



# His Word Is Truth!

This article is written by Pastor Tom Eckstein of Concordia Lutheran Church in Jamestown. "His Word is Truth" will appear in this paper every 3rd Monday.



This article is the third in a series of articles on Baptism and infant Baptism. **As in the previous two articles, I want to stress once again that I have good friends who are sincere Christians and yet have different views than I do about Baptism and infant Baptism.** Therefore, as brothers and sisters in Christ we should study the Holy Scriptures together in love and thereby allow God's Word to lead us into unity on those issues where we do not yet agree. (See **John 17:17-21; Acts 17:11; Ephesians 4:1-6, 14-16**)

In my first article in this

series I explained how Scripture teaches that baptism is the work of God – *an instrument He uses to give us Christ and His gifts of salvation.* (See **Matthew 28:19, John 3:5, Acts 2:38 and 22:16, Romans 6:3-4, Galatians 3:27, Ephesians 5:26, Colossians 2:11-12, Titus 3:5, 1st Peter 3:21**) In my second article I used Scripture to give answers to the following two objections to infant Baptism: **1) "Infants are not sinful, and so they don't need to be saved!" and 2) "But infants can't have faith in Jesus!"** We learned from Scripture that infants are sinners who need the salvation that comes through faith in Christ alone. We also learned from Scripture that it is possible for infants to have saving faith in Christ. If you missed reading one or both of these articles, you can find them on Concordia's website: **www.concordiajt.org**

In today's article I will use Scripture to answer another objection to infant Baptism: *"But Jesus was baptized as an adult!"* Many assume that

since Jesus was baptized as an adult this means that God forbids infant Baptism. But this thinking leads to problems if we take it to its logical conclusion. For example, Jesus was about 30 years old when He was baptized. Should we then deny baptism to all people under 30 years of age? Of course not! Also, Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River. Should we then insist that no Baptism is valid unless it takes place in the Jordan? Obviously, the answer is "No!" Finally, Jesus was a man. Does this mean that no women should be baptized? Certainly not! **The point I'm making is that the Baptism of Jesus should not be used to forbid infant Baptism because Jesus was baptized for reasons completely different than why we sinners must be baptized!**

For example, in Mark 1:4 we read: **"And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins."** Here we see that God used John's

Baptism to give forgiveness of sins to repentant sinners. *But Scripture clearly teaches that Jesus is the perfect and sinless Son of God!* (See **John 8:29 & 46, 2nd Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 4:15**) Jesus did not need to repent of any sin nor did He need the forgiveness God gives in Baptism. So then why was Jesus baptized? Here's the answer: Jesus was baptized FOR US!

Jesus was baptized to show us that He is the source of the forgiveness and new life we receive in Holy Baptism. In fact, John did not understand this at first. When Jesus asked John to baptize Him, John said: **"I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"** (See **Matthew 3:13-14**) John understood that Jesus is **"the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world."** (See **John 1:29**) Therefore, John could not comprehend why Jesus wanted to be baptized. Jesus then said to John: **"Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness."** (See **Matthew 3:15**) Jesus is here teaching us that His own

baptism was part of the Father's plan to reveal to us that Jesus, His Son, is at the center of His righteous desire to save sinners. (See **John 1:30-34**) In fact, when Jesus was baptized the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove and then the Father spoke from heaven and said: **"This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."** *Jesus was baptized to show us sinners that Baptism saves us (see 1st Peter 3:21!) because of His work for us!* In fact, Scripture teaches that God uses the waters of Baptism to "wash away" the guilt of our sin. (See **Acts 22:16, Ephesians 5:26, Titus 3:5**) However, when the perfect and sinless Son of God was baptized He took our sin from the waters and carried them to the cross where He suffered the damnation we deserve. God uses Baptism to give to us the benefits of Jesus' death and resurrection! **Therefore, the Baptism of Jesus actually supports the practice of infant Baptism because Scripture teaches that infants also need the**

**salvation that Jesus gives to sinners in the waters of Holy Baptism. God uses Baptism to give infants repentance and saving faith in Jesus so that they might receive the gifts of salvation delivered in Baptism!** (See **Matthew 28:19-20, John 3:5 and Acts 2:38-39**).



Please read the next "His Word is Truth" on Monday, December 15! In next month's article Pastor Eckstein will use Holy Scripture to give an answer to the following objection to infant Baptism: "The Bible never says we should baptize infants!"

For more resources about Christian teaching and issues, go to Concordia Lutheran's web page: [www.concordiajt.org](http://www.concordiajt.org)

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