

Matthew 3:13-17^{iv}

Then Jesus came from Galilee
to John at the Jordan,
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 it is proper for us in this way
to fulfill all righteousness.”
Then he consented.
And when Jesus had been baptized,
just as he came up from the water,
suddenly the heavens were opened to him
and he saw the Spirit of God
descending like a dove and alighting on him.
And a voice from heaven said,
“This is my Son,
the Beloved,
with whom I am well pleased.”

^{iv} About the Gospel: Matthew 3:13-17

The baptism of Jesus is a central event in Matthew’s revelation of God in and through the incarnate Son. Matthew examines both Jesus’ role and John’s to answer questions raised by the baptism: (1) Does this mean that Jesus is sinful? (2) Does it imply that Jesus is somehow subordinate to John?

Both concerns are met by Jesus’ reply in verse 15. Though sinless, he identifies himself with sinful humanity. He also emphasizes his obedience to and fulfillment of Old Testament expectations.

Matthew describes the words of the “voice from heaven,” which of course is God’s voice, as a

formal (“This is”), public proclamation of Jesus’ divine Sonship (v. 17). The words themselves, drawn from Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1, identify Jesus as both King and Servant.