

## Why Was Jesus Baptism Recorded in Matthew?

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*Matthew, a Preaching Series*

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**Bible Text:** Matthew 3:13-17; Leviticus 21:10

**Preached on:** Wednesday, June 25, 2014

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We're in Matthew 3 and we're going to start reading, please, at verse 7,

"But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" What a great message that was last week on the wrath of God. "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor."

I know the word is "thoroughly," if you were to update the English in that verse it would be "thoroughly." It's the same word essentially. Thoroughly,

"thoroughly purge his floor and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. 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? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."

By the way, that title on the slide is not updated. Forgive me. You're not going to hear that message again.

"Then he suffered him. 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: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in

whom I am well pleased. Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil."

May the Lord add his blessing to the only book he ever wrote. Amen.

So you know the deal. Here is a map of what would be Palestine during the time of Jesus. Here is Judea, the bottom third. Here is Samaria, the middle third. Here is Galilee, the northern third. So I want you to keep that in mind. Our story takes place with John baptizing. This is the Jordan River as you can well see. I absolutely stole this slide from Pastor Shawn. Up here is the Sea of Galilee up on the plaster and down here is the Dead Sea and the Jordan River we find out from the Gospel of John that John the Baptist is baptizing at Bethabara, which is here about the mouth of the Dead Sea and, of course, this is a picture of the Jordan River.

Now, let's talk about what is not being said because that usually makes good preaching material. What is not being said. 1. We are not being told in this passage that John the Baptist's baptism and the baptism we performed Sunday night with Leo are one and the same. They are not the same baptism. All you need to do is look at Acts 19 and realize that unsaved people had John's baptism. Okay? So I'm not going to preach on that much. Just know that we don't baptize because John the Baptist did, we baptize because Jesus told his apostles to do so in his name. It's just very simple. So we're not told in this passage that we all are baptized because John the Baptist did it. Okay, that's clever preaching but it's dumb, alright?

Number 2: we are not told that Jesus' baptism requires our baptism. It makes bad teaching, my good fellow Bereans, to say the reason we're baptized is because Jesus was. Now, that is, I suppose, a good inference but it is not Bible. It's not true. The reason we're baptized is because the Son told us to be, okay?

Next, we don't find here what we find in the other Gospels. For example, we find that Jesus was actually baptized last after everyone else. We find that he was anointed with the Holy Spirit while he was praying. We recognize that Jesus actually called it his anointing in the book of Luke. And that John the Baptist was the other person who saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove upon Jesus. I should also add that we're told, I believe it is in Mark, that the Holy Spirit had the form like a dove. So in other words, it's not that the Lord descended or the Holy Spirit descended like a dove descends. No, it really looked like a dove.

So those are details that are not in Matthew's Gospel. Now, why do I mention those? Well, because they answer questions while you're reading it. Now, I do want to point out that there are particular reasons why Matthew included this passage in his Gospel. Let's remember that this has the fingerprint of both God and man upon it and it is included by Matthew for a particular purpose. Are you with me? I feel like we need to pray. Pray with me.

*Lord, I pray that you would take your word and put it deep in the hearts of us, your believers, your people. I pray you'd arrest tired minds and alert tired minds and open the understanding of our eyes and help us to experience what is the breadth and height and depth and length of the love of Christ which constrains us and help us to be different because of what we see in the book of Matthew tonight. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

Alright, so why did Matthew include this here? Why? Think of all the things Matthew didn't include. Now, the reason I say this is because this is not a study in Luke, Mark, John or the harmony of the Gospels. I'm not doing that. Why? Because Matthew wrote what he wrote and if we truly believe that Matthew wrote his Gospel first of the four, then we can't assume that Matthew said, "Well, I'm not going to mention that because they have that in Luke." No, I can't assume that. I have to believe that there was an agenda with Matthew particularly. Think of all the things Matthew doesn't mention. He doesn't mention the shepherds in the field keeping their watch over the flock by night; he doesn't mention that in the account of the birth of Christ. He doesn't mention the episode of Jesus at 12 years old. There are a lot of things Matthew doesn't mention and why doesn't he mention it? Because it doesn't fit into his agenda, his program for why he's writing the book of Matthew. So we've got to be careful about that. We want the overall scriptural view of something but we ought to trust the Scripture enough to stay put, okay? That's what I'm trying to get us to see.

