

Series: The Gospel of Luke
Text: Luke 3:21,22
November 30, 2014: Gospel Community Study Guide

This Study Guide is based on a sermon by Dr. Joshua Mack. You will find the link to the sermon here.

<http://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?sid=11315957241>

Getting Started:

See if there are different members of your gospel community group who are willing to tell the story of their baptism.

The Big Idea:

We began by talking about our baptism, because today we will be thinking a little about Jesus' baptism. Now, really this is not a very good comparison because our baptism and Jesus' baptism are very different. Jesus was baptized by John before the cross. This is a different kind of baptism than we experience and it had a very different purpose. For Jesus, one of the purposes of his baptism was to reveal who He was and to announce the beginning of His public ministry.

It is important for us to consider the baptism of Jesus, because it gives us God's perspective on who He is and what He came to do. As you know, people have many different perspectives about Jesus. Even while he walked the earth, there were many looking at him, and asking themselves and each other, 'Who is this man?' His baptism is a very significant moment because at His baptism, God steps in and answers this question for us.

Remembering the Message:

This text teaches us about who Jesus is and in the sermon on Sunday we discussed three lessons we learn about Jesus from his baptism. Can you remember what those three lessons were?

Into the Text:

Read Luke 3:21 and 22 and then read Matthew 3:13-18 and answer the following questions:

What stands out to you as you read these passages?

What questions do you have about them?

What information do you get in Matthew about what happened at the baptism of Jesus that you do not get in Luke?

What do you think Jesus means when he says he wants to be baptized because “it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness?”

Before Jesus was baptized, were there any ways he would have stood out from the crowd surrounding him? In other words, if you were there that day at Jesus’ baptism and you were looking out at the crowd being baptized, was there anything about Jesus that would have set him apart and caused you to immediately know He was the Messiah God had promised?

Why do you think Jesus chose to be so ordinary and more to the point, why do you think He chose to submit Himself to all of God’s rules and regulations, even ones like baptism?

What is the significance of the heavens being opened up?

What do you think is the importance of the Spirit of God descending on Him?

What can you learn about Jesus and God’s attitude towards Him from what the voice from heaven has to say about him?

Thinking Theologically:

This text has several important theological implications. Let’s take a moment to think together about them.

First, there is an ancient heresy called modalism that suggests that God is only one person who sometimes shows up in different forms. Sometimes he appears as God the Father, sometimes as God the Son, and sometimes as God the Spirit. In what way could you use this particular passage to refute that?

Second, one of the reasons Jesus was baptized was because He came into this world to represent us to God. This means what He did, He did not for Himself, but for us. His baptism is an illustration of this. He did not have to be baptized for himself, but He did so to fulfill all righteousness, and why did He become man to fulfill all righteousness? He did so that He could share that righteousness with us. Why is it so important that Jesus obeyed God’s law perfectly? What comfort should Christians take from that?

Third, Jesus chose to live His life in dependence on the Holy Spirit. We see his relationship with the Spirit illustrated at His baptism. As we read through the gospel of Luke, his dependence on the Spirit will be made more and more clear to us. One author explains this relationship like this, “Jesus came into this world and lived his sinless life and fulfilled his divine calling as none other than the long-awaited Spirit-anointed Messiah. That is, though he was fully God, and though he possessed the fullness of his own infinitely rich and full divine nature through his incarnate life on

earth as he does now in his ascended life at the right hand of his Father, yet the Spirit of God rested upon his life. In other words, although he came as one who was both fully God and fully man, he also lived his life as one indwelt with and empowered by the Spirit of God.” The implications of this are huge! This author continues, “Although Jesus was the God-man such that he possessed a fully divine as well as a fully human nature, it seems clear ... that the bulk of Jesus’ day-to-day living occurred as he fulfilled his calling, obeyed the Father, resisted temptation, and performed his confirmatory miracles, fundamentally as a man empowered by the Spirit. He lived his life as one of us.” What encouragement can you take from that?

To Think About:

What reasons does what you have learned from the baptism of Jesus give you for loving Him more?

What are some of the ways you were encouraged or challenged by this study and this week’s message? Do you have any other questions you would like to talk about?