

## Matthew 3:13-17 / January 13, 2008

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It had been a long day not that he was complaining. He gotten honey on his belt and in his beard. Maybe when he baptized the next person he could dunk his own head under water and get the honey off. It was really bugging him. He also had a locust leg stuck in his teeth.

And all these people, is there any end to these pathetic people. He could see how they needed reassurance; they needed help by the looks of them their lives must be a mess.

Oh no look here come some Pharisees and Sadducees why were coming down to the river. What did they want, those hypocrites. They are so self righteous and they don't care one bit about these poor pitiful people. They only make their life harder. They give them all of God's law without any of his mercy.

*(Matthew 3:11) "I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.*

Just when John was done dealing with them all of a sudden here comes Jesus. John says to himself. Here he is. The time has come. It's really true.

As strong as John's faith was, as committed as he was and sure of what God wanted him to do, there was still this feeling he sometimes got. He would wonder, am I just fooling myself? Is God really leading me? Or am I just chasing after windmills like Don Quixote. John probably didn't say that because **DON QUIXOTE** is a novel written by Spanish author **Miguel de Cervantes** in the 1500'.

The time is finally here. This must be my reward John thinks. I will be baptized by the Holy Spirit and Fire. Jesus approaches John and says, I wish to be baptized.

John does hear him right. What? You want what? He was expecting Jesus to ask him if he wanted to be baptized but it sounded like Jesus said that he, Jesus wished to be baptized.

What did you say? Jesus said, baptize me.

No, John says, you must baptize me. You are the messiah, I am the messenger. I am not worthy. I want to be ...

Jesus says we must do this to fulfill all righteousness.

John says, But you are righteous you don't need...

Says you. Anyway I'm not doing this for me. John confused, if not for you then for who? For you, for them, for the father, for the world.

Jesus is baptized. When he comes up from the water the heavens were open to him. Jesus sees, the Holy Spirit descending on him like, a dove.

And a voice from heaven says, this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased.

How much did John know or understand about Jesus' baptism? We really don't know. Matthew tells us that Jesus had the heavens open to him and saw the Holy Spirit coming upon him.

Matthew says that a voice from heaven claims Jesus as his son one that the voice is well pleased with. Matthew doesn't tell us who heard those words. Was it just Jesus? Did John hear it? We don't know.

What we do know is that John was doing a baptism of repentance and that he baptized Jesus. Baptized him in the waters of repentance, even when he wanted Jesus to baptize him instead. God had other ideas.

Peter had a similar experience. Remember on the night in which Jesus was betrayed when Jesus was washing the feet of the disciples. Peter didn't want Jesus to wash his feet. Peter wanted to wash Jesus' feet. God had other ideas.

There are times when we have ideas and God has other ideas.

There are times when we have plans but God has other ideas.

There are times when we want to justify ourselves but God has other ideas.

Sometimes we are self-centered, sometimes we are self-interested, sometimes even in our best intentions and we find that God has some other ideas.

Maybe John didn't understand why God wanted him to do what he wanted him to do. Maybe John didn't see or hear anything special happen after Jesus was baptized. That would be a lot like our experience in following, in trusting Jesus.

Sometimes we are like John, not wanting to do what God wants us to do, not understanding why God wants us to do it. But Jesus calls us to be faithful as he is faithful. And because Jesus was and is faithful in the face of our unfaithfulness, fulfilling all righteousness on our behalf we have hope.

Let us hold on in hope to God's beloved Son with whom he is well pleased. Let us open our eyes, ears, mind and let Christ change our heart while we hold on to Christ in hope. Amen.