**DISCOVERING THE LIFE OF JESUS IN YOU PT. 1**

**HIS BAPTISM, YOUR BAPTISM**

**3/26/17**

**I. Introduction:**

A. I want you to imagine a very strange occurrence. Tomorrow morning Jesus wakes up in your bed, puts on your shoes, greets your family, goes to work in your car, lives the whole day listening through your ears, seeing with your eyes, working with your hands. All of the circumstances are the same. The world is the same, the problems around you are the same, your body is the same, the only difference is that this invisible person has replaced you in living out your day.

Imagine what difference that would make. Do you think perhaps your family would notice a gentleness and kindness that wasn’t in you before? Do you think when you looked at the sunset you would see the beauty differently? Do you think that you might drive differently with far less stress? How about on the inside? Would you have less anxiety? Would you need fewer sedatives? Is it possible that you would have the confidence to live fearlessly? Is it true you would probably live without hate, resentment, or regret? Would you have more clarity about the next decision you were to make and be able to make it out of calm wisdom?

B. What I want to share with you is that this is more than a fantasy; this is at the heart of what a Christian life is all about.

Paul said in Col. 1:25-27 NIV, *“I have become its servant by the commission of God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness-the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord’s people. To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”*

*In Gal. 2:20 KJV, he said, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”*

What we want to talk about in this series is how we can discover what this mystery is all about, the mystery of how Jesus Christ, himself can live through our lives in our everyday world. We are going to talk about “discovering the life of Jesus in you.”

**Some key truths we will be presenting from God’s Word:**

1. **Being a Christian is not about “the imitation of Christ, it is about the habitation of Christ.”** It isn’t about self-improvement but self-replacement. Some of you have had knee or hip replacement. You did this because you saw the potential of knee replacement as greater than knee improvement. The idea is that you could’ve kept putting “Bengay” on your knee or getting shots but you realized the improvement would be minimal.

The idea is that I could spend my life trying to love you more but it would be inadequate. I saw a bumper sticker once that said “God loves you and I’m trying.” I thought that sounded kind of lame. What if Jesus could love me through you? That would be a lot better. Jesus gave a picture of this kind of life when He spoke about how Christians should face persecution and questioning of their faith.

Mat. 10:19-20 NIV, *“But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time, you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.”*

2. Another way to say this is that Jesus came not just to give you a saved life but an exchanged life.

In I Cor. 1:30 NIV, *“It is because of Him that you are in Christ Jesus who has become for us wisdom from God-that is our righteousness, holiness, and redemption.”*

This is a level of the Christian life so many Christians don’t grasp. That is why Paul called it a mystery. It is something the Holy Spirit must show you. Some people know about God in theory, some know a relationship with God, but some have a revelation of an identity in Christ in which Christ lives through them.

I remember having a revelation as a 19-year-old man. I was on a search for my identity. I remember spending an afternoon on Tom Sawyer’s Island asking God, “Who am I”? I thought of a lot of questions about my strengths, interests. But after a long time, it came to me that I would not find out who I was by thinking of me, but by focusing on who Jesus is in me, what he became for me through the cross… the source of my identity. I realized I would still have my flesh: my reactions, bad desires, selfish feelings… but that wasn’t who I was. It was like I was a pot… made out of mud, cracked and broken. I wasn’t going to become something different in my flesh, but that I now contained Someone different, who lived in my mud-pot, Jesus living in me. Suddenly I had this strange awareness, as though Jesus was looking through my eyes at the people around me, that he was full of His compassion and purity in my heart; he was eager to stretch out his hand to help others around me.

I began to realize that I would change not by being a better self but having in me a new source besides myself. That I would still have all of those reactions in my flesh, but in the same way I had been unresponsive to the presence of Christ in me in so many occasions, I could now begin to be more unresponsive to my flesh and more and more aware of His life in me and that is how I would change to become more like Christ. I realized that is how Jesus lived in relationship to His Father.

