

## The Baptism of the Lord

*But Jesus answered him, 'Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.'* Matthew 3.15

John's baptism for repentance and forgiveness of sins (3.2, 6) was in line with Jewish water rites. So, when Jesus showed up to be baptized, John hesitated for two reasons: recognizing Jesus' superiority, he believed Jesus should be baptizing him, along with the fact that Jesus was without \_\_\_\_\_ and did not need to repent.

Being without sin, \_\_\_\_\_ righteousness did Jesus have to fulfill?

Although righteousness speaks of moral integrity, it is more, it is a life of faith in God; it's \_\_\_\_\_.

Not only has Jesus identified with us in our sin, we also are to identify with Him in His \_\_\_\_\_ on the Cross! **Through the Cross** our relationship with God is restored and all righteousness is fulfilled.

The underlying question of baptism is a question about \_\_\_\_\_. Who am I? Who are you?

There are three areas of life where culture has impacted and influenced all of us: wealth, sex and power! We are to be witnesses **to** and **for** Christ in our respective cultures particularly in regard to wealth, sex and power because these three topics are \_\_\_\_\_ issues of life and universal to all cultures.

How we respond to these three challenges depends on how we answer the question, **who am I?** This is the question our \_\_\_\_\_ answers for us.

In His baptism Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ with us and died **for** our sin, and in our baptism we identify with Christ on the Cross and die **to** our sin. **Only Jesus** could die for our sin, but **only we** can die to our sin! This is how we participate in our salvation and this is how we deal with the abuse of power, lust and greed in our lives.

Life in Christ is not about rules and regulations governing money, sex and power; it is about \_\_\_\_\_ to sin and rising to new life in Christ. We are to live into our baptism by reckoning ourselves dead to sin.

As we come to Christ's Table this morning, let us \_\_\_\_\_ our baptismal vow, **reckon** ourselves dead to sin in whatever ways it is working itself out in our lives, and **open** our hearts to the renewing power of God's Word and Spirit so that we may be alive to God in Christ and dead to the things of this world, *for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.*

