

Luke 3B

- If you were to answer the question, “Why did Jesus come to earth as a man?”
 - You could answer that question in multiple ways
 - Die for sin
 - Live a sinless life
 - More astute Bible student might also mention
 - To offer the Kingdom of God to the Jewish nation
 - To fulfill all prophecy
 - As the Son, He came to reveal the Father (John 14:9)
 - Gave an example to believers how to live out his faith
 - In the first two verses for today taken from Chapter 3, we can see those last three reasons on display
- We also have opportunity to understand better the purpose of both baptism and prayer in the life of a believer, as modeled by Christ

[Luke 3:21](#) ¶ Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened,
[Luke 3:22](#) and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, “You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.”

From the parallel accounts in other gospels, we know that John had been busy as usual baptizing at the Jordan

- When one day, from a distance he caught sight of Jesus approaching
- John did not understand who Jesus was until this moment
 - In fact, from the gospel accounts there is no indication that John ever knew Jesus or that their mothers were related
 - Lived in different cities & John lived in desert
- In the Gospel of John, John says he didn’t know Jesus was the Christ

- Until the dove descended on Jesus
 - Had been told to look for the sign
- And Luke tells us that Jesus came to John and John baptized him
- Following the baptism, Luke records that the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus
- The specific vision Luke records mentions a dove, which has become the symbol of the Holy Spirit
 - This is a theophany – God appearing in corporeal form – taking the form of His creation
- Knowing Christ is sinless naturally leads us to ask the question why would Jesus need to be baptized?
 - In fact, we really need to review the purpose for baptism as given to us before we can understand what it's purpose may have been for Jesus' ministry
- Baptizing was done to disciple a believer – not to create a believer
 - It was and is symbolic
 - Depicts the cleansing of sin
 - Depicts the death of the old man and resurrection unto life
 - In both cases, it is a depiction – a picture of something already done in the heart by the Holy Spirit
 - The Holy Spirit is the one with the ministry to bring this new life
 - He gives the new spirit in a believer
 - He brings an awareness of a forgiveness of sins – the confidence of a believer
 - He is the one that gives us an awareness and understanding of the Word of God
 - He is the one who indwells us and empowers us for ministry – anointing we call it

- We use water to picture the salvation experience and we anoint men with oil to picture the anointing of the Holy Spirit
- We have these understandings from scripture, but in John's day, baptism was a new idea
 - John was called John the Baptist because he introduced the idea of washing in the river to signify repentance
 - So for John and all who had been exposed to this new ministry of a symbolic washing away of sin, there was no other purpose
 - This explains John's reaction to Jesus' request to be baptized in Matt

[Matt. 3:14](#) But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?"

[Matt. 3:15](#) But Jesus answering said to him, "Permit *it* at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he *permitted Him.

- John's confusion came because he understood only one purpose for the act of baptism – and he knew Jesus would not need that ministry
 - In fact, John incorrectly assumed that Jesus' ministry would include baptizing – but it never did

[John 4:1](#) ¶ Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John

[John 4:2](#) (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were),

- John mentioned pointedly that Christ wasn't baptizing, because it was not the ministry of Jesus to baptize
 - We already mentioned His purposes in coming to earth
 - John's assumption that the primary focus of Jesus' ministry was to bring repentance and thereby the forgiveness of sins and ultimately baptism was wrong
 - We said last week that John the Baptist pictures the ministry of the Holy Spirit and Jesus' ministry stands apart from that of the HS

- So if forgiveness of sins is not the purpose behind Jesus' own baptism, what is?
 - To better understand what's happening here, you only need to consider a couple things
 - First, consider that all three aspects of the Godhead are participating in this scene
 - God the Father speaks and His Spirit descends on Jesus
 - But we've already heard how it is that the spirit descends – in a very visible way
 - As a dove
 - Why so peculiar a way? In Texas at the wrong time of year, descending like a dove is exactly the wrong thing to do
- Consider the words of John concerning the same scene...

[John 1:33](#) "I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.'

[John 1:34](#) "I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God."

[John 12:28](#) "Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

[John 12:29](#) So the crowd *of people* who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, "An angel has spoken to Him."

[John 12:30](#) Jesus answered and said, "This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes.

