- ⇒ Unique as a twelve year old (Lk 2:42-50).
- ⇒ Unique in His baptism (Lk 3:21-22).
- ⇒ The Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14).
- ⇒ He was made "of the seed of David"

Now, unlike the record of other baptisms, there is a visible and audible response from heaven. It involves both the Holy Spirit and God the Father. This is an epochal moment, once again setting Jesus apart from those He came to save.

- ⇒ Jesus was praying when He was baptized.

Now, unlike the record of other baptisms, there is a visible and audible response from heaven. It involves both the Holy Spirit and God the Father. **This is an epochal moment, once again setting Jesus apart from those He came to save.** This uniqueness is seen in the following:

- ⇒ Unique in how He was conceived (Matt 1:20).
- ⇒ Unique in that the angels were commanded to worship Him when He came into the world (Heb 1:6).
- ⇒ Unique in the announcement of His birth (Lk 2:8-14).
- ⇒ Unique in being born a King (Matt

according to the flesh" (Rom 1:3).

- ⇒ God sent His own Son "*in the likeness of sinful flesh*" (Rom 8:3).
- ⇒ He was "*made of a woman, made under the Law*" (Gal 4:4).
- ⇒ He "*took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men*" (Phil 2:7).
- ⇒ Like men, He had to put His trust in God (Heb 2:13).
- ⇒ He took part of flesh and blood (Heb 2:14).
- ⇒ He "*took upon Himself*" the nature of the seed of Abraham (Heb 2:16).
- ⇒ "*In all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren*" (Heb

2:17).

⇒ He was *"in all pointed tempted like as we are"* (Heb 4:15).

There is a tendency for men to press the matter of Jesus being made like us too far. Although He was made like us, was tempted like us, and experienced suffering, He was, and

remains, unique among men.

⇒ He is appropriately described as *"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens."* (Heb 7:26)

⇒ *"In Him is no sin"* (1 John 3:5).

⇒ He is *"the only begotten of the*

Father" (John 1:14).

Enough cannot be said about the uniqueness of Jesus. In fact, the effectiveness of His death, the reality of His resurrection, and His ongoing ministry in heaven demands that He be unique, unequaled, unparalleled, inimitable, and matchless.

THE HOLY GHOST DESCENDED ON JESUS

^{22a} *And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him . . ."*

THE HOLY GHOST

"And the Holy Ghost . . ."

Other versions read, *"the Holy Spirit,"* ^{NKJV} and *"the Ruach HaKodesh."* ^{CJB}

The words *"Holy Ghost"* or *"Holy Spirit"* do not occur in Moses and the Prophets (Genesis thru Malachi). In that section *"Spirit of God"* occurs fourteen times, and *"Spirit of the Lord"* twenty-six times.

How much more the Spirit is mentioned from Matthew through Revelation!

FORTY TIMES IN 39 BOOKS

⇒ The expression *"Holy Ghost"* occurs eighty-seven times from Matthew thru Revelation (KJV). The word *"ghost"* is technically correct, having the following primary (#1) meaning:
"THE SEAT OF LIFE OR INTELLIGENCE : SOUL"
MERRIAM-WEBSTER Now, however, this is considered an archaic meaning.

⇒ *"The Spirit of God"* eleven times

⇒ *"The Spirit of your Father"* one time

⇒ *"The Spirit of Truth"* three times

⇒ *"The Spirit of the Lord"* four times,

⇒ *"The Spirit of life"* two times

⇒ *"The Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead"* once

⇒ *"The Spirit of adoption"* once

⇒ *"The Spirit of or God"* eleven times

⇒ *"The Spirit of the Living God"* once

⇒ *"The Spirit of His Son"* once

1:22; 5:5; 1 Thess 4:8; 1 John 3:24; 4:13).

⇒ Through **the Spirit** we *"mortify the deeds of the body"* (Rom 8:13).

⇒ Through the Spirit we *"wait for the hope of righteousness"* (Gal 5:5).

Make no mistake about this – this is the era in which the Holy Spirit has an immediate ministry within the saints. However, this is because the Holy Spirit came upon Christ, and remained with Him *"without measure"*

⇒ *"The Spirit of Jesus Christ"* once

⇒ *"The Spirit of grace"* once "

⇒ *"The Holy Spirit"* one time (KJV)

⇒ *"The Spirit"* seventy-nine times

⇒ *"Spirit of Christ"* two times.

TWO HUNDRED AND SEVEN TIMES! IN TWENTY-SEVEN BOOKS

This is the era of the New Covenant, and *"the day of salvation."* The Holy Spirit is now more prominent.

⇒ For example, it is said of the New Covenant that it is *"the ministration of the Spirit"* (2 Cor 3:6).