Alright now, why is this included? 1. To show us that there are three persons of God. Early on in the church history, people were really bothered about how do you explain the Trinity? I mean, it is a little difficult. I mean, you have people that say, "Well, the Trinity is like an egg. You have the shell, you have the white, you have the yolk and the yolk is kind of like God the Father and the white is kind of like God the Son and the shell is like God the Holy Spirit." The problem with that is it's just a poor analogy because the shell, for example, if you've ever had a shell without an egg in it, I have not, but the shell is not the egg all by itself. The yolk is not the egg all by itself. The white is not the egg all by itself. But they are parts of an egg. We are not saying that the Father is a part of God, that Jesus is a part of God and the Holy Spirit is a part of God. No, we're saying the Father is God, mysteriously the Son also is completely God, mysteriously also somehow, the Holy Spirit is also God.

Early on in church history, there are these folks that were known as modalists. These are people that say God shows himself in three different modes. Sometimes he shows up as God the Father and sometimes as the Son and sometimes as the Holy Spirit. A current day guy who believes in that would be a man that you might have heard by the name of T. D. Jakes who believes that God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are manifestations of God but are not God themselves, not all by themselves. Well, this kind of shoots that idea in the head, doesn't it? You have all three of them present, yes? You have the Father speaking to the Son and the Holy Spirit descending. Clearly you have more license if you're going to be a heretic, you have more license to believe that there are three separate persons who are not all the same God than you have in saying that one God represents himself differently in three different people. So if you're going to pick your heresy, pick the one that makes sense but don't be a heretic at all. Why don't we just

believe what the Bible says? They are all three God and they all three showed up here at the baptism. Alright, well, that was free.

Number next: it shows us, now this is going to bother some of you so just hang with me, it shows us how Jesus became the Christ. Sorry. John in Matthew 1:18 for example, look there with me. I want you to see this. I want you to see, please, in verse 18, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise." Know this, Jesus was known as the Christ before he was the Christ. That's just kind of simple to understand if you compare this to the idea of president elect, he's known as the president even before he's inaugurated. So Jesus is the Son of God and he is declared to be the Son of God with power at the resurrection, Romans 1:4 says. It's the same way with the title "Christ." Christ is not his last name. It means, what? The anointed one. Well, when was he anointed? Here at his baptism. The Holy Spirit came upon him and anointed him at his baptism so though he has always been Jesus the Christ, he was actually in real time Christed, so to speak, at his baptism. You say, "I don't know if I'm comfortable with that." Well, good, we'll move onto number 3 so you don't think about it anymore. Alright?

Next, this is included so that we can know where Jesus has been. Look at the last verse of chapter 2, "And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet saying he shall be called a Nazarene." Well then, Nazareth is a part of what third of Palestine that we looked at up on the map? Okay, I've heard it up here, let me hear someone in the back. Thank you, Galilee. Yes, Galilee. Not Samaria and not Judea, Galilee. So Jesus goes to Nazareth and he becomes a part of Galilee. As a matter of fact, it says that at the end of the previous verse. Look at the end of chapter 2, well, look at the whole verse, chapter 2, verse 22, "And when he," Joseph, "heard that Archeleas did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee." And where did they settle? Nazareth of Galilee.

Now we look at chapter 3 and we look at verse 13 and what do we find Jesus is coming from? Where is he coming from? Galilee. Now, why is Matthew taking the time to use those words other than the simple fact that he was inspired by the Holy Spirit to do so? Why is he using this terminology? Because it is to draw in contrast to the other folks. Where did they come from and show me a verse? In the context.

Yeah, where do you see that, Brother Dick? 3:5, look at 3:5, "Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region round about Jordan." So surely if John the Baptist is looking out at a bunch of really religious good Jews who are from Jerusalem, basically Jewish Mecca, right? Not to mix religions on you there but they're basically coming from the hot seat of God right there at the temple. That's where God is, right? Above the Ark of the Covenant. Of course, by that time, the Ark of the Covenant was gone but they had that veil to charade the fact that they had no hope. Are you with me? You realize that when the veil was rent at Calvary it ripped open in front of an empty room. The Ark of the Covenant was long gone and God was no longer meeting. Who knows where the Ark of the Covenant is. Watch Discovery Channel if you want to figure it out or a good Harrison Ford movie if you're not sure, okay?

