

Eternal Life Through Believing in Jesus

**9) He Who Believes In The Son
Has Everlasting Life**

'After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He remained with them and baptized. Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized. For John had not yet been thrown into prison'

(John 3:22-24)

It was not Jesus who baptized but His disciples on His behalf:

'Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples)'

(John 4:1-2)

Jesus' baptism included John's call to repentance, but went further, calling for faith in the gospel

'Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel"'
(Mark 1:14-15)

We see its meaning in His own baptism which took place before He baptized anyone. He said that His baptism was to fulfill all righteousness

'Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?" But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him'
(Matt.3:13-15)

**When we believe in Christ we are baptized into Him and joined to Him
His righteousness is imputed to us and God is well pleased with us**

The change in lifestyle which John called for is made possible for us because when we are baptized into Christ we are baptized in the Spirit

'I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire'

(Matt.3:11-12)

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**John's baptism was right for that period of preparation for Jesus. But now our focus is on Jesus. Even into the church age John's disciples could be found. E.g. Apollos, who was better instructed by Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:24-26)
See also Acts 19:1-7**

- **New Covenant baptism is distinct and was officially instituted after the resurrection of Jesus**

'Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'

(Matt.28:19)

'Then there arose a dispute between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purification. And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified—behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him!"'

(John 3:25-26)

John dealt with two issues:

1) the Jewish leaders who challenged what he was doing (these are the same as in 1:19),
'Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"'

2) His disciples, who were envious of Jesus' success, wanted to know why John's ministry was now being eclipsed by that of Jesus. 'You bore witness to Him, now He's got more followers than you'. They were jealous for John because Jesus' ministry was growing and John's declining

In response John was neither intimidated by the Jews – He kept on baptizing - nor discouraged or envious by the success of Jesus, even though it was at his own expense

'John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven. You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent before Him.' He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease'

(John 3:27-30)

John's response to Jesus' success and his decline is threefold:

1) He says no one can have any ministry unless God gives it to them. Remember, John himself was a man sent by God (1:6). *'For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?'* (1 Cor.4:7)

- **If it is given, it is ministry; if it's taken, it is stealth**
- **Once given it is not taken back**
- **If it is from God, don't be jealous and don't oppose it, for nothing can overthrow it**
- **If it is not from God it will come to nothing**

2) He was not disappointed because he always said he was not the Christ

***Having said that, he did have a role. His role was like that of the best man to a bridegroom**

***John didn't just accept this, he found joy in it**

***The more I am truly occupied with Christ, the less shall I be occupied with myself**

***Humility is not the product of direct cultivation, it is a by-product. The more I try to be humble, the less will I attain it. But the more I am truly occupied with Him, constantly lifting Him up and beholding His glory in the mirror of God's Word, the more I will become like Him**

3) Jesus is from above, John from the earth. Jesus was and is God, from heaven. 'He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all. And what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true. For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure' (John 3:31-34)

Every Christian has a measure of truth and knowledge; Jesus has the fulness. The prophets had fragments; Jesus is the truth (Heb.1:1-2)

He was not just a messenger, but the message of God to us

**Jesus dwelt in the bosom of the Father Everything
He said was from the Father
The Father Himself confirmed this in Matt.17:5**

**There was never a time when one needed to
decide whether He said was from the Father or not**

**Many did not receive Jesus, but those who do set
their seal to God's testimony of Jesus**

***'He who believes in the Son of God has the witness
in himself; he who does not believe God has made
Him a liar, because he has not believed the
testimony that God has given of His Son'
(1 John 5:10)***

'The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him'

(Jn.3:35-36)

Only to One absolutely equal with Himself could the Father give all things

**To believe in the Son results in eternal life
In contrast, the wrath of God remains on those who reject the Son**

The gospel is a call to believe in Christ and receive everlasting life