⇒ Through Jesus, the Spirit is now **given** to the people of God (2 Cor

⇒ We have access to the Father *"by **one Spirit**"* (Eph 2:18).

⇒ The church is *"builted together for a habitation of God **through the Spirit**"* (Eph 2:22).

⇒ God as chosen His people *"unto salvation through **sanctification of the Spirit**"* (2 Thess 21:13).

⇒ The saved are *"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, **through sanctification of the Spirit**, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ"* (1 Pet 1:2).

⇒ We obey *"the truth **through the Spirit** unto unfeigned love of the brethren"* (1 Pet 1:22).

This appearance was, therefore, primarily for attestation to John, confirming that this was, in fact, the One for whom he had been preparing the way.

- ⇒ We are “washed,” “sanctified,” and “justified . . . **by the Spirit** of our God” (1 Cor 6:11).
- ⇒ The saved are being “changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as **by the Spirit** of the Lord” (2 Cor 3:18).
- ⇒ The “**fruit of the Spirit**” is an indispensable part of salvation (Gal 5:22-23; Eph 5:9).
- ⇒ “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Rom 8:2).
- ⇒ The Holy Spirit makes “intercession for the saints according to the will of God” (Rom 8:26-27).

Make no mistake about this – **this is the era in which the Holy Spirit has an immediate ministry within the saints.** However, this is because the Holy Spirit came upon Christ, and remained with Him “without measure” (John 3:34). This bestowment takes place in our text.

DESCENDED IN A BODILY SHAPE LIKE A DOVE

“ . . . descended in a bodily shape like a **dove upon Him** . . . ”

Other versions read, “a bodily form like a dove,” ^{NKJV} “in physical form like a dove,” ^{CJB} “a physical appearance like a dove,” ^{CSB} “in a bodily appearance, as if a dove,” ^{YLT} “looked like a real dove,” ^{ERV} “the material shape of a dove,” ^{GOODSPEED} “the bodily likeness of a dove,” ^{MURDOCK} and “a bodily appearance, as if a dove.” ^{YLT}

Matthew’s Gospel reads, “the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him” (Matt

3:16). Mark’s Gospel reads “And straightway coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him” (Mark 1:10). John’s Gospel reads, “And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him.” (John 1:32).

John had been told “Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost” (John 1:33). Because the Holy Spirit cannot be seen by mortal eyes, the Spirit “descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon” Jesus. **This appearance was, therefore, primarily for attestation to John, confirming that this was, in fact, the One for whom he had been preparing the way.**

There have been unique appearances of heavenly things.

- ⇒ The angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in a flame of fire in a bush (Ex 3:2).
- ⇒ The glory of the Lord appeared in a cloud (Ex 16:10).
- ⇒ Angel of the Lord appears to Gideon (Judges 6:12).
- ⇒ The angel of the Lord appeared to Israel (Ex 16:10; 24:17; Num 14:10; 2 Chron 7:1).
- ⇒ A chariot of fire and horses of fire appear to Elisha, carrying Elijah into heaven (2 Kgs 2:11-12).
- ⇒ Micaiah the prophet saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right hand and on His left (1 Kgs

22:19).

- ⇒ Amos saw the Lord standing upon the altar (Amos 9:1).
- ⇒ Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up, with His train filling the temple (Isa 6:1-8).
- ⇒ Ezekiel saw visions of God (Ezek 1:1).
- ⇒ Daniel saw one like the Son of man being brought to the Ancient of days (Dan 7:13-14).
- ⇒ Stephen saw the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God (Acts 7:56).
- ⇒ John saw the glorified Christ (Rev 1:12-20).

These just a few of the appearances of heavenly persons and things that have been seen by men. **None of them were accomplished by human strength or wisdom.** All of them confirm an interest in humanity that exists in the heavenly realm.

UPON HIM

The Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, descended and set upon Jesus of Nazareth. This is record by the other Gospel writers as well (Matt 3:16; Mk 1:10; John 1:32). **The Holy Spirit coming upon Jesus was prophesied of old time.**

- ⇒ “**And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD**” (Isa 11:2).
- ⇒ “Behold My Servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth; **I have put my Spirit upon Him: He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.**” (Isa 42:1)
- ⇒ “**The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me; because the LORD hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to**

proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (Isa 61:1).

Signifying the lack of restriction of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus, John testified, *"For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him"* (John 3:34).

When Jesus returned from being baptized, a point is made of the impact

the Holy Spirit had upon Him: *"And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness"* (Luke 4:1).

This accounts for the fact that while Jesus was moving about as a Man, He never did anything on His own. Whether He was speaking or working, He was being directed by the Father from within, through the Holy Spirit (John 5:19; 8:28; 12:49; 14:10;

15:15).