So the truth is, that's horrible, so the truth is back near the Babylonian captivity and the Ark disappears and you have there still the temple and there are the Pharisees and the Sadducees coming to John and Matthew saying, "But the Messiah didn't come from where you would expect." The Messiah had an accent. An accent? Yeah, yeah, you remember, Peter was from Galilee. Do you remember on the night of Christ's betrayal they said, "You're with him." "No, I'm not with him." "Oh, you're from Galilee." "No." "Yes, you are. You got you an accent. Your speech bewrayeth ye," is the King James, okay? "I can tell by the way you're speaking that you're from Galilee." Jesus had a Galilean accent. How do you think that came over with the Pharisees? Someone from Galilee, known as Galilee of the Gentiles in the book of Isaiah. He comes from Galilee of the Gentiles, folks. Your Jewish Savior came from Nazareth in Galilee of the Gentiles and Matthew says, "Hey, that's where we left him, that's where we're going to pick it up again in chapter 3, verse 13."

So for 12 verses, we don't know what Jesus has been up to, presumably he's been an honorable Son because look what it says in verse 17, "a voice from heaven, said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." You rest assured, I don't know how old he was at the end of chapter 2, it could have been 2, it could have been 4, I don't really know how old Jesus was. It really depends on how long they stayed in Egypt, right? So we don't really know how old they were when he got back. If they came back right after the death of Herod, he was probably 2 but there's no need to think they came back right after the death of Herod. They might have, but in any case, he might have been 2, might have been 3, might have been 4, and we find out from the book of Luke that Jesus is 30 at his baptism so it's been about 26 years, perhaps, maybe 28, and Matthew says, "All you need to know is that for these 28 years he has been pleasing his Father."

Wow, what a great epitaph that would be, huh? Wouldn't that be great to walk up to a tombstone and know that the person wasn't lying when they put a Scripture verse on the tombstone? "Precious in the sight of the Lord are the death of his saints," and that old guy ain't been in church in 77 years and the poor preacher in the funeral had to preach him into heaven because, you know, on his deathbed he said something about how he loves God and, "Oh, he must be saved because that's what saved people do." I mean, I've never been to a funeral where someone went to hell. Maybe you have and thank God you've met an honest preacher.

I remember being in western Kentucky for about four years of my life and I went to several funerals as a pastor and as an assistant pastor and just a church member and I've got to tell you, I never went to a funeral where the person went to hell. They all mysteriously found their way into heaven. It didn't matter the fact they were arrested for meth. It didn't matter that they hadn't been in church in years and years and years. Somehow they were not converted enough to get him into church on Sunday but they were converted enough to get him into heaven when they died. Well, isn't this fun? Are y'all with me?

Alright, so Jesus had a testimony that he delighted the Father. I would love for someone to be able to walk up on my graveside service and say, "I don't know much about Bill Sturm, but I'm sure he pleased the Father because all I've seen of him..." I would love for that. "I didn't see Bill Sturm much." I would love for one of you if I beat you into heaven to be to walk up to my tombstone and say, "I believe the Father was well-pleased with that guy. Now, I've seen him act the fool sometimes and he wasn't perfect and there were some things that he did that I probably wouldn't have done and there are some things that he did, the way he did them, I probably wouldn't have done. And I knew him pre-Christian and I knew him pre-pastor and I knew him and there were some things that I might not have...but I know this, he delighted the Father." Certainly this is an ultimate way in which Jesus delighted the Father the way no other one can.

Josh, I think a lot of you but I'm afraid you'll never be up to this standard here until you get to heaven. Are you okay with that? I can probably say that you delight the Father. Eugene, I could probably say you delight the Father. Tom, the way you're playing the guitar, I know you're delighting the Father. Everyone else, I've got to guess. But delight the Father. Delighting the Father is something that we can pray to do generally but, wow, what a testimony the Son had. He delighted the Father. Every time he made a table in the carpenter's shop in Nazareth, he was delighting the Father. Every time that he went to prayer in Bethlehem because they went up every year, we're told, every time they went up to Bethlehem for sacrifice, they delighted the Father. Wouldn't that be a great testimony? That is a great prayer to pray in the morning when you turn on the coffee machine and scratch the dogs and sit on your couch with your Bible, our prayer should be something like, "Lord, help me today to bring delight to your soul." What a simple prayer.

