

“Jesus Identifies with Us”

Matthew 3:13-17

You know the old saying:

“Don’t judge someone till you walked a mile in his shoes?”

- It advises practicing empathy by understanding another person's experiences, challenges, and motivations before making a judgment.
- In other words, understand where that person is coming from, what they are doing, what are the strains, pressures and difficulties of their life – so you can know them better. Identify with them.

Jesus, here in this passage is *identifying* with his creation (humans).

He comes to John, identifies (submits) with him and his ministry, and is baptized as He begins His public ministry.

Now think about this:

Expectations are high for the arrival of the Messiah. Up to this point he has not yet been identified. Now Jesus comes to claim that identity. But what an unlikely figure...

Here in Matthew 3:13-17 Let me show you...

3 ways Jesus identified with us:

I. Jesus came to John (v.13)

A. 1st time publicly –

- After 30 years of obscurity. “Cometh” – arrived, official arrival
- And with all that happens here... (identity with Trinity etc.)
- God is resuming direct communication with man after 400 years of silence.
- As I said, He comes somewhat silently in an out of the way place...
- Where with a king, you’d expect...

B. Why come to John?

- They knew about each other, but this was probably the first time they met.
- Jesus was in Galilee; John was in Judea.
- Jesus identifies and reinforces John’s ministry and message.
- His message (of repentance) is Christ’s message!
- That Christ is the One John has been talking about...
- He is going to complete what John had started!

II. Jesus was baptized (vs.13-15)

A. John’s refusal at first

- Jesus came specifically for baptism “to be baptized of him” – purpose
- Because baptism implied a person had repented...(makes Jesus look like...)
- So, the idea of John baptizing Him was unthinkable.

- John saw himself as needing repentance and forgiveness and showing that in baptism, but not the Lord!
- Because John was fully aware of Jesus deity, “he forbid Him”
- He kept trying, insisting imperfect active: continuous or repeated action in the past - this is a testimony of Jesus’ sinlessness. John says: “I’m a sinner, you’re not”

B. John consents

- Why did Jesus submit to baptism?
- We find the answer in verse 15: Jesus’ first words since age 12...
- You see Jesus was not denying that he was superior to John or that he was sinless... Jesus says “suffer it, permit it at this time” it is appropriate for this special time.
- Though it did not seem appropriate, it was for this special time.
- And Jesus explains why: “fulfill all righteousness” [God’s plan]

Think of it this way:

- Jesus could have been “up there” with John (v.7)
- Preaching, telling all to repent
- Instead, He is “down there” with the sinners
- Identifying with them and certainly [eventually] sacrificing for them on the cross!
- Does He understand you? Understand me?
- Our needs? “No One Understands Like Jesus”!
- There is another reason He submitted to baptism...
- To give an example to His followers. Illustration: Jesus modeled obedience.

III. Jesus was revealed (vs.16-17)

A. The heavens opened – this divine aorist passive, God himself opening heaven to reveal something momentous...

B. The Spirit of God revealed

C. God the Father’s confirming word:

Conclusion:

- And yet, Jesus does care and is concerned for you.
- He cared so much He was willing to go to that cross for you!
- Do you know Him as your Savior?
- Christian, are you resting in His promises?
- Jesus has been revealed to you, he has identified with you. Are you pleasing Him?
- Let’s remember together all that Jesus did for us as we celebrate the Lord’s Supper!