

Episode #713 Matthew 3 Part 5-John Baptizes the Lord

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. In previous studies we were considering the ministry of John the Baptizer (John the Identifier). He rejected the arrogant religious leaders, chiding them that they must bring forth fruits worthy of submission before he will baptize them. He spoke of the Lord coming after him Who would baptize in spirit holy and in fire. He will purge out His floor, gathering the good wheat into His barn and burning the chaff with fire. Now, John will meet the Lord Himself.

III. The Baptism of Jesus Christ.

- A. Verse 13. Many have great difficulty with this who attach water baptism with washing away your sins or saving you. The Lord had no sins to wash away, and He did not need to be saved. John’s baptism put the Lord in the company of submissive ones in Israel. He did submit to God’s will, even to going to Calvary’s cross, Philippians 2:8.
- B. Verse 14. John realizes he needs to be identified with Christ, so why would Christ come to him to be identified?
- C. Verse 15. If it was right for all these other people to enter into a submissive company, then it certainly was right for the Lord Jesus to do the same.
- D. Verse 16. The Spirit the (One) of God descends and alights on Him. John sees it in the form of a dove, John 1:33-34.
- E. Verse 17. A voice from heaven should be compared with John 5:37. This voice came from God, but it was not the voice of God, as if He has a mouth, teeth, a tongue, vocal cords, etc. He created a voice and it spoke for Him, the miracle of the voice. If He could give Balaam’s donkey a voice, He could certainly use a voice Himself. He loved Christ with an *agape*, self-sacrificial love. Do we believe this? Are we well-pleased with Jesus Christ ourselves?

IV. Conclusion: Christ came to John to be identified as submissive to God along with all the others. God sent a voice that declared the truth about Him: He is His beloved Son, and God is pleased with Him. We should believe this voice and find our pleasure in Him as well.

V. Having identified Himself with the submissive company in Israel by John’s baptism, the Lord now heads into the wilderness for the next qualification of His ministry: the temptation by Satan.

VI. The Temptation in the Wilderness

- A. Matthew 4:1. He was more than led, though “driven” is probably too strong. The word “tempted” is the same Greek word as “tested,” though one hopes for a positive result and the other a negative.
 1. The devil is not a human being. All people have different levels of talents. Some with genius ability decide to use it against God, like Robert G. Ingersoll. The same is true of heavenly beings.
 2. Satan was not the human-looking race of heavenly beings we call angels, but a cherub, Ezekiel 28:11-19. Particularly talented, anointed by God to cover. I believe he was made to guard God’s glory, and yet turned the considerable ability God gave him against God.

VII. We will continue to consider this fallen being the devil and his temptations of the Lord in the wilderness next time.