

## **John Baptizes Jesus**

**Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22**

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” (English Standard Version – ESV)

### **Background:**

- Many believed that the Spirit was no longer available in their time. Others believed the Spirit would not work as forcefully as in the days of the prophets, until the time of the end. That the Spirit comes on Jesus indicates the inauguration of the messianic era and marks Jesus out as the Spirit-bearer and, hence, Messiah.

- Among the Jews, the dove was the symbol of purity of heart, harmlessness and gentleness (Matthew 10:16; compare Psalm 55:6-7. The form here may be interpreted as an emblem of the innocence, meekness and tenderness of Christ.

- Many believed that voices from heaven were the closest anyone came to prophecy in their time. Jesus has both kinds of witness: the heavenly voice and John's prophecy. Matthew intends his more erudite readers to see allusions not only to a royal Messiah in Psalm 2:7, but also to the suffering servant of Isaiah 42:1-4.

### **Questions:**

- + If Jesus had no sin and John baptized for repentance, why did Jesus come to John for baptism?
- + What does John's question say about his view of himself in comparison to his view of Jesus? How do you view yourself in comparison to your view of Jesus? How does God view you?
- + What does Jesus mean when he says to John, “it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness?” How does the answer of Jesus to John apply to the church today? How does it apply to you?
- + Some say the Trinity is evident in the baptism of Jesus. Do you agree? Why or why not? What is significant about “the Spirit of God descending like a dove” and resting on Jesus?
- + Why would God say, “I am well pleased” with him, if Jesus has not yet begun his ministry? Is God well pleased with you? Why or why not? How can you be well pleasing to God?