Thus the impact of being in the world, and partaking of flesh and blood is seen more clearly. **Although He had lost none of His Deity while dwelling among men, He could neither defeat the devil nor effectively minister to men without heavenly enablement.** The Holy Spirit provided that enablement, because when He humbled Himself, there was a sense in which He sheathed the sword of Deity.

A VOICE FROM HEAVEN

^{22b} . . . and a voice came from heaven, which said, *Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."*

A VOICE CAME FROM HEAVEN

" . . . and a voice came from heaven . . ."

Confirming there are living personalities in heaven, there have been people who have heard voices spoken out of heaven.

⇒ **HAGAR:** *"And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation"* (Gen 21:17-18).

⇒ **ISRAEL:** *"Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he showed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire"* (Deut 4:36).

⇒ **NEBUCHADNEZZAR:** *"While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee"* (Dan 4:31).

⇒ **JESUS:** *"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."* (Matt

3:17).

⇒ **JESUS:** *"Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again"* (John 12:28).

⇒ **PETER:** *"And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat. But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth. But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common"* (Acts 11:7-9).

⇒ **JOHN:** *"After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter"* (Rev 4:1).

⇒ **JOHN:** *"I heard a voice from heaven . . ." (Rev 10:4,8; 14:2,13; 18:4).* In fact, those in Christ are told, *"See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from allude"* (Heb 12:25).

THOU ART MY BELOVED SON

" . . . which said, Thou art My beloved Son . . ."

Other versions read, *"You are My Son, whom I love,"* ^{NIV} *"You are My Son, the Beloved,"* ^{NRSV} *"You are My dearly loved Son,"* ^{BBE} *"You are My Son,"* ^{NJB} and *"You are My much loved Son."*

Jesus is also referred to as *"My Beloved"* in Matthew 12:18), where Matthew alludes to Isaiah 42:1. God also referred to Jesus as His *"Beloved Son"* at His transfiguration (Matt 17:5). The

When it comes to the consideration of the love of God, His preeminent love is toward His Son, who volunteered to humble Himself, doing the will of God, in order that God might be both "just" and the "Justifier" of those who believe in Him

word translated “beloved” [agapetos] means “esteemed, dear, favorite,” ^{THAYER} “beloved, dear, very much loved,” ^{FRIBERG} “of an only son,” ^{LIDDELL-SCOTT} and “Of the Messiah, with connotation of special choice by God.” ^{GINGRICH}

When it comes to the consideration of the love of God, His preeminent love is toward His Son, who volunteered to humble Himself, doing the will of God, in order that God might be both “just” and the “Justifier” of those who believe in Him (Rom 3:26).

The love of God for the world is a qualified love – “SO loved” (John 3:16; 1 John 4:11). But His love for the Son is not “so” qualified. His love for men springs from His mercy – “God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us” (Eph 2:4) – but this is not the case with Jesus. It is only God’s love for His Son that enabled Him to “so love the world.”

Further, men can only experience that love as they are “in Christ.”

In my judgment, there is not enough being said about the love God has for His Son. It is ever true, “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand” (John 3:35). And again, “For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth: and He will show Him greater works than these, that ye may marvel” (John 5:20).

To ensure that God loves you, you must “receive” His Son (John 1:12). Those who are fond of referring to God as loving men “so much,” need to ascribe that type of love to Jesus, and God’s love for Him. It is only as we are “in Him” that the love of God brings eternal advantage to us. No person has a right to refer to the love of God who does not love the Son and keep His commandments (John 14:15,21,23).

IN THEE I AM WELL PLEASED
“ . . . in thee I am well pleased.”

Other versions read, “in you I find happiness,” ^{CEB} “I take delight in You!” ^{CSB} “in Thee I did delight,” ^{YLT} “yes, My delight,” ^{LIVING} “In You I am delighted!,” ^{WILLIAMS} and “In You I am well pleased and find delight!” ^{AMPLIFIED}

Men are admonished to live and to “Please God” (1 Thess 4:1) – to “walk worthy of God unto all pleasing” (Col 1:10). But Jesus did not have to be admonished, to do this. This is what He DID, and God acknowledged it after His Son had tabernacled in the flesh for thirty full years!

When Jesus was baptized, we are apprised, He was praying (Lk 3:21). In a sense, I should suppose, God answered His prayer from heaven with this unqualified commendation.

JESUS WAS THIRTY YEARS OLD

“²³ And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age . . . ”

All versions read the same:–i.e. “about thirty years of age.” The word translated “about” [hosei], means “ABOUT, NEARLY,” ^{THAYER} “ABOUT.” ^{LIDDELL-SCOTT}

The point seems to be that the emphasis is placed Divine approval, as opposed to meeting an age criterion.

