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### **Matthew 3:13-17**

*Meeting Jesus in Matthew: Jesus is the Son of God*

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Matthew 3:13–17 (NIV) 13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. 14 But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” 15 Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented. 16 As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

#### Introduction:

1. Today we’re talking about the baptism of Jesus.
2. I was baptized when I was about ten years old.
3. If you were at my baptism, you would have learned several things.
4. First, you would have learned my home church thought baptisms were important.
5. We practices full immersion and our baptismal tank was elevated about fifteen feet in a rock wall.
6. Second, you would have learned we only baptized professing Christians, so no pagan infants.
7. Sometimes people gave their faith stories or testimonies before getting baptized, but not me!
8. Third, you would have learned that I believe in Jesus and was willing to make a public profession.
9. What you wouldn’t see is the party my parents threw afterwards and how I wanted all those gifts.
10. Maybe some of you are thinking about getting baptized.
11. Before you get baptized, you need to understand several key truths Jesus’ baptism teaches us
12. The baptism of Jesus teaches us three truths. (**Read Matt 3:13-17**)

(The baptism of Jesus teaches us three truths:)

#### I. First, God is a Trinity.

##### A. We see the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit at Jesus’ baptism.

1. Trinity comes from the latin words “trinitas” or “trinus” which mean “threefold.”
2. We believe that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all one God.
3. They are three distinct persons with their own unique minds and wills and some would say roles.
4. God the Father’s voice speaks from heaven and says “this is my Son” of Jesus.
5. We see the Holy Spirit take the form of a dove and land on Jesus.

##### B. A diagram can help illustrate how all three persons are one God but there are not three gods.

1. Jesus is the same God but a different person than the Father and the Holy Spirit.
2. Sometimes we try to use simple illustrations to explain the Trinity, but none of them get it.
3. The Trinity is like an egg (white, yoke, shell), but each part is different substance, so three gods.
4. The Trinity is like water (solid, liquid, gas), but still H<sub>2</sub>O, so god taking different forms.
5. The Trinity is like a three-leaf clover, but the leafs are too distinct and not unified enough.
6. I believe in Christianity because of the Trinity—people wouldn’t make this up.
7. People’s conception of God is to supersize God, but here God is similar to us but different.

- C. No other world religion but Christianity believes in the Trinity.
1. Islam believes there is only one god and the Trinity is an evil idea.
  2. Hinduism also believes in one god, but one that manifests itself in a million ways.
  3. Buddhist don't believe in a god but in becoming one with the universe, nirvana (all is god).
  4. The Jehovah's Witnesses don't believe in the Trinity but think Jesus is "God's first creation."
  5. They point to the Bible and say there's no single verse that uses the word "Trinity".
  6. One pastor described the doctrine (belief) of the Trinity as a sunrise instead of a spotlight.
  7. Instead of looking for verses that say "Trinity" look for verses that talk about each member.
  8. We baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Mt 28:19, 1 Cor 12:4-6, 2 Cor 13:14).
- D. The Trinity applies to you because the Triune God invites you into relationship with him.
1. Before time the Father loved the Son through the power of the Holy Spirit.
  2. In Jesus' baptism, notice how they're all loving and affirming each other and yet are distinct.
  3. God invites you to love him and be loved by him without losing who you are.
  4. When we believe in Jesus, we don't become gods ourselves.
  5. Instead, throughout our lives God will change us into eternal beings who can love fully.

(We can have this relationship with God because of Jesus.)

(This leads us to our next point.... First, God is a Trinity.)

## II. Second, Jesus is God's chosen one

(The Bible talks about a Messiah or "anointed/chosen one" who will save God's people.)

(We see God make clear Jesus is his chosen one using three attestations in these verses)

- A. First, the Old Testament says Jesus is God's chosen one.
1. When Jesus approaches John to be baptized, John tries to turn him down.
  2. Jesus responds that he needs to be baptized "to fulfill all righteousness."
  3. This is not a reference to a specific verse, but all the verses that say God's chosen will come.
  4. When Jesus is baptized, the Holy Spirit comes down from heaven and rests on him (anoint).
  5. 700 years prior, a prophet named Isaiah said this would happen to the chosen one (Isa 42:1, 61:1).

Isaiah 11:2 (NIV) **The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him— the Spirit** of wisdom and of understanding, **the Spirit** of counsel and of might, **the Spirit** of the knowledge and fear of the Lord

- B. Second, a prophet verifies Jesus is God's chosen one.
1. In the OT, in the 9th century, a man named Elijah prophesied to the people.
  2. Elijah was famous for wearing a garment of hair and a leather belt (2 Kings 1:8).
  3. The last book in the OT, Malachi, says, God will send Elijah again (Malachi 4:5).
  4. "John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist." (Mt. 3:4)
  5. John is the second Elijah but when he see Jesus, he declares he's God's chosen.

