

united kingdom

JESUS' BAPTISM

the Kingdom story from creation to revelation

(Luke 3:1-21; Mt. 3:2-17)

Jesus begins His ministry, and it becomes apparent that it will be different than anything expected. In fact, the concept of "God's people" immediately becomes broader – it's those whose hearts are right with God. God commissions His beloved Son for the task ahead of Him.

Introduction



Jesus grew to be a young man.

John tells people to prepare for the coming kingdom by being baptised.



The tax collector can be honest in what they take



The soldiers don't exhort money and accuse people of false actions

John Confronts

John confronts the hypocritical religious leaders.



Hypocritical (a bunch of snakes!)

Prove that they follow God by the way they live

They shouldn't trust in just their ancestry – God can make anyone part of His kingdom

John corrects wrong assumptions

People wonder if John is the Promised King



John says that someone greater than he is coming – the Promised King will baptise them with God's Spirit

Practical Advice

Different kinds of people ask for practical advice about what they could do



The "normal" person can share their belongings

Jesus Comes

Jesus comes to be baptised. God's Spirit comes on Jesus in the form of a dove. God says that Jesus is His greatly loved Son and that Jesus brings Him joy.



Weekly Meditation and Reflection

Below are some questions and further reading if you would like some extra food for thought on this story. Some may find it helpful to journal the answers, and others may simply want to read and pray through them.

1. John gives some practical advice on what people can do to prepare for God's Kingdom. He's not telling them what they need to do to be saved – He's giving people examples of what a changed heart looks like and practical advice on how to turn away from sin and turn toward God. Think about your heart. Are you actively turning away from sin and turning toward God? If you were in that crowd, what would John tell you to do? Ask God what He wants to say to you.
2. John tells the religious leaders that they shouldn't trust in their ancestry to get into God's Kingdom. God's Kingdom is about a heart change. Is there anything besides your relationship with God through Jesus that you've been trusting in to get you into God's Kingdom? Ask God to reveal to you if there's anything other than Him that you're trusting in. (E.g. your good deeds, your church background, your church attendance, your leadership skills, your parents' faith, etc.)
3. This kind of Kingdom is not what people were expecting ... despite Isaiah's prophecy. John's message challenged most people's traditional understanding of the coming King and what He would do. Think about your journey with God through this story set so far. Has anything in this overall story challenged your own understanding of how God works? Has God revealed anything new or deeper

about Himself that you didn't know before or hadn't understood fully? Thank Him for it, and ask Him for more!

Meditate on the following passages:

The blossoming of the wilderness is a theme in Isaiah. Some Old Testament prophets spoke of the wilderness as a place of new beginnings. It's certainly true in this story!

- Isaiah 40:1-5
- Isaiah 44:1-5
- Matthew 12:33-37
- Romans 4:11-16
- Galatians 3:6-9