This confirms that John the Baptist was thirty years of age when he commenced his ministry, as Elizabeth was six months with child when Mary conceived Jesus through the Holy spirit (Lk 1:26,36),

This means that John was assigned thirty years to get ready for his ministry (which included Divine tutelage), and six months to prepare the way for the Lord.

The Age of Thirty

It appears as though thirty years of age equates to some level of

maturity, at least as it regards the work of the Lord. I understand that it would not be right to draw up requirements concerning this matter, but it is something to consider. Divine employment requires some maturity.

⇒ THE PRIESTHOOD: The Levites who served in the Tabernacle commenced their service at thirty years of age (Num 4:3,23,30,35,39,43,47; 23:3).

⇒ THE ELEVATION OF JOSEPH. Joseph was thirty years old when he “stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt,” being given authority over the land (Gen 41:46).

⇒ KING DAVID. David was thirty years old when he began to reign (2 Sam 5:4).

Compared to some of the members of the Sanhedrin, both John and Jesus were relatively young. In fact, during His ministry, some of Jesus’ critics chided Him on this very point: “Then said the Jews unto him,

Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?” (John 8:57).

In establishing the commencement of Christ’s ministry, God followed the procedure He had ordained for the Levitical priesthood, a work that pertained to Him exclusively, for they ministered “in things pertaining to God” (Heb 2:17; 5:1). His ministry commenced when He was thirty years of age. Also, it began with a washing.

This concludes Luke’s record of Jesus’ baptism. However, I felt it would be profitable to review the other Gospel writer’s record of this epochal event – the beginning of the ministry of Jesus, when He went about “doing good.”

Suffice it to say, more is said about the baptism of Jesus than the baptism of any other man or people. We have some details of the following baptisms, although they are very sparse:

⇒ Those on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41).

- ⇒ The Samaritans (Acts 8:12).
- ⇒ The Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:38).
- ⇒ Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:18; 22:16).
- ⇒ The household of Cornelius (Acts 10:47-48).
- ⇒ The household of Lydia (Acts 16:15).
- ⇒ The Philippian jailor (Acts 16:33).
- ⇒ Crispus, his house, and many Corinthians (Acts 18:8).
- ⇒ The disciples from Ephesus (Acts 19:5-6).

One might think that more would be said about the baptism of sinners, than the baptism of *"the Righteous*

Suffice it to say, more is said about the baptism of Jesus than the baptism of any other man or people.

One^{NIV} (1 John 2:1). We learn several things from this.

- ⇒ This confirmed John's baptism was valid.
- ⇒ Jesus extended Himself to identify with the people.
- ⇒ It was in a common ordinance that Jesus was made known as the Son of God.
- ⇒ This removed any question about

the validity of baptism.

- ⇒ This confirmed the validity and necessity of John's baptism.
- ⇒ This removes any question about whether or not men should be baptized.
- ⇒ It revealed the thoroughness of Christ's obedience.
- ⇒ It sanctified the ordinance.

MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT OF JESUS' BAPTISM

¹³ *Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. ¹⁴ But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? ¹⁵ And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. ¹⁶ And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: ¹⁷ And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*

JOHN FORBADE HIM

" . . . But John forbad him . . . "

Other versions read, *"John tried to prevent Him,"* ^{NKJV} *"John tried to deter Him,"* ^{NIV} *"John would have prevented Him,"* ^{NRSV} *"John would have hindered Him,"* ^{ASV} *"John would have kept Him back"* ^{BBE} *"John tried to stop Him"* ^{CEB} *"John urgently forbad Him,"* ^{DARBY} *"John stayed Him,"* ^{DOUAY} *"John refused Him,"* ^{MRD} *"John tried to dissuade Him,"* ^{NJB}

"John tried to talk Him out of it" ^{NLT} *"John was forbidding Him,"* ^{YLT} *"John didn't want to do it,"* ^{LIVING} *"John was trying to stop Him,"* ^{IE} *"John protested,"* ^{WEYMOUTH} *"John restrains Him,"* ^{ABP} *"John kept objecting,"* ^{CEV} *"John tried to make Him change his mind,"* ^{GNB} *"John dissuaded Him,"* ^{GOODSPEED} *"John resisted Him much,"* ^{JUB} *"John restrained Him,"* ^{LITV} *"John objected,"* ^{MESSAGE} and *"John protested strenuously, having in mind to prevent Him."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

Keep in mind who John was, his possession of the Holy Spirit, and what had been revealed to him.

- ⇒ He was the one appointed to prepare the way for the Lord (Isa 40:3; Matt 3:3; Mk 1:3; Lk 3:4).
- ⇒ He was filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb (Lk 1:15).
- ⇒ He was told how to know the identity of the Christ (John 1:33).
- ⇒ He knew Jesus was the Lamb of God that would take away the sin of

the world (John 1:29).

