

Jesus: “My Beloved Son!” *Jesus baptized by John*

From Elder John Stoos *Based on Luke 3:7-21*

Dr. Luke’s Prologue for His Orderly Account

“Behold, I send My messenger and he will prepare the way before me” Malachi 3:1

Dedication to Theophilus *Luke 1:1-4*

Time Set: *“There was in the days of King Herod...” Luke 1:5*

John’s birth announced by Gabriel *Luke 1:5-25*

Jesus’ birth announced by Gabriel *Luke 1:26-56*

John is born *Luke 1:57-79*

Jesus is born *Luke 2:1-7*

John is circumcised *Luke 1:59-66*

Jesus is circumcised *Luke 2:21*

John grows and is strong in spirit *Luke 1:80*

Jesus grows in wisdom and strength *Luke 2:39-51*

-- Angels Proclaim Jesus & His Kingdom *Luke 2:8-20*

-- Saints testify that God is faithful

*[Elizabeth 1:39-45- Mary 1:46-56 –Zacharias 1:67-79 –
Shepherds2:15-20-Simeon 2:25-35-Anna 2:36-38]*

Jesus presented at Temple

as Son of God and Son of Man *Luke 2:22-38*

Time Set: *“Now in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar...” Luke 3:1, 2*

John told to prepare the way: *Luke 3:3-6*

Jesus begins His ministry: *Luke 3:23*

John baptizes the people *Luke 3:7-20*

Jesus is Baptized by John *Luke 3:21*

John is arrested by Herod *Luke 3:18-20*

Jesus is tempted by Satan *Luke 4:1-13*

-- John proclaims Jesus and His Kingdom *Luke 3:7-20*

-- The Father testifies of His Beloved Son *Luke 3:21, 22*

Jesus presented in the genealogy

as the Son of God and Son of Man *Luke 3:23-38*

Jesus Begin His Ministry *Luke 3:23 & 4:14*

Scripture Reading:

Luke 3: “15 Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not, 16 John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire." 18 And with many other exhortations he preached to the people. 19 But Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, 20 also added this, above all, that he shut John up in prison.

21 When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. 22 And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased." 23 Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph

Jesus, “My Beloved Son!”

Jesus is Baptized by John

This morning we participated in the joy of baptizing little Garret Christopher.

As we continue our series on the Gospel of Luke, we come this morning to the baptism of Jesus which is very timely!

For those who notice details, we have passed over the ministry of John the Baptist, except for Baptism of Jesus: We will look at the ministry of John in more detail when we come to chapter seven where his disciples bring questions to Jesus.

This morning we will consider:

- **Why did Jesus need to be baptized?**
- **What happened when Jesus was baptized.**
- **Why are we commanded to baptize ALL members of the Covenant into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit?**

The answer to the first question is pretty straight forward and was covered in part when we looked at why Jesus was circumcised as a baby.

In Matthew’s Gospel, John objects saying that he needed to be baptized by Jesus, and Jesus simply responds by saying: “permit it to be so now, for this it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.”

Luke provides the other important detail when he adds, “Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age.”

We are back to the proclamation of the Angel Gabriel: Jesus came to save His people from their sins.”

That is the righteousness that is to be fulfilled: Jesus will identify with His people with the sign of baptism and He will be anointed as the great high priest of our salvation, which can be done now that he is thirty years of age.

What I trust we will understand after today is how Jesus is baptized to identify with us just as we are now baptized to identify with Him!

Now let us consider what happened as Jesus was baptized?

- **Picture of a new Exodus: John has taken the people into the wilderness, to anoint the new Moses who will deliver His people from their captivity: The captivity of sin and death!**
- **Heaven is ripped open, just as the temple curtain is ripped at the cross.**
- **A new beginning with the outpouring of the Spirit: Culminating at Pentecost**
- **A truly Trinitarian event: The strongest presentation in the Scriptures and the easiest to relate too!**

Gives us a “glimpse” at the eternal wonder of God just as a beautiful picture captures some of nature’s wonder or as C.S. Lewis has said, how nature gives a glimpse of heaven!

Significance of what we see:

- **The Son carrying out the will of the Father, grown up as a man, thirty years of age, praying and ready!**
[Application should be obvious: Are we praying for God to use us?]
- **Spirit descends like a Dove: Hard to miss images from the Old Testament:**

Genesis 1:1 “*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.*”

- **At the end of the flood, it is the Dove that again hovers over the waters and then is the first to go forth from the Ark.**
- **The oil that anointed the priests – Jesus anointed by the Spirit as our Great High Priest!**
-- Your homework this week is to study Hebrews chapters 7-10

➤ **Brings the New Creation**

Compare death passing to one who touched a corpse in the Old Covenant with Life coming to the dead touched by Jesus in the New Covenant

Finally, the Father testifies from Heaven: “You are my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased”

- **Well pleased to present Him as the propitiation for our sins.**
- **Well pleased to have Him sit at His right hand of power**
- **Well pleased to give Him the Kingdom**

Please note the focus on who is testifying: This is very important for our proper understanding of baptism today!

