

# A Study of the Christ

## Text

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Ministry of John the Baptist	3:1-12	1:1-8	3:1-20	
John baptizes Jesus	3:13-17	1:9-11	3:21-23	
Temptation of Jesus	4:1-11	1:12-13	4:1-13	
John's testimony about Christ				1:19-28
John recounts Christ's baptism				1:29-34

## Overriding Principles

- The beginning of Jesus' public ministry introduces us to the greatest earthly example of the highly effective "show and tell" principle (cf. Acts 1:1; Jn. 1:1, 14, 18; 14:7-9).
- Prior to embarking on His preaching journey, Jesus first will face and overcome a temptation in the wilderness that in principle mirrored the temptations that overcame Israel (Deut. 10-19; 8:1-10).

## Main Point

- As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire (Matt. 3:11).

## Secondary Points of History, Culture, Words, and Grammar

- Although the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar (AD 14-37) would have been AD 28/29, Tiberius was appointed as Augustus' (30BC-14AD) co-ruler in AD 12. This would allow for the beginning of Jesus' ministry in AD 26/27 and would square better with His being about 30 at the time (Lk. 3:23). Remember Jesus was born in 6/5 BC (Lk. 1:1-2).
- The Jews were familiar with washings for ceremonial cleansing (Lev. 11-15), but not with water as a factor in the forgiveness of sins (Lk. 3:3).
- John came in the role of an Eastern courier who would precede a king's coming and make proper preparations for him (Lk. 3:4-6; Isa. 30:3-5).

- John would call out a *Righteous Remnant* of Israel (Isa. 10:22) to be the first followers of Jesus (**Lk. 3:7-14**).
- Genuine repentance produces evidence to confirm its reality (**Lk. 3:8-14**).
- John was *like* Elijah even in his dress (**Matt. 3:4**; II Kg. 1:7-8).
- T he Religion of Moses had not been enough to complete God's plan of redemption (**Matt. 3:6**; Heb. 8:6-13).
- T he Jews trusted in their heritage rather than in a faithful relationship with God (**Matt. 3:9**; cf. Jn. 8:33, 39).
- Judgment was at the doorstep of the Jews as they would soon pay a terrible price for centuries of rejecting God (**Matt. 3:10**; 23:29-39; Lk. 23:27-31).
- Jesus would baptize with the *Holy Spirit* and with *Fire*. T he baptism of the Holy Spirit on the A postles would, through their work, benefit all who would respond to the Christ. T he baptism of fire would be the judgment to come on all who rejected Jesus. Hearts would be sifted (**Matt. 3:11-13**; Acts 1:5, 8, 13, 26; 2:1, 4, 7, 14, 42-43; 4:33; 11:15-17; E ph. 1:3, 10, 22-23; 2:5-6, 13-18; 4:16; I T hess. 4:17; II T hess. 1:6-10; II Pet. 3:8-18)!
- John recognized Jesus as a better man than he through his personal knowledge of Him. John would learn that Jesus was the Messiah by the testimony of the Father and the Holy Spirit (**Matt. 3:13-14**; Jn. 1:29-34; Ps. 2:7; Isa. 42:1).
- Jesus was the only accountable person whose baptism could not have been for the remission of sins (**Matt. 3:15**; Heb. 4:14-16).
- A *Beloved Son* would be one who could claim the entire household (**Lk. 3:22**; Matt. 28:18; I Cor. 15:20-28; E ph. 1:20-23).
- Jesus succeeds in the wilderness where Israel had failed (**Matt. 4:4, 7, 10**; Deut. 8:3; 6:16, 13).
- Jesus was not motivated by bread, showmanship, or political power, but by God's word, trust in God, and respect for God. He did not come to defeat Rome, but to defeat evil. T he realm where evil abides is the heart—that is where Jesus would reign (**Matt. 4:1-11**; I Jn. 2:15-16; Mk. 7:14-23; Heb. 2:5-9; 10:22; Ps. 8:4-6; I Pet. 3:15).
- Satan is the master of the *opportune* time (**Lk. 4:13**; cf. I Cor. 10:13; Jas. 4:7).
- When the Gospel of John uses the word *Jew(s)*, it does not mean the ethnic group, but rather the *religious establishment* (**Jn. 1:19**; cf. **1:24**).

- John was not the Christ (Lk. 3:15-16; Jn. 3:28); he was not E lijah (Matt. 11:14; 17:10-13; Mal. 4:5; Lk, 1:17); and he was not the Prophet (Deut. 18:15, 18; Acts 3:22; 7:37); he was a servant of the Christ. In that he found great dignity (**Jn. 1:19-23**; Matt. 11;11).
- T he Jews did at least recognize that religious innovation did require authority (**Jn. 1:25**; Matt. 21:23-27).
- Clearly John *knew* Jesus (Matt. 3:13-15), but he did not *know* Him as the Christ until God revealed it to him (**Jn. 1:31, 33**).
- Jesus did indeed exist before John, even though John was born before Jesus (**Jn. 1:30**; Lk. 1:35-36; cf. 8:56-58).

### Relationship to the Church

- Repentance is still demanding (Acts 26:20).
- Authority is still required in religion (II T im 2:15; 3:16-17; Ii Pet. 1:2-4).
- Satan is still active (I Pet. 5:8).
- Jesus is still more powerful than Satan (Rom. 16:20).
- Jesus came not only to save us, but to show us God and transform our lives into conformity with Him (Rom. 8:29; 12:1-2; II Cor. 3:18).
- S piritual relationships and values are still superior to whatever S atan offers as their rivals (Matt. 16:24-27).

### Who is Jesus?

- He is the One who put S atan to flight.
- He stands where we often fall.
- He is not "too good" to do what is needed.
- He is the focus, core, and interpreter of all that is God!