- ⇒ The Word of God had come to him (John 3:2).

And yet, John balked at what Jesus required of him – to baptize Him. How can such things be?

Spiritual Knowledge Is Not Academic

What is "academic" is abstractive. Something that is "abstract" is "DISSOCIATED FROM ANY SPECIFIC INSTANCE," OR IS "INSUFFICIENTLY FACTUAL." ^{MERRIAM-WEBSTER} It is something that is hypothetical, impractical, speculative, and undemonstrable. ^{MERRIAM-WEBSTER} This is found in the field of theory, supposition, and hypothesis. It involves bantering about in the field of ideas, as compared to dealing with facts and reality.

Much of what takes place in the arena of modern Christendom, so far as practicality is concerned, is treated as theoretical – things like regeneration, justification, the new birth, and sanctification. They are often treated as though they were nothing more than ideas to be diagnosed by men.

What John had been told from heaven dealt with established reality, yet could not be maintained in a finite mind. In John's case, this was not owing to a flaw in his character. That is not why he was apparently unable to put everything together that had been revealed to him. It is rather owing to the time in which he was living – a time when the new birth had not yet occurred, and having *"the mind of Christ"* was not yet available to men. This is precisely why Jesus said of John, *"Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he"* (Matt 11:11). Compared to other men, John was a giant. However, the place where he stood was, when compared to the mountain on which those who are in Christ Jesus stand, was a valley. The greatness of *"the least in the kingdom of heaven"* is not owing to **who** they are, but **where** they are. This situation accounts for John's response to Jesus.

The transcendency of the Divine Mind

It also must be underscored that there is a certain transcendency that characterizes the Divine mind. What was perfectly clear to Jesus was not perfectly clear to John. The reason – *"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him"* (1 Cor 2:9).

An example of "the mind of Christ"

Here is an example of how Jesus thought. It is a revelation of the humility of Jesus, of which it is written, *"And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross"* (Phil 2:8).

I HAVE NEED TO BE BAPTIZED OF THEE

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad Him, saying, I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?"

This is similar to Peter's response when Jesus came to wash his feet: *"Thou shalt never wash my feet."* When Jesus replied, *"If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me,"* Peter responded, *"Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head."* (John 13:8-9).

These are examples of how people responded to Jesus when they had some measure of understanding concerning who He was.

At this point, it is not clear how thoroughly John comprehended Jesus. It is understood that he had announced, *"Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"* (John 1:29). That was obviously an inspired outburst (like Peter confessing Christ), but the extent to which that awareness was with John at the time Jesus came to be baptized by him is not clear.

It is clear that Jesus was known as a righteous man, and unlike other men in that regard.

There is a view that has some merit on this matter. Some are persuaded John was talking about Jesus baptizing with the Holy Spirit, something that he had announced the Messiah would do (Mk 1:8; John 1:33). In this view, John would be saying, "I have need for You to baptize me with the Spirit, more that me baptizing You with the baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins." I must admit that this view makes a lot of sense to

me. I am quite willing to leave the matter in your hand.

FULFILLING ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS

"And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him."

Other versions read, *"It is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness,"* NKJV *"It is proper,"* NIV *"it is right for us to make righteousness complete,"* BBE *"This is necessary to fulfill all righteousness,"* CEB *"we should do everything righteousness requires,"* CJB *"for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffers him"* DARBY *"This is the proper way to do everything that God requires of us"* GWN *"we must carry out all that God requires,"* NLT *"I must do all that is right,"* LIVING *"we ought to fulfil every religious duty,"* WEYMOUTH *"this is the fitting way for both of us to do our full duty to God,"* WILLIAMS *and "this is the fitting way for [both of] us to fulfill all righteousness [that is, to perform completely whatever is right]."* AMPLIFIED

Here we see Jesus humbling himself for the sake of validating obedience to something God had ordained. Jesus reasoned with John, *"If it is right, then it ought to be done!"* Man often reasons, "Is this something O must do?" "Is this a commandment of God?" "Is this essential to salvation?" All of that may sound sensible, but it is not. This is not a sound way of thinking. The question is, "Is this right?" And, if it is right, what valid reason can be adduced for not doing it? What logic can there possibly be in **not** fulfilling all righteousness?

Thus, Jesus was baptized because it was the right thing to do. **Part of Jesus' identity with humanity, was doing what was required of them.**

MARK'S ACCOUNT OF JESUS' BAPTISM

⁹ MARK 1:9 *And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. ¹⁰ And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a*

dove descending upon him: ¹¹ And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

JESUS CAME FROM NAZARETH TO BE

BAPTIZED

" And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. . . "

Matthew says Jesus came from Galilee (Matt 3:13). Luke omits the report of where Jesus came from to be baptized. John also omits this information.