John 5:19 NIV

*“Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.”*

Over and over Jesus would say, the works I do aren’t my works, they are the work of the Father in me.

I see this is kind of like spontaneous language translation. I have often used interpreters in different countries. They preach my sermons (hopefully) by repeating and reflecting out what is coming into their awareness within.

3. One of the best ways to discover and learn to live this life of Jesus in you is through doing what we want to do in this study. That is by looking at the story of Jesus from the angle that in all of Jesus’ journey, He was living a life that wasn’t just an example for us, but was a revelation of the life He wanted to come and live through us, when we face similar circumstances in our life. What we are going to do in this study is not only look at Jesus’ betrayal but how we can let Jesus live in and through us as we face our betrayals. It is all about realizing that Jesus wasn’t just betrayed, he was betrayed for us and as us, to be our very life as we are in the betrayals of life.

So in this series we’re going to look at His baptism/our baptism, Jesus’ temptation/our temptation, Jesus suffering and betrayal/our suffering and betrayal, Jesus’ death and resurrection/our death and resurrection.

In addition to the Sunday sermons, there will be life groups that will meet so that we can discuss and talk through this revelation on a personal level and help each other walk out this special kind of Jesus’ life. I found a small group Bible Study series by Rick Warren on this subject, and I put the YouTube links to these sermons, along with small group discussion notes, that you can use to get reinforcement to the messages on Sunday.

In our studies, we will be walking through the Book of Matthew. It’s 28 chapters and we’re taking 28 days to go through this into the week after Easter. I’m challenging everyone to read the book of Matthew a chapter a day. If you want an even bigger framework, read the whole story of Jesus found in the 4 gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and you can cover that territory in 28 days if you read about 3 chapters a day.

II. **Today, let’s look at the baptism of Jesus and our baptism.** Let’s read this story and then show it from the movie “Son of God”. Read Matthew 3:13-17

Baptism is where Jesus began His ministry. It is where He publicly stepped out into a life of representing the Father and received the affirmation, breakthrough, and empowerment to fulfill His mission in life. I want to mention this right up front because I want to tell you today, the 4 benefits you have received or will receive when you follow Jesus’ command to be water baptized.

* A chance to get rid of guilt, condemnation, and old labels.
* An occasion to receive a heavenly identity-words... “You are my beloved Son”.
* A foundation for claiming spiritual breakthrough… it says the Heaven’s parted.
* An occasion to know the anointing and ceaseless overflow of the Holy Spirit in your life-The Spirit descended on Him like a dove.

Let’s start with the first observation of what Jesus baptism represents and provides for you in your baptism.

**Observations**

1. **Jesus’ baptism was Jesus taking a public stand for us.** We know Jesus did not need to be baptized. John was surprised that Jesus was being baptized because it was an act of repentance and cleansing. When the people around the Jordan saw Jesus, they would have assumed that Jesus was confessing his sins and wrongs, but what he was doing was identifying with us. He was announcing this is what I came to do. It was Jesus declaring that I have come to live the life they should’ve lived and die the death they should’ve died, so that when they come out of the water they can hear in their hearts the words of the Father, *“You are my beloved son/daughter in whom I am well pleased.”* Not because of our performance but because of what Jesus would do for us on the cross.

In I Pet. 3:21 NLT, Peter speaking of baptism as a picture of salvation says, *“And that water is a picture of baptism which now saves you, not by removing dirt from your body, but as a response to God from a clean conscience. It is effective because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”*

In other words, baptism is a way you make an appeal to God for a clean conscience. In baptism you recognize what Jesus did for you on the cross to take away your sins and make you right with God to give you the standing of Jesus Christ.

There are so many Christians who live with a sense of unworthiness upon their life. Condemnation is one of the weapons the enemy most uses to bind us, to keep us from boldness and confidence in our prayers. Baptism is a way we **claim** Jesus’ death on the cross, as our death on the cross where our sins are removed. As I go into the water, I am going with Jesus to his cross and grave; as I rise, I rise with his righteousness credited to my account. This is a truth many Christians don’t fully enter into.