- The words of Jesus tell us that the entire scene with the Holy Spirit descending & voices speaking was played out for the sake of those watching
- The fact that the Holy Spirit was made so visible even to the point of giving an image of a dove was so that the meaning of the events in this scene would be obvious to the crowd
- This was a testimony to who Jesus was
 - Some regard Jesus as a religious teacher or a prophet
 - Those pale in comparison to the portrait given in Luke

- So Jesus came to be baptized so that His identity could be established before that crowd as the Son of God
- Before these people who John had prepared for Christ's appearing
- When we are baptized, we are actually achieving a similar function
 - The baptism of a believer is often a hotly debated piece of a theology because some have taken it to mean this is part of the salvation process,
 - otherwise why would Christ demand that it happen
 - So some are tempted to make it a requirement for salvation, which it clearly is not
 - The thief on the cross stands as a testimony
 - But then as we learn it is not essential for salvation, we can also make the mistake of going in the opposite direction...that is making it meaningless and optional
 - Forgetting that Jesus did command it of all believers.

[Mark 16:16](#) "He who has believed and has been **baptized** shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.

- Jesus says that believing and being baptized are so intimately connected that one should always go with the other
- But notice he condemns a man only for disbelief
- So again, what's the connection?
 - Faith coming as it does, baptism is an important marker in the life of a believer
 - Don't know the day I was saved...
 - It confirms a changed heart – can help prove to both the person and observers that the change is genuine
 - It provides opportunity for public confession

[Rom. 10:8](#) But what does it say? “THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, in your mouth and in your heart”—that is, the word of faith which we are preaching,
[Rom. 10:9](#) that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;
[Rom. 10:10](#) for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

- And like Christ, it declares our identity - who we are in Christ – a believer, a follower, a saint
- But Jesus was baptized for more than just demonstrating His identity
 - And from both Luke’s and John’s description, we see that as He is baptized He receives the Holy Spirit coming upon Him
 - In fact, at the moment the spirit descended, The Father was anointing Jesus for His ministry on earth - – a ministry that would require the power of God Himself
 - And immediately after this scene, Jesus begins His ministry in full
- It’s helpful for us as we move into and beyond this point in the Gospel to gain a focused appreciation of what it truly meant for God to take human form in Jesus
 - Jesus was God but He was all man though without sin
 - So He was limited by His own choice to be without the capabilities that He once enjoyed at the right hand of the Father
 - While in human form, he was still aware of who He was and what He was there for, but He became much more dependent on the Holy Spirit to remain in connection with the Father
 - In the next chapter, we will see several references to how Jesus is led by the Holy Spirit or given power to accomplish His ministry
 - The picture being built here, especially by Luke, is that it was through the ministry of the Holy Spirit that Jesus was able to accomplish His supernatural work while in human form
 - We’ll study this more as we move through the Gospel

- But naturally, we see the same experience as well
 - Again baptism is a symbolic act, and not usually the exact moment when supernatural events occur, like indwelling
 - So as a believer you are already accompanied by the Holy Spirit before going into the water, otherwise why would you go?
 - But just as Jesus was seen receiving the Holy Spirit at His baptism, we believers are now accompanied by that same spirit with that same power and connection to the Father that Jesus enjoyed
 - And just as He was charged to go forward with a new ministry, we likewise have been called into some form of ministry to the Lord and for His Kingdom
 - There is no one way to minister, but rather there is primarily one way for each of us
 - As members of Christ's Body, we are to specialize just as a member of the body has a special role
 - And by our spiritual gifting, we can now benefit the Body but only when we put our ability to use
 - Your baptism was your coming out party, and now you've expected to seek out ways to put your gifting to use
 - And if you don't know what your gifting is, then you need to pray and seek opportunities to get more directly involved in the work of the kingdom
 - The only way I know to remain unaware of your gifting is to stand still, spiritually speaking
- Typically, once a gifting and a calling extend beyond a normal level of service within one Body
 - and it's apparent that God has called a man to higher purpose, -
 - to a devotion of himself to the ministry
 - Then the scripture calls for men within that Body to recognize God's work in that man and anoint him with oil and pray over him

- This is a work much the same as baptism – symbolic of what God has already done
- And it recognizes God, given Him glory for the work in this person, while making a public affirmation that this person is set apart for ministry
 - Sometimes our obedience to these measures come without our intending, almost as if God wants us to understand their importance before our will catches up with His
 - Examples...Confess, baptized, and anointing
- Finally, there is one more reason Christ was baptized – to obediently fulfill God's Word

[Is. 42:1](#) ¶ “Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold;
My chosen one *in whom* My soul delights.
I have put My Spirit upon Him;
He will bring forth justice to the nations.