Nazareth was some distance from where John was baptizing in Bethabara (John 1:28) – estimated to have been about twenty-five miles, or a good day's journey.

Jesus knew that the first revelation of who He was would not be in Nazareth, a city that was steeped in unbelief, and had a bad reputation (John 1:46). **That is where He was raised, but near Bethabara was where He was baptized.** In this we learn that obeying God, and being known for the right reasons, sometimes involves going to another location.

COMING UP OUT OF THE WATER

" . . . And straightway coming up out of the water . . . "

Other versions read, *"as Jesus was coming up out of the water,"* NIV *"as He came up out of the water,"* CSB *"When He came up out of the water,"* RSV *"immediately coming up from the water,"* YLT *"The moment Jesus came up out of the water,"* LIVING *"Suddenly, as Jesus was coming up from the water,"*

^{IE} and *"Suddenly, as Jesus was coming up from the water."* MONTGOMERY

Matthew says He *"went up straightway out of the water"* (Matt 3:16). Luke and John omit this expression. *"straightway"* means immediately.

The word from which *"coming up"* is translated [anabaino] means, *"LITERALLY, OF UPWARD MOVEMENT GO OR COME UP, ASCEND"* FRIBERG AND *"TO COME UP, TO GO UP, TO ASCEND."* LOUW-NIDA

This refers to Jesus rising out of the water after John had plunged Him into it. This cannot refer to Jesus coming out of the water and returning to the shore. That was a lateral movement, not an ascent.

Like everyone who is baptized, Jesus was put beneath the surface of the water, so that He was completely covered by it. **It was as He surfaced from the water that He saw what followed.** Even if we did not know the meaning of the Greek word *"baptizo,"* the *"form"* expressed in baptism clearly involves a burial and a resurrection (Rom 6:17).

HE SAW THE HEAVENS OPENED

" . . . He saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Matthew reads, *"the heavens were opened unto Him"* (Matt 3:16). Mark reads, *"He saw heaven opened"* (Mk 1:10). Luke reads, *"the heaven was opened."* (Lk 3:21). The Amplified Version reads, *"he [John] saw the heavens opened."*

Actually, both Jesus and John saw the Spirit descending as a dove upon Jesus. According to the apostle John, John the Baptist said, *"I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him"* (John 1:32). No Gospel writer says that John saw the heavens opened, although that may very well have occurred.

Here, however, the accent is placed upon Jesus, and the confirming word is set forth as having been spoken to Him personally: *"Thou art My beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."* (Luke 3:22). Matthew presents it from John's viewpoint: *"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"* (Matt 3:17).

JOHN'S ACCOUNT OF JESUS' BAPTISM

^{"JOHN 1:31} ***And I knew Him not: but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. ³² And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. ³³ And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. ³⁴ And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God"***

I KNEW HIM NOT

"And I knew Him not . . . "

Other versions read, *"I did not*

know Him," NKJV *"I did not recognize Him,"* NASB *"had no knowledge of him,"* BBE *"I didn't know he was the one,"* LIVING *"I did not yet know Him,"* WEYMOUTH *"I didn't know who he was,"* CEV *"I did not know who he would be,"* GNB *"I knew nothing about who he was,"* MESSAGE and *"I did not know Him and did not recognize Him [myself]."* AMPLIFIED

John said this twice: *"I knew Him not"* (John 1:31,33). **Jesus could not be distinguished as the Son of God by His natural appearance** (as compared to Him being transfigured (Matt 17:2; Mk 9:2; Lk 9:29). Even His miracles did not sufficiently clarify who He really was. After the disciples had been with Him

for some time, and when He had stilled the storm and calmed the troubled seas, they *"feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"* (Mark 4:41).

Jesus Himself said, *"no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the"* (Matt 11:27). That is why the Father had to reveal Him as He did when He was baptized (Matt 3:17), when God revealed Him to Peter (Matt 16:16-17), at His transfiguration (Matt 17:5), and when He unveils Jesus in all of His glory (1 Tim 6:15).

The world certainly does not know who Jesus really is, and much of the professed church does not either. Their dilatory conduct confirms this is the case. **A considerable percentage of the modern church betrays their ignorance of Christ by failing to hear, heed, and follow Him.**

The same is true of those who are in Christ Jesus. **The world does not know them.** As it is written, *"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not"* (1 John 3:1). The only way anyone can know who the saints are is to make an association between them and the Lord Jesus Christ. **However, if Jesus is not known for who He really is, those who are joined to Him cannot be known either.**

HE SHOULD BE MADE MANIFEST TO ISRAEL

" . . . but that He should be made manifest to Israel . . ."