Next, the impeccable character of Jesus. Look at verse 14, "John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" This is interesting. What kind of baptism was this? A repentance. Did everyone get that? Jesus is taking part in a baptism unto repentance and he said it was a righteous thing to do, and we'll get to that in a minute as to how Jesus is taking part in a baptism unto repentance. And I've said it a few times, I know I've said it in my Sunday School class and I'm pretty sure I've said it on Wednesday nights and on some Sunday nights when I've had the opportunity to preach: repentance in and of itself does not mean turn from sin, you have to look in the context to see what you're repenting of, but clearly here in the context, we're talking about people who were repenting of sin. How do we know that? What verse? Verse 6, thank you. Thanks, Meredith. They were baptized of him in Jordan confessing their sins. So here you have people who are confessing their sins and repenting of their sins and are showing their repentance even more by being washed in water. I'm not saying their sins were washed away in water, I'm saying that they showed their sincerity to God by being washed in water, this thing known as baptism. Is everyone listening? Okay, I want to make sure we're getting this.

So isn't it strange? What does it tell us when John looks at Jesus and says, "I have need to be baptized of thee and comest thou to me?" Now, before you answer, let's remind ourselves that John does not yet know for sure that Jesus is the Christ. We find up in the

other Gospel, the Gospel of John, that he knew that when the Holy Spirit came down upon him. Why? Christ means anointed one and he saw the Holy Spirit anointing him and that's how he knew he was the Christ. How do you know he was anointed? I saw him get anointed. Are you all with me?

So we don't know that John the Baptist knew that Jesus was the soon-to-be anointed, but we do have reason to believe that John knew Jesus pretty well and how do we know that John knew Jesus pretty well? Anyone? Yeah, they were cousins, at least their mommas were. Man, what's wrong with me. At least their mothers were, alright? So we know that their mothers were related in some way, probably if I got this right, Salome, which is Mary's sister, was married to Zebedee and Zebedee and Zacharias were brothers and that would have made them related.

Alright, so probably we do know that in Luke 1 that Elizabeth and her family and John the Baptist lived in the hills of Judea and Mary and Joseph presumably since Matthew 2 lived in Galilee and it looks like based on Matthew 1, that Mary started out in Nazareth of Galilee. Alright, so what am I saying? I'm saying that John and Jesus probably saw each other at least periodically: family gatherings, picnics, whatever. I don't know.

("Well, Mary went to see Elizabeth as the first thing after she heard so they had to be close.") Well said. And John leaped in Elizabeth's womb at the salutation of Mary.

(...) Yup, there's a lot of connection between John and Jesus and I have them written down in my office. So there are a lot of connections. Oh, it makes me giddy just thinking about it. There are a lot of connections. Thanks a lot, Jesse.

So here's the fact: you have John and Jesus know each other very well and so when Jesus shows up at a baptism unto repentance where people are confessing their sins and John says, "You don't belong here." What is John saying? "I know you and I don't know you to be a sinner." Twice in this passage we have the witness of both John the Baptist and the Father that Jesus was impeccable. Impeccable. You couldn't find anything wrong with Jesus and I still can't. Well, what does that say? What I just told you?

Number 5: the reason why this is included is to show us Jesus' identification with sinful people. Okay, here is Jesus taking part in a baptism that symbolizes repentance from sin. Jesus did not have any sin to confess, verse 6, but he was still taking part in a baptism of repentance from sin. How do we justify this? Well, we have talked about how Jesus is the ultimate prophet, have we not? Alright, let's look at what an ultimate prophet in the Old Testament did.

Here's Isaiah 6, "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train," the tail of his garment, "filled the temple." That is a big robe, alright? When the hem of our robe fills a temple, it's big, okay? Verse 2, "Above it," the throne or above the hem of the garment, I'm not sure which. I haven't been able to figure that out yet. "Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole

earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." Jesus could not say, "I am a man of unclean lips," but as a good prophet, he could say, "I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." And we find out from Matthew 1:21 that they will call his name Jesus and why? Why? Because he's going to save his people from their sin and Jesus starts the ministry of saving his people from their sin by first identifying with his sinful people.

Now, think of the miracle here. He could've waited until the day when all the peasant folks came out to get baptized, but the context at least leads us to believe that it's in the same proximity with the Pharisees. And where does he spend most of his time throwing down and landing punches in the book of Matthew? With the Pharisees. You see, the Pharisees are a picture of the worst sinner you can think of and Jesus shows up with the worst sinner you can think of, I'm talking about the one that makes you clench your fist, the one that makes you scratch your teeth. I'm talking about grind them; I'm talking about it irritates you so bad, you get so mad you cry. Those people, God says, "I'm thinking about the worst people I know of and my Son is going to, hey, he's going to identify with them."