Jack Hayford tells the story of what his brother’s 6-year old grandson told his brother, Jim. He was over at their house. Jim at the time was around 60 or so. The grandson sees Jim and his wife’s wedding picture and comes over to him holding the picture and asks, “Grandpa. What happened to you?” Jim says, “Well that was the day I married your grandma”. The boy then said, “Well Grandpa, did she also get married to you on that day?”

So many Christians know and believe that Jesus died to join himself to us as our Savior. Water baptism is where we **acknowledge** we were there, too and died, too.

In Romans 6:3-4 NIV says, *“Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”*

Water baptism is a **declaration**, that you are **claiming** all that Jesus did for you on the cross as your own. Not only forgiveness of sins, but even of the labels of the old person you were. We go into the waters of baptism as sinners but we come up as sons… “My beloved son”. Baptism is the **claiming** of this new identity.

I heard a pastor illustrate the incident of Jesus’ baptism in terms of what He was announcing he would do for us in His death. He said, “Imagine with me a long line of the sinners coming to the Jordan to confess their sins in baptism, imagine that you were in that long line. Imagine now that there was sort of an assistant or secretary that was there to sort of expedite things. She comes up with an idea to make labels to put on each one so that it would be easier for John to recognize their sin as they came to repent. So she goes up to each one and asks what their worst sin was. The first one says, ‘adultery’, so she writes on the label ADULTERER and puts it on him. The next one and the next one LIAR, HYPOCRITE, PORN ADDICT, DRUG ABUSER, VIOLENT, HATER, THIEF.

But then all of the sudden Jesus shows up. One by one He goes and takes those labels and puts them on Himself. He goes in the water covered from head to toe with labels, not a single one belonging to Him. He goes under and as He comes up, all of the labels have changed. One by one He goes and puts the new labels on… BELOVED, HOLY, RIGHTEOUSNESS, PURITY, FRIEND OF GOD, CHAMPION, HEALER… all of the labels that belong to Him.” There are many lies that many of us are still living under, that impinge upon the freedom, life, and dignity that we are to know and have in Christ.

B. **This exchange of positions allows two other things to happen.**

1. **The Heavens open**. The Greek word is powerful. It means to tear apart. It was another picture of Jesus’ death and what happened. The veil that separates God and man was torn from top to bottom. Baptism is a point where we are **confirmed** in our confidence that we can come boldly to the throne of grace… we have complete and total access to receive the breakthrough’s we need from God. Because of what Jesus did, we can **claim** an open Heaven over our life and we can ask anything in His name, presenting it with the very righteousness of Christ.

2. **We can confidently receive the empowering, anointing, and ceaseless flow of the Holy Spirit in our lives.**

It was this baptism not only of water, but a baptism of the Holy Spirit that empowered Jesus to fulfill his calling and ministry. It was shortly after this event that Jesus would go to his hometown of Nazareth and announce in Luke 4:18, *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners, and recovery of sight for the blind…”*

Many don’t realize that as they repent of their sins and are baptized, not only is there a full and complete righteousness imputed to their soul, not only is a new identity proclaimed, and the heavens opened for breakthrough access, but they are now full candidates for the same baptism and anointing of power that Jesus received and the apostles received on the day of Pentecost.

In Acts 2:38, On the day of Pentecost, when the people heard the apostles who had been baptized in the Holy Spirit speaking in tongues and Peter preached, the people were convicted and asked what they should do.

*Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off-for all who the Lord our God will call.” (Acts 2:38-39 NIV)*

God intends our baptism in water not only to deal with our past but to be a step towards receiving the mighty infilling of the Holy Spirit, so that we have the fire of God on our life to fulfill the mission He has. (Video-Michelle’s story)

**III. In conclusion. Here are two important points I want to make about Jesus’ baptism and your baptism.**

A. First of all, many of you have been water baptized as a believer but you didn’t have the life changing revelations that have been described. You may say, do I need to get baptized again? If you were baptized as a believer (though there is nothing wrong with getting baptized again, if it would be a way of strengthening your faith), you can know that the benefits of baptism, I have described, were put into your account whether you realized it or not. It’s like if you didn’t check your bank statement and someone secretly deposited a million dollars into your account. It would be present whether you knew about it or not or claimed access or not. That is the case with the benefits of baptism. A clean conscience, a new identity, clear access to God for breakthrough, and the unlimited possession of the Holy Spirit and His anointing for ministry on your life are yours to start writing checks on and claim. I urge you to claim all of these blessings for your life today as part of what the life of Jesus in you has made available to you.

I want to encourage you in the bold receiving of the Holy Spirit and his power like Michelle did. Ask, expect and receive this promise so that you can be his witness wherever you go.

B. If as a believer you haven’t taken the step to be water baptized. I want to urge you to do it, this Easter. Sign up today. I know that many have different objections to this.

1. **What if I was baptized as an infant?**

I want to say, nothing against this act for I know it was a very meaningful thing that parents did for you. Thank God for parents who have enough of a heart and concern for God and their children to take this step of having their children baptized as an act of their faith as parents. You were very blessed to have parents that would do that.

Nevertheless, scripture is clear that the believer’s baptism mentioned in the scripture is something that must be your individual choice to make and must come in sequential order after you have repented and believed. Notice this passage Acts 8:35-38 NIV.

2. **Why does it have to be a public act?** Why can’t I just go in private somewhere and go under water?

What we see is that Jesus’ baptism was a very public event. It was a decision to take a decision quietly made in the confines of his soul, and put it on display in a very public display of commitment to us. Jesus stood up for all of us who were sinners, baptism is His invitation for us to stand up for Him as our Savior.

There is something so essential to a **public declaration** of your faith that Jesus said in Mathew 10:32-33 NLT,

*“Everyone who acknowledges me before men. I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in Heaven. But everyone who denies me here on earth, I will also deny before my Father in heaven.”*

We see a picture of this, as the people hear the voice of God from Heaven. Jesus made a public commitment and received a public blessing.

3. **Our eternal salvation was defined by His public stand for us at his baptism and the cross.** Our experience of the power and blessing of all of that salvation is will be fully realized in the public stands we take for Jesus. This is the primary one Jesus asks for. We liken it to a wedding-a public advertisement of your lifelong commitment. One little boy told the pastor, my brother is going to advertised this week.

It is a stand that is like taking our light out from under our bed and putting it on the roof. It is a **bold declaration** of a transfer of power in which we are taking the crown we have worn for our life and publicly declaring that crown is on Jesus now. He is Lord. It is also not only like a public wedding, it is also like a public divorce; I am done, finished with my relationship for sin. I am taking a stand that sin won’t define me anymore. My new identity is not what I’ve done, what I feel, how I’m tempted; it is who Jesus is in me. I give Jesus full permission to live His life through me, by **recognizing** that I am dead, He gets my body, my mind, my heart, my emotions to be His instruments of love.

As I’ve reflected on this stand, it humbles me, especially to consider what this stand has meant for millions of Christians throughout history and in so many places where religions like Hinduism or Islam are predominant today. You may be a Christian in your heart and not pay much of a price, but water baptism is **crossing the line**. It was against the law for believers in the first century to be baptized. They knew when they were baptized there would be people in their own families who would say: “You’re not my son anymore, I’ve disinherited you, I will never speak to you again. You have shamed our family and are deserving of death”. There would be employers who would say, “You can never have a job again with our company”. There were law enforcement officials who would say that was your last day of freedom; in North Korea that may very well be the last day of your life.

Yet day after day, hour after hour since Jesus ascension to the present day, Christian after Christian has gone down to be baptized… to say, “Jesus you are worthy of my complete surrender, you are deserving ownership of my whole life even to the point of death. I go to the waters as a **symbol** of my spiritual grave where I leave my old life on the cross, where I die, and I **choose** now to begin to live the life of Jesus in me”.