John was told that Jesus would be *"made manifest to Israel."* Other versions read, *"revealed to Israel,"* ^{NKJV} *"seen openly by Israel,"* ^{BBE} *"to point Him out to the nation of Israel,"* ^{LIVING} *"To show Him to the people of Israel,"* ^{IE} *"so that everyone in Israel would see Him,"* ^{CEV} *"so that Israel could know that he is the Messiah,"* ^{ERV} and *"that He should be made manifest and be revealed to Israel [be brought out where we can see Him]."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

There was enough evidence given at Jesus' baptism to convince everyone in Israel that He was the promised Christ. God made Him known, and all of the people should have picked up on it.

However, all did not recognize the display – as Jesus confirmed when He wept over Jerusalem. *"And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee*

in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation" (Luke 19:42-44).

Concerning the revelation of Christ, it is written:

⇒ *"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifest in the flesh**, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory"* (1 Tim 3:16).

⇒ And again, *"But is **now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ**, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel"* (2 Tim 1:10). And again, *"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, **but was manifest in these last times for you"*** (1 Pet 1:19-20).

⇒ And yet again: *"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (**For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us**)"* (1 John 1:1-2).

The manifestation of reference commenced when Jesus was baptized by John, and affirmed at the wedding feat of Cana (John 2:1-11), and when He "went about doing good, healing all who were oppressed of the devil (Acts 10:38).

THAT IS WHY JOHN CAME BAPTIZING
" . . . therefore am I come baptizing with water. . ."

This was the higher reason for John's ministry. The secondary reason was to prepare the way for the Lord, so

that when He had made known, the people could receive Him.

I SAW THE SPIRIT

" . . . And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. ³³ And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him . . ."

THE SAME IS HE THAT BAPTIZETH

" . . . the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost."

This was a critical part of John's message, and is mentioned in all four of the Gospels (Matt 3:11; Mk 1:8; Lk 3:16; John 1:33), and in the Acts of the apostles as well (Acts 1:5).

Jesus Himself never did baptize anyone with water: *"When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples)"* (John 4:1-2).

Because of the wresting of this ministry of Jesus, how He baptizes is rarely proclaimed in our day. Yet, it remains an integral part of the Gospel. There have been times when this was observed overtly:

⇒ On Pentecost (Acts 2:33)

⇒ At the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:44; 11:15)

⇒ When the disciples from Ephesus were baptized (Acts 19:5-6).

I understand this to be what Paul referred to when he wrote, *"For **by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body**, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit"* (1 Cor 12:13). The NIV adds this footnote for the word "by" – *"Or <with>; or <in>."* The word "by" is translated from a Greek word [en] meaning, "IN, ON, AT, WITH, BY; "OF PLACE PROPER; A. IN THE INTERIOR OF SOME WHOLE; WITHIN THE LIMITS OF SOME SPACE." ^{THAYER} "DENOTING A

POSITION WITHIN BOUNDARIES IN, WITHIN," FRIBERG "A POSITION DEFINED AS BEING WITHIN CERTAIN LIMITS - 'INSIDE, WITHIN, IN," LOUWA-NIDA "OF THE INSTRUMENT, MEANS OR MANNER, IN OR WITH," LIDDELL-SCOTT AND "OF PLACE: IN," GINGRICH

In other words, the Holy Spirit is to Jesus' baptism what water was to John's baptism. When we read that the Holy Spirit "fell" (Acts 11:15; 19:17) on people, this equates to the Spirit being "poured out" upon them (Acts 2:17-18). Commenting on the Spirit falling on those of Cornelius household, Peter said, *"And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?"* (Acts 11:15-17). Of this occasion Luke says the gift of the Holy Spirit was "poured out" (Acts 10:45). Peter says of that occasion, *"God gave them the like gift as He did us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ"* (Acts 11:17). Upon hearing the report, the early church responded, *"Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life"* (Acts 11:18).

Some have sought to codify Jesus baptizing in the Holy Spirit, affirming that this is a unique experience apart from salvation, and accompanied by men speaking in other unlearned languages. Others have taken the position that these are the only times Jesus baptized people with the Holy Spirit. **However, there is another explanation for the three instances in which this did occur:**—i.e. the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:45-47), and the disciples from Ephesus (Acts 19:17).

These all occurred during a period of transition, when the new had come and the old was vanishing away. The phenomenon accompanying the experience was designed to confirm the transition from the old to the new.

⇒ **PENTECOST.** This was the inauguration of the New Covenant, and was

accompanied by miraculous phenomenon distinguishing the event.

⇒ **HOUSE OF CORNELIUS.** This confirmed the acceptance of the Gentiles, which was an epoch most difficult for the early church to receive. Therefore, that acceptance was confirmed by giving the Gentiles the same gift in the same manner as given to the Jews on the day of Pentecost. This was pointedly said to be the same "pouring" and "gift" that was given on Pentecost.