That means I get in because I'm the worst sinner I know and if the worst sinner of his day can be saved by the Christ from their sins, that tells me that I can believe on Jesus and be saved from mine. Every day. Saved from the wrath of God upon my sin at salvation and saved from the power continually of my sin through everyday life. And so the reason he's taking part in this baptism is because he must identify with the people with whom he is of whom he is going to...yeah, that's right. "He who knew no sin became sin for us." He had to identify with sinful people. He chose to identify with sinful people to save them from their sin. As if coming as the song said and taking on our sinful flesh wasn't amazing enough. Well then, we have a Savior who shows up and takes part in a baptism that the Pharisees weren't even allowed to take part in. Think about that. So John the Baptist says, "You Pharisees, you're not repentant. You don't belong here." And he looks at the Son and says, "You have nothing to repent of. You don't belong here." Good stuff.

Next, oh, this is my favorite one. Maybe it shouldn't be, but it is. It blows my mind. This blows my mind. If I was writing Matthew, I would have written verse 1 of chapter 4 differently. If I was making a transition and, by the way, that's why I didn't right? Because God doesn't think very highly of what I right. He picked Matthew and used Matthew and we have the words we're supposed to but I'm trying to get you to see how I think. If I were writing a heroes epic, here's what I would say: God sent his Holy Spirit down on Jesus and then Jesus stood up and declared us free from our sins and marched to Rome and crushed them all and buried them in the sand and we all live happily ever after. But no, that Holy Spirit anointed Jesus and it wasn't first to do great works, to open blinded eyes, to make lame people walk or even to raise him from the dead. Not at first, no. This to me is madness. The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus to, first, drive him into the wilderness.



Look, here's the fact, Pastor Shawn will get to this next week because I'm going to take a vacation. We're going up to Wisconsin for a little while and I'll be back the week after. I don't want to steal too much thunder and maybe he'll look at it from a different view anyway, but usually in our feely good Christianity, we say things like, "I don't know what God is going to do with you, but God is going to do something great. It's your day. It's your day. Something good is gonna happen." That's popular Christianity and I've got to tell you, I see Jesus going to the wilderness and why is he going? For one reason: to be tempted. Not to be blessed, to be tempted. But that Holy Spirit that came down upon Jesus, he came so that Jesus could be tempted of the devil. Of the devil.

Now, I know we blame a lot of things on the devil. It's almost like we make him omnipresent. "The devil made me do it." Really? Out of seven billion people the devil cared enough about you to come and make you stub your toe on the furniture and made you say a bad word? No, but here we can say the devil showed up personally in Jesus' life and the Holy Spirit is responsible for leading. And I wonder about you. I wonder, is there ever a time when you look up towards heaven and say, "Why am I here? What am I doing here in this wilderness? I don't see a way out. Are you serious? I'm waiting for my little 40 days to expire, figurative or literal, however you want to say it, and that's why I'm here? That is why the Holy Spirit is in me, to first drive me into a wilderness where I can be thirsty and hungry and alone? That's why?" Yes. Yes. Sometimes human speaking, to go into the wilderness and receive nothing but temptation and to, listen now, come out empty handed. Did Jesus come out with bread? Did Jesus come out feeling good about his ability to be caught by angels? He was tempted to feel both of those. Did Jesus come out a literal real time king over the nations? He got nothing out of the temptation but he did have the approval of the Father.

So I would ask you to remember if you leave with nothing else tonight, leave with the understanding that sometimes it is the Spirit of God that drives you into the wilderness and you need not look around and wonder why. "Why am I waiting?" Because the Holy Spirit drove you into the wilderness to be tempted. I'm supposed to look around and see God is not moving at my timetable and I am supposed to adopt the idea that Christ had, that he was to be tempted of the devil and the Holy Spirit drove him to that place of temptation. There are going to be times in someone's life in the next month, I promise you, life happens and in a crowd of 100+ people, we're going to have some life happen to someone in here and it is, listen to me, sometimes the best answer you can give is, "God is behind this. God is behind this."

Have you been reading or following along with the ISIS making their way eastward through Iraq? It is mind numbing what Christians and even Shiite Muslims are going through, but Christians particularly are being made to pay the sharia law tax and if they don't pay it, unspeakable things happen to them. Unspeakable things. Things that made me so angry that I needed Sunday night's message to remind me that I'm not to go to bed angry. Unspeakable things that if I had resources, I would be a ravaging vigilante. I don't know if anyone shares that with me. And we wonder, "What am I doing here?" Really the answer is very Christocentric, it's Christ-centered and it is that we, like Jesus, are

sometimes endowed with the Holy Spirit empowerment for nothing more than to endure temptation.