(Both the Scriptures and a prophet attest to Jesus as God's chosen one, but so does God himself.)

- C. Third, the Father says Jesus is his chosen one.
1. God himself opened the heavens and declares Jesus is his son.

2. There should have been no doubt in those watching the baptism that Jesus was God's chosen one.
3. God doesn't open heaven often, but when he does, we should pay attention (Transfiguration).
4. God has been silent for the last 400 years since he gave his people the last OT book.
5. God breaks this silence with an important announcement—his Son has arrived!
6. The father breaks his silence to validate Jesus' ministry and say he approves of him.
7. The father is saying this is my unique Son whose ministry on earth is my ministry.

D. John Cage is a famous composer, theorist, and artist (called most famous composer of 20th century).

1. His most famous piece is a composition called 4'33.
2. The musician sits at his or her instrument for three movements without playing.
3. Some have dubbed it "four minutes thirty-three seconds of silence."
4. A pause, or silence, helps us hear music (without silence music would be chaos).
5. Imagine how much more beautiful the music is that comes after that silence.
6. God the father stayed silent for 400 years so that we would pay attention when he spoke.
7. Now the Father says Jesus is my son and I approve of his ministry!

(Jesus' baptism teaches us three truths: First, God is a Trinity; Second, Jesus is God's chosen one.)

### III. Third, God loves people.

A. Jesus identifies with sinners in his baptism.

1. Earlier in the chapter, John the Baptist preached his baptism is one of repentance.
2. But after him will come who will "baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."
3. Then Jesus steps onto the scene the least glamorous way possible.
4. He just walked 70 miles from Galilee to the Jordan river to be baptized by a dirty prophet.
5. Jesus doesn't need to be baptized, he's never sinned, but he humbles himself to identify with us.

(Jesus embraces our shame... have you ever had anyone embrace your shame?)

B. Have you ever been sick, and had a family member or friend shout, "Stay away from me!"

1. As someone who get's sick a lot, you guys are super annoying!
2. People don't embrace sickness or disease or death, but Jesus did.
3. When Jesus approaches you in your sickness, how do you respond?
4. Do you let him embrace you in your shame, or do you deny him?
5. Maybe you won't accept Jesus' forgiveness because you're too embarrassed.
6. You can trust Jesus with any aspect of your life, even the most shameful moments.

(Jesus identifies with you but do you identify with Jesus?)

C. Four Ways to Identify With Jesus:

1. Ask him to deal with your sin (don't keep it to yourself, ask a friend to pray, invite healing).
2. When you witness his power, pause and worship (don't act like the crowd at the Jordan).
3. Obey him even when you don't understand (just like John the baptist).
4. Get baptized (the best way to identify with Jesus' baptism is to get baptized, class Jan 23rd).

(Ultimately the baptism of Jesus tells us one central truth.)

(It tells us this... Jesus is the God who got into the water with us.)

D. Jesus' water baptism points to his death & resurrection.

1. Baptism in water not only symbolizes ritual purification, it symbolizes death.
2. Water in the ancient world is a symbol of chaos, death, and the unknown.
3. If you stay underneath water, the water will kill you.
4. Jesus is saying I not only identify with you; I'm willing to die for you.
5. Notice what happens when Jesus comes back up... heaven opens!
6. When Jesus dies on the cross, the curtain in the temple tears in two from top to bottom.
7. The curtain in the temple symbolized God's separation from sinful people.
8. At his baptism, Jesus is telling us he will tear a hole in heaven (heal relationship)!
9. In Christ, God can say of you, "You are my beloved child, with whom I am well pleased."

(Jesus is the God who got into the water with us.)

Conclusion:

1. When I was about seven years old I was at a party for my cousin.
2. They had a rectangle in-ground pool in their back yard and my three brothers were in it swimming.
3. I didn't know how to swim but I got in on the stairs holding onto the side wall.
4. As I watched them, what they were doing looked so fun I stepped off the last step to join them.
5. The water was too deep, I couldn't swim, and so I sank, panicked, thrashed, and choked.
6. That's when my oldest brother grabbed me and pulled me out of the pool.
7. We're all born in the deep end, drowning in sin and gasping for hope.
8. Jesus became our big brother so he could pull us out of the water.
9. Jesus is the God who got into the water with us.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Corinthians 13:14 NIV)