

Weekly Scripture and Sermon Study: History & Context Guide
Luke 3:21-22

History, Culture, & Context

“Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.’”

This section of Luke discusses the baptism of Jesus, which is also discussed in Matthew 3:13-17 and Mark 1:9-11. Jesus’ baptism is a confirmation that He is the Messiah and Savior the prophets spoke of.

Luke’s account of Jesus’ baptism begins by saying this occurred “when *all* the people were baptized...”. Emphasizing this shows that Christ wanted to identify with and relate to all He had come to serve and bring salvation to. In this act of baptism, Jesus is validating John’s work, validating His obedience to God (see also Matt 3:13-15) and providing an example for us to follow.

The Life Application Study Bible commentary says, “Luke emphasizes Jesus’ human nature. Jesus was born to humble parents, a birth unannounced except to shepherds and foreigners. This baptism recorded here was the first public declaration of Jesus’ ministry. Instead of going to Jerusalem and identifying with the established religious leaders, Jesus went to a river and identified with those who were repenting of sin. When Jesus, at age 12, had visited the Temple, He had understood his mission (2:49). Eighteen years later, at his baptism, he began carrying it out. And as Jesus prayed, God spoke and confirmed His decision to act. God was breaking into human history through Jesus the Christ.”



Questions to Consider

1. Why did Jesus get baptized by John? What was the significance of Him doing so?
2. What is the significance of heaven being opened up in v. 21?
3. Why does Jesus pray in v. 21?
4. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in Jesus’ baptism?
5. How do you rely upon the Holy Spirit to accomplish God’s call for your life?