- The Father was pleased to put His Spirit upon His Son, to empower Him to do the work of righteousness
- As Christ said in Matt, it was necessary for the fulfilling all righteousness
- For Jesus to be baptized, in other words, was simply a matter of obedience to the Father
- Which of course brings us to the final parallel for all believers

[Matt. 28:19](#) “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,
[Matt. 28:20](#) teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

- If you are a believer but you have never been baptized
- Or you were baptized as an infant
- Then you have a test of obedience awaiting you
 - Your Lord has said instructed you to be baptized for all the reasons we have described

- Let your heart hear His words and obey – both for the sake of His Word and for the blessing that comes from obedience
- We will have a baptism...
- And finally, before we move from these verses, consider how Jesus experienced His baptism – in prayer
 - Doesn't it strike you as strange that Jesus would need to exercise prayer to communicate with the Father though they are one/
 - Remember what we've said about the nature of Jesus as man
 - He lost His close intimate connection with the Father
 - He found His opportunity to pray so important because having known that intimate relationship, he desired it immensely
 - And He sought what for a man can only be found in prayer – divine communication and intimacy with the Father
 - Before Jesus died, such intimacy was possible only through a priest
 - Men prayed and God heard their prayers, but access to the Father was found in the temple by way of sacrifice and priests – men were held at a distance from God and knew it
 - Now we have what Jesus had as a man
 - Opportunity for intimate communication with the Father
 - But so often we take praying lightly because we don't have instant gratification
 - The apparent lack of instant response drives us to distraction and laziness
 - Don't see your prayers like a message in a bottle
 - See it more like an e-mail
 - We'll learn more about prayer as we watch Jesus use it throughout His ministry
- The next series of verses are the genealogy of Jesus

[Luke 3:23](#) ¶ When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph, the son of Eli,
[Luke 3:24](#) the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph,
[Luke 3:25](#) the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Hesli, the son of Naggai,
[Luke 3:26](#) the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda,
[Luke 3:27](#) the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri,
[Luke 3:28](#) the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er,
[Luke 3:29](#) the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi,
[Luke 3:30](#) the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim,
[Luke 3:31](#) the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David,
[Luke 3:32](#) the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon,
[Luke 3:33](#) the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Ram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah,
[Luke 3:34](#) the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,
[Luke 3:35](#) the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Heber, the son of Shelah,
[Luke 3:36](#) the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech,
[Luke 3:37](#) the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan,
[Luke 3:38](#) the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

- Jesus' ministry began according to Luke at around the age of thirty
 - This age was significant, at least in part because it was consistent with the Biblical requirement that priests be 30 before serving
 - God recognizes that maturity come in part with age and experience, so here again Jesus sets an example under the law
 - Of course, He would be our High Priest in the order of Melchizedek, so His ministry was not begun until he reached the necessary age

- The second thing to jump out at us is the phrase “supposed son”
 - We know He wasn’t actually Joseph’s son
 - But Luke wants to show the line coming from the father as would be appropriate
 - This issue actually plays into the next issue stemming from this genealogy
 - This passage is naturally compared with the similar passage in Matt
 - So we should highlight some of the differences between this passage and the one in Matt
 - Matt comes first and start , Luke’s comes in Chap 3
 - Matt: Highlighting Jesus as born to be the Messiah and hold the throne
 - Luke: Jesus ministry as a man and God together
 - Matt starts at Abraham and goes toward Christ, Luke backwards to Adam
 - Messiah for Jews vs. New Adam for the world
 - The two genealogies trace back through different names to Solomon
 - Several solutions have been proposed
 - Mary vs Joseph
 - Incumbents vs real family
 - Leverage marriage for Joseph’s father
 - Mary vs Joseph makes the most sense

Look forward to our baptism