

SERMON FOCUS: I must publicly identify with Christ.

SERMON FUNCTION: The hearer will see the importance of identifying with Christ publicly.

BACKGROUND: Many of you may remember that Dr. Luke wrote his gospel in about A. D. 60, to a Gentile audience to give an orderly account of all that Jesus began to do and to teach. Here, we are covering Luke's brief overview of the ministry of John the Baptist, which culminates in the Baptism of our Lord.

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 3:15-22

INTRODUCTION:

Recently, we have had a few ask about baptism, so I intended to discuss it last week. On the church calendar, the 12th was Baptism of the Lord Sunday, which is the day that many churches have a sermon on our Lord's baptism and what it means to us. So, we're going to talk about baptism today.

MESSAGE:

1. BAPTISM WAS A SIGN OF REPENTANCE

- a. Baptism was not normally for Jews.
 - i. They were God's chosen people by birth.
 - ii. Baptism was normally required for Gentiles wanting to convert to Judaism.
 - iii. For a Jew to be baptized meant that he regretted and repented of his sinfulness.
- b. The people that John was baptizing were looking for a Savior.
- c. Listening to John preach, people realized that their lives were not right.
- d. If you look at vv. 10-14, you see that John was giving people specific acts to do that would demonstrate their repentance.

2. JESUS WAS BAPTIZED TO IDENTIFY WITH US

- a. If people listening to John were being baptized to show repentance, and Jesus had no sin, why was he baptized?
- b. Immediately after Jesus' baptism, He was led out into the wilderness to be tempted.
- c. *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin.* -- Hebrews 4:15 (CSB)
- d. *For everything in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride in one's possessions — is not from the Father, but is from the world. 17 And the world with its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God remains forever.* -- 1 John 2:16-17 (CSB)

- i. Jesus was tempted with all these types of temptations
 - 1. To turn stones into bread would have been to fulfill lust of the flesh.
 - 2. To have had the world given to Him would have fulfilled a lust of the eyes
 - 3. To have jumped and proven himself as Messiah would have been prideful
- ii. We all face these types of temptations.
- iii. Jesus has identified Himself with us in our sinful humanity, not by becoming sinful, but by being tempted.
- iv. "Jesus knows all about our struggles, He will guide till the day is done; There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus, No, not one! No, not one!" Hymn 181.
- e. In being baptized with those who were repenting, Jesus demonstrated His approval of John's message of repentance and of Jesus as the Messiah. He also identified with the struggles of sinful people.

3. WE MUST BE BAPTIZED TO IDENTIFY WITH HIM

- a. Since Jesus was baptized to identify with us, we are required to be baptized to identify with Him.
- b. When people were coming to be baptized by John, they were acknowledging their sin and repenting of it.
- c. We are required to do the same.
- d. Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call." With many other words he testified and strongly urged them, saying, "Be saved from this corrupt generation!" So those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand people were added to them. -- Acts 2:38-41 (CSB)
- e. Baptism is for those who have repented and confessed their need of Christ. It is an act of public identification with our Lord.
 - i. For whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and that of the Father and the holy angels. -- Luke 9:26 (CSB)
 - ii. For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek. -- Romans 1:16 (CSB)
- f. Baptism is an unapologetic public declaration of faith in Christ. It is for those who have understood the gospel and have committed their lives to Christ.

4. THE GOSPEL IN SIMPLE FORM (adapted from Dr. James Merritt).

- a. Bad News: We are all sinners separated from God.
- b. Worst News: There is nothing we can do about our sin problem.

- c. Good News: Christ did for us what we cannot do for ourselves.
- d. Best News: Salvation and eternal life are a free gift, but you must receive it.

INVITATION HYMN # 305 I Have Decided