There are many questions and controversies that have raged around baptism:

Some very important and some not so important:

Some examples:

- **When should we baptize?**

Children or adults?

Immediately or later?

Babes in the faith or mature?

Folks find “proof-texts” for almost all of these options

- **How should we baptize?**

Immerse – pour – sprinkle

We are simply NOT told

- **Who should baptize?**

The evangelist? The pastor? The father?

Again, we are not told and there are various examples

- **Where should it be done?**

Creek? – Home? – Church?

I would suggest that all these battles are just smoke-screens for the real debate over the really important question?

- **WHO is testifying when a baptism occurs?**
- **Who testified at the baptism of Jesus?**
- **Consider the baptisms that we see throughout the New Testament...**
 - **Pentecost: The Holy Spirit is poured out**
 - **Ethiopian Eunuch: Phillip appears**
 - **Saul of Tarsus: Who made this “decision?”**
 - **Lydia’s Household: Apostle Paul appears**
 - **Philippian Jailer’s Household: Paul & the earthquake**
- **Where we do see Christians “testifying” about their decisions or baptisms in the New Testament, it is condemned at Corinth.**

In our American Baptist culture, we focus on the individual who gives his testimony: He or she is baptized because they have a testimony: They can tell of their conversion experience!

- **In the account of Christ’s baptism and throughout church history it is clearly God who is testifying!**

This Biblical teaching and pattern is why we baptized little Garret this morning: It is based on what we find in Acts 2 after God had testified about the power of His Son Jesus: “37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” 38 Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

- **God’s promise is His testimony: We claim this promise by faith: Not faith in our faith or our testimony, but faith in God’s faithfulness and His promise!**
- **As evidence of how far we have strayed, consider the push in many churches for those who have been baptized to be re-baptized:**

I can use my own story as an example:

There was no “human faith” present at my baptism as an infant:

Not in my parents, not in the pastor and certainly not in me!

When I later came to faith, I was re-baptized: Was this needed? Did it add to God’s promise, which I could claim or did it just add my “testimony?” Was it simply a convenient evangelistic tool?

- **This loss of proper focus is why we have so much insecurity and introspection today:**
 - **Did I really believe? Did I give the right testimony?**
 - **IF I have fallen away... Should I be baptized AGAIN??**
 - **When we restore someone who has been excommunicated, do we re-baptize them??**

Don’t know of any case where this is done... which is telling!

BOTTOM-LINE:

- **Where do I, or any of us, look for the assurance of salvation: To our heart or to the Word?**
- **Do I look to my faithfulness or to God’s faithfulness?**

Lord-willing: Little Garret will NOT have to grow up wondering IF he is saved or look for a conversion “experience”

- **He can, as all of us can, look to God’s promise & faithfulness as He renews His covenant each week with His Word and Sacrament.**

This is how Paul shows the significance of Baptism in Colossians:

“2:1 For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face,

[As we, serving as your Elders, should struggle for you!]

2 “that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

[The mystery we get a glimpse of at the baptism of Jesus!]

4 “I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments. 5 For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

[Faith IN Christ – not faith in faith or faith in our testimony!]

6 Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, 7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.”

[That faith which was a gift from God: The Gospel revealed from faith to faith as Paul says in Romans 1:16]

8 See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. 9 For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, 10 and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. 11 In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.”

- **Faith in God's Faithfulness & Power**
- **We live because of the resurrecting power and justice of God**
- **That is our assurance:
That is our ONLY assurance!**

A couple of final points: So we are not misunderstood this morning...

Water Baptism is NOT necessary for salvation – We are saved by faith in Christ which is a gift from God!

- **Just as the baptism of Jesus did not make him the beloved son our baptism does not make us Children of God! The sign points to the reality, but it is not itself that reality.**

We can look at various examples:

-- The thief on the cross: No way he was baptized!

-- Thousands of infants lost at birth or before

-- Example of David's son: "I must go to him..."

-- Those in churches where baptism is withheld from Covenant children

- **The Bible teaches that they must have the gift of faith:**

Psalm 22: "But You are He who took Me out of the womb; You made Me trust while on My mother's breasts. 10 I was cast upon You from birth. From My mother's womb You have been My God."

Baptism is also a communal event:

1 Corinthians 10: "Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, 2 all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:12 “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--Jews or Greeks, slaves or free--and all were made to drink of one Spirit. 14 For the body does not consist of one member but of many.”

**Little Garret has been baptized into the one body of Christ as have we all
As Pastor Rich Lusk said,**

“In one sense, Christian faith is never anything more (or less!) than accepting what God said about you at your baptism.”

As our hymn of response this morning we are going to sing Amazing Grace. This week brings the release of the new movie on the life of William Wilberforce and the role that John Newton played in his life and his battle against the slave trade. Mr. Newton was a former slave trader who came to Christ and penned this great hymn.

As we sing it this morning we should remember that it is not amazing in the least that God should testify that Jesus is “His beloved Son.”

However, it is TRULY AMAZING that God would testify through His Word and Spirit that WE are His beloved children, the very bride for His beloved Son.

➤ Let us truly rejoice in that Great Truth this week!