Well, next. This is put here to remind us that God still speaks to his people. It's been a while since you've heard from the Lord? The Jews can identify. You see, over there in the book of Amos it says, "Nothing, nothing comes to people except through the prophets." And we find out that John the Baptist was the last Old Testament prophet. John the Baptist was the last Old Testament prophet and God holds the heavens open and speaks down and who does he speak to? Jesus, the greatest prophet and John the Baptist, the last Old Testament prophet. God still speaks to his people. Now, he speaks primarily through the word of God and the Holy Spirit and those two will never contradict in your life. If there's a contradiction, it's only a perceived contradiction and we need to find out what we're misreading. But God still speaks to his people. It has been 400 years and I want you to know that God still speaks to his people. Has it been a while since you've heard from the Lord? Well, I think this passage, one of the purposes is to show you that God sometimes rends the heavens open and speaks. Sometimes he rends the heaven open and speaks to his people. Has it been a while since you've heard from the Lord? I think a good take home application is just hang on a little longer. Just hang on a little longer and you'll hear from heaven.

Number 8. Oh, this is good too. The new high priest for the sins of the people. Jesus is the new high priest for the sins of the people. I guess this will be the last one I show you since you've seen number 9 already. But before the priests would go into the temple to meet the Lord, they would go to one of these things here. Do you know what those are? They're not boiling cauldrons. Those are known as lavers. Now, there was one in the Old Testament tabernacle and the idea was that a priest would go through a ceremonial washing and before he would go in and minister before the Lord for his people and that was the idea. You know, we find out from the Old Testament that people started being priests, Levites started serving as priests at what age? Does anyone know. They had to retire at 50. That's unfortunate, huh? Mandatory retirement of 50. Anyone know what time they had to start? How old they were? 30. Now, when Hezekiah and David were fixing the priesthood back in their kingdoms, they lowered it to 20 for a little while, but it was 30 before that and 30 after that. So between the years of 30 in a person's life, age 30 and 50, you were serving in the temple. I don't think it's any mistake that here is Jesus taking part in a sort of ceremonial cleansing and he's 30.

Now, what was the high priest a minister of? In Hebrews it calls him a particular minister, a minister of what? A particular testament, an Old Testament. Look at Matthew 26, go there with me. Matthew 26. Jesus brought a New Testament when he died, amen? Look at Matthew 26, look at verse 26, "as they were eating." Look at the context. What event is this? The Lord's Supper, the Last Supper, sure. "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the," look here, what is it called? "New testament," new covenant, sure, whichever version you have in your lap. New testament, new

covenant. Jesus, we are told in the book of Hebrews, is the mediator or high priest of a new covenant. He says so here.

Alright, so let me show you a little something maybe you've seen before. Look at the end of the chapter. Look at verse 62. Remember, there are many themes in the book of Matthew and one of them is that Jesus is the ultimate. The ultimate what? The ultimate Joshua. The ultimate David. The ultimate Abraham, right? We've seen that. Well, you're now going to see he's the ultimate Aaron. We're not surprised. He already said he's here to bring us a new testament. That sets the stage and now we look at verse 62, "And the high priest," what's his name, anyone? Yeah, verse 57, it's Caiaphas. Verse 62, "Caiaphas arose, and said unto him, Do you answer nothing? what is it which these witness speak against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said," or? You said it, "nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Look at the high priest's response. "Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy."

What did he really do there? There is a reason why this is in the Scripture, "he rent his clothes." Leviticus 21:10, "And he that is the high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head, nor rend his clothes." It was probably eight hours earlier, Jesus holds up a cup and says, "This is the blood of the new covenant." Probably three years earlier he washed in the laver of the baptism of John and started his priesthood work for the people of the new covenant and then, what? Nine hours after the Lord's Supper, the very next morning, probably even before since we looked at chapter 27, it's morning. Chapter 27, verse 1. It's not even daytime yet so it's less than eight hours later. Less than eight hours later, the high priest of the old covenant disqualifies himself from being the high priest. Later that afternoon, we didn't him anyway. The veil is torn. The new testament has been started. Hebrews 9:17 says that in order for a new testament to be in effect, a testator has to die. Jesus dies at 3 in the afternoon. Well, that's fine because we haven't had a high priest for six or eight hours now. He disqualified himself in the face of the high priest of the new covenant.

So I've given you, I guess, altogether nine reasons why we have the baptism of the Lord here.

Let's pray.