

sermon study guide

Pastor: Ashwin Ramani

Date: January 11 / 12, 2020

Sermon Title: Revealing Jesus: The Baptizer – Matthew Series Part 6

IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. What was the longest period of time you spent in the wilderness or away from civilization? What was it like?
2. A major focus of this weekend's sermon was baptism. Have you been baptized? If so, when? What did getting baptized mean for you?

UP - PURSUE GOD

Read Matthew 3:1-12

3. How is John's purpose described in these verses? How does John describe Jesus' purpose?

Read Ezekiel 36:26-27

4. Water baptism is a symbol of a much deeper reality. How would you describe the connection between water baptism and baptism with the Holy Spirit?

OUT - PURSUE MISSION

5. Pastor Ashwin stated that some see the filling of the Spirit as a "one time" event while others see it as a repeated reality. How have you experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

Read Acts 1:8

6. Pastor Ashwin challenged us by saying, "You have full access to the Holy Spirit at conversion. But how are you living this out today? Is your life marked by the power of God's Spirit?"
How have you seen the power of the Holy Spirit at work in your life? How do you need his power in this season of your life?

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

Pastor Ashwin said, "If there was one person who was so sure of his identity and purpose in life – it was John!". In this season of life, what would you say is your primary purpose? How does being empowered by the Spirit enable you to fulfill this purpose?

THE WORD (NIV)

Matthew 3:1-12

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ² and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." ³ This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

"A voice of one calling in the wilderness,
'Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.'"

⁴ John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. ⁶ Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹ And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ¹⁰ The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ "I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

Ezekiel 36:26-27

²⁶ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

Acts 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

1 Corinthians 12:13; Acts 1:4-5; Galatians 5:22-23; Romans 8:14-16

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sermon study summary

Revealing Jesus: The Baptizer

Matthew 3:1-12

Pastor Ashwin Ramani

Matthew 3 is a significant chapter that affirms the identity of Jesus as the Son of God. As a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, John the Baptist was the one to break the four hundred years of silence, announcing that the Messiah and the long time of waiting was over (Matthew 3:3). John the Baptist knew and lived his purpose as the forerunner of Jesus. The outward ritual of his baptism with water was a sign of repentance. John used this baptism to point people to Jesus, who was superior and the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit and fire (Matthew 3:11).

What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit? Baptism is a metaphor that signifies being drenched, immersed or soaked. The baptism of the Holy Spirit thus saturates and immerses one in the triune God. Sin severed our relationship with God but Christ has provided the way for restoration. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the confirmation of this restoration. Although the Holy Spirit was active during Old Testament times, He only empowered select individuals for specific tasks. Now, the Holy Spirit dwells in all who have a saving relationship with Christ which is a fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophetic blessing (Ezekiel 36:26-27). Not only has the power of sin been removed, but the filling of the Holy Spirit has occurred.

When are we baptized in the Spirit? Some Christians believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs at conversion (I Corinthians 12:13). Other Christians believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a post-conversion experience (Acts 1:4-5). Both of these views are based on the assumption that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a singular event. The key to a Spirit-empowered life of sanctification requires a continuous and ongoing relationship which results in a reoccurring filling of the Spirit. This continuous filling is illustrated in Acts 2-4, where the Apostle Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit three times (preaching to the crowds, healing a crippled man, speaking to the council).

What is the effect of this experience? The baptism of the Holy Spirit results in, first, the endowment of power. This power is evident by boldness to live a vibrant Christian life, including the power to pray, fight temptation and share the gospel. A life yielded to the Holy Spirit will result in a life of passion with maximum impact for God's Kingdom. Secondly, the baptism of the Holy Spirit helps one to live a life of holiness. Those filled with the Holy Spirit will become more like Jesus and demonstrate His character as given in the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).

What is the baptism of fire? It is a metaphor that speaks to the purifying and purging work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit convicts of sin, sanctifies and gives a passion for holiness. The fire is also a metaphor for judgment. Those who have not experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit will be baptized with the judgment of eternal fire (Matthew 3:12).

Jesus is not physically present in the church today, but He is alive and active because of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The moment that a person puts their faith in Christ, they are baptized by the Spirit, which seals their forever identity as God's child, and fills them to live an empowered life for Christ.