

The Story Church - 1.8.23

A Physician and the Facts: Luke's Pursuit of the Truth

Volume 2: *His Name Is Jesus*

Part Three: *Why Was Jesus Baptized?*

SERIES INTRO: He was a doctor - a scientist trained to do meticulous research in pursuit of the truth. He was also an educated Gentile who became the only non-Jewish author of the Bible. And in the middle of the first century AD, this man devoted his life to answering one question: ***Can Christianity be trusted?***

His name was Luke, and after years of researching the extraordinary claims being made by a small, highly motivated sect called *The Way*, he became an unlikely disciple of Jesus. How could a reasonable researcher come to believe that a 1st Century Jewish rabbi who was executed by the Romans is the living Son of God? We'll explore this question and more at The Story Church throughout this 22-week series as we follow Luke's logic from the Christmas manger to Easter's empty tomb.

REFLECTION QUESTION: Are you baptized? If so, what does your baptism mean to you? If not, why have you chosen not to be baptized?

READ: Luke 3:2-3, 7-8, 21-23 "...the word of God came to John, son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went into all the country around the Jordan (River), preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins... John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance...' When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: 'You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.' Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry.

What role does repentance play within the Christian worldview? Why is it essential?

Do you agree with the claim that everyone, regardless of their religion or lack thereof, believes in sin? Why or why not?

How would you compare Christianity's "solution" to the problem of sin with the solutions offered by other religions and worldviews?

If sin is primarily about repentance, and if Jesus was sinless, then why was Jesus baptized?
(see: *Matthew 3:14-15*)

READ: 2 Corinthians 5:21 "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

How did the baptism and subsequent crucifixion of Jesus change everything in regard to our sin? What difference does it make?

How did each member of the Trinity show up at Jesus' baptism, and what might this teach us about the unique roles of the Father, Son, and Spirit in our lives today?

Why is belief in (or relationship with) just one or two Persons of the Trinity incomplete? In other words, how might we characterize "belief" in God and/or the Spirit without belief in the Son? Or what is someone missing when they acknowledge God the Father and the Son but deny or ignore the Spirit?

How would you describe your relationship with God the Father?

...with Jesus Christ, the Son?

...with the Holy Spirit?

Your _____ of the _____
precedes your _____ to the _____.

What do you make of the above fill-in-the-blank statement? What changes or adjustments can you make this week to open your heart to the Spirit of God?

This Week's Daily Reading Plan*

- 1/9 - Luke 4:31-37
- 1/10 - Luke 4:38-41
- 1/11 - Luke 4:42-44
- 1/12 - Luke 5:1-11
- 1/13 - Luke 5:12-16

* Find the full January Reading Plan at thestory.church/resources