⇒ **DISCIPLES OF EPHEBUS.** Taking place in Gentile territory, and at a considerable distance from Jerusalem, this confirmed the termination of the baptism of John, and the superiority of faith in Christ, and the baptism accomplished by Jesus.

I SAW AND BEAR RECORD

" . . . And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."

Other versions read "have borne witness," NASB "testify," NIV "my witness is," BBE "have declared," GWN "I am telling you the truth," IE "have become a witness," WEYMOUTH "So this is what I tell people," ERV "this one is the Chosen One of God," LEB and "I'm telling you, there's no question about it." MESSAGE

John wrote his Gospel, *"that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name"* (John 20:31). This is what God revealed to Peter – that Jesus is *"the Christ, the Son of the living God"* (Matt 16:16). This is what God declared at Jesus' baptism, and at His transfiguration: *"This is My Beloved Son"* (Matt 3:17; 17:5). The Gospel is *"the record God has given of His Son"* (1 John 5:10-11). The one who overcomes the world is *"he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God"* (1 John 5:5). It is *"the Son of God"* that is come and has given us an understanding (1 John 5:20). True unity is found in *"the knowledge of the Son of God"* (Eph 4:13). God declared Jesus to be *"the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the*

dead" (Rom 1:4). Gabriel told Mary that she would give birth to One who "shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

All of Jesus' other titles and identities derive their power from the fact that He is "the Son of God." It is on this fact that all "sound doctrine" is suspended.

God is not said to have delivered up our Friend or Brother, but *"His Son"* (Rom 8:32). God is not said to have glorified a prophet, but *"His Son"* (Acts 3:13). God did not send an angel to *"bless us,"* and *"turn away every one"* of us from our iniquities, but sent *"His Son"* (Acts 3:26). We were not reconciled to God by a mere martyr, but *"by the death of His Son"* (Rom 5:10). God is not conforming us to something defined in literature, but to *"the image of His Son"* (Rom 8:29). We have not been called into an mere organization, but *"into the fellowship of His Son"* NKJV (1 Cor 1:9). In the fulness of the time, God did not send forth a cherub, or a Seraph, but *"His Son"* (Gal 4:4). It is the *"Spirit of His Son"* whom God has sent into our hearts (Gal 4:6). The saints are not waiting for the earth to be improved, but are waiting for *"His Son from heaven"* (1 Thess 1:10). God has not spoken in these last days to us through prophets at sundry times and in diverse manners, but *"by His Son, whom, He has appointed heir of all things"* (Heb 1:2). The supreme commandment of God does not pertain to moral conduct, or eschatological events, or human relationships, *"That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment"* (1 John 3:23). The greatest witness comes from God Himself, who is the greatest Witness: *"If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of his Son"* (1 John 5:9).

I am confounded at how little is being said these days about Jesus Christ being *"the Son of God."* More is being said about His relationship to men than His identity with God. There are people who are fond of thinking of Jesus as their Friend, or One who is there to bless them – and all such

things are true. **Yet, they are not the pivot on which all Divine benefits are placed. It is not what Jesus is to you that drives the engine of salvation, but what He is to God!** If that does not seem important to you, you are standing on shaky ground.

What we need today is a battery

of faithful witnesses who will testify that Jesus Christ is preeminently and unquestionably ***“THE SON OF GOD.”*** He alone is the appointed Expositor of God (Matt 11:27). It is He who brings us to God (1 Pet 3:18). We have been ***“reconciled to God by the death of HIS SON”*** (Rom 5:10). Our ***“Great High***

Priest” is ***“Jesus THE SON OF GOD”*** (Heb 4:14). Preach it! Make much of it! Lift up Jesus the Son of God! Embrace Him by faith! Abide in Him! Tell the people who He is to God! That is a message God will underwrite! Clarify who He is? Make clear what He has done! Affirm what God has said of Him!

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 2/20/15. We will continue our series of lessons in the Gospel of Luke. The twelfth lesson will cover verses 23b thru 38 of chapter 3: ***“THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS.”*** While it may be somewhat laborious. The genealogy of Jesus is important. In it we have a list of men – all progenitors – that cannot possibly be associated with the Christ except by Divine election. None of them volunteered. All of them were chosen. There is no revealed reason for them being chosen, except that it was the will of God. If men are reluctant to think of God in this manner, this lesson will establish that this is a way in which God works, and there is not a person on earth that can effectively contradict it. Of the billions of people that lived between Adam and Jesus, God selected the ones through whom the Messianic lineage would be traced. This also established the impotence of Satan to thwart the coming of the One he knew was appointed to bruise his head. He was simply not able to do anything about this. Not one of the appointed progenitors had to be replaced. This meant that the time of Jesus birth was established, as well as those involved in the lineage. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.