

The Inscrutable Question: Evidence Testing of Christ: Background: Baptism: Commissioning & Investiture into the Office of Messiah, Mark 1:9-11

11. Original appointment to the Aaronic priesthood required that candidates be between the ages of 30 and 50. Thus it became customary in Israel that a priest did not enter into service until he had attained age 30.
12. However, Jesus was not in the tribe of Levi but the tribe of Judah and thus unqualified to function as a priest under the Mosaic Law.
13. Further, He is prophesied by David in Psalm 110:4 and confirmed by the writer of Hebrews in Hebrews 5:6-10 to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek, a commission that would not become operative until after His resurrection. (Hebrews 7:23-28)
14. The baptism of our Lord therefore was not a commissioning into a priesthood but rather into the higher office of Messiah in which He would execute the Father's plan of salvation.
15. Therefore, our Lord spent 30 years developing spiritual skills before He began executing production skills. His official Messianic commission was recognized by ritual baptism in the Jordan River by John the Baptist.
16. A commission is defined by:

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, s.v. "commission":

An authorization or command to act in a prescribed manner or to perform prescribed acts; the authority to act for, in behalf of, or in place of another; a task entrusted to one as the agent of another.

17. The baptism of Jesus was not only His entrance into public ministry but was also prophetic of its Messianic mission. It portrayed His death, burial, and resurrection.
18. Jesus Christ entered into a contract with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit in eternity past. This occurred at a Divine Summit Conference designed to resolve the fall of man by offering a way of salvation compatible with the essence of God.
19. God the Father submitted a plan that required one Member of the Trinity to offer Himself as a substitutionary Sacrifice.
20. This Person would qualify as a Mediator by His willingness to take upon His undiminished deity the nature of true humanity.
21. In hypostatic union, this Person would utilize the prototype spiritual life to remain impeccable all the way to the moment of sacrifice.
22. After qualifying by means of impeccability to be the substitutionary Sacrifice, this Person would voluntarily agree to accept the judicial transfer of all the sins of all people to His true humanity.
23. Further, this Person would then voluntarily agree to allow divine justice to judge these sins in Him. This would result in spiritual death, which is loss of fellowship with the Father.

24. This would be the literal execution of what would be portrayed by the animals of the Levitical sacrifices. The Messiah would be the antitype of the animal types, a fact addressed by John the Baptist in:

John 1:29 - *The next day John saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."*

25. Once the Messianic mission was completed, then the true humanity of the Substitute would experience physical death but to be restored to life by means of resurrection after three days and three nights in the tomb.

26. The successful completion of this commission would be indicated by the propitiation of the Father and would be confirmed by the resurrection.

27. At this Divine Summit Conference, the Father submitted the plan, Jesus Christ volunteered to execute it, and the Holy Spirit agreed to sustain the true humanity of the Lord during the Incarnation.

28. The commissioning of Jesus into this plan was demonstrated by the baptism performed by John in:

Mark 1:9 - *And it came about in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and He was baptized by John in the Jordan.*

29. Immersion was a picture of Jesus' submission to the Father's plan for the Incarnation which would culminate with Him being identified with the sins of the world.

30. Emersion was a picture of His resurrection and completion of the Father's plan of salvation.

31. In Jewish ritual, baptism was a ceremonial purification. John's baptism was an advance on this idea. It stressed repentance on the part of the one coming for baptism.

32. Repentance means a change of mind. The change was one away from eschatological expectation of Messiah to the current reality that Messiah had come.

33. For those who submitted to John's baptism, immersion illustrated their willingness to follow Messiah into His kingdom. This would be proclaimed by the phrase "the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" and was the invitation to enter into Plan A.

34. Immersion was a recognition that Messiah would die for their sins and they would in turn be saved by faith alone in Him.

35. Emersion illustrated the resurrection of the Messiah from the dead and that they would also be resurrected by faith alone in Him.

36. Thus commissioned under the title of Messiah, our Lord was also invested with the power of the office in:

Mark 1:10 - *And immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him;*

v. 11 - *and a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."*

37. This amounts to an investiture, defined by:

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, s.v. "investiture":

To furnish with power and authority; to grant someone control or authority over; the act of establishing in office.

38. The descension of the Holy Spirit upon our Lord is the investiture of divine power to Him for the execution of the plan of God for the Incarnation.
39. This is not the initial indwelling of Christ by the Holy Spirit. The Lord was indwelt and filled by the Holy Spirit beginning at the Virgin Birth. Here the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit for the Lord's public ministry is in view.
40. This power will enable Him to perform miracles, heal the sick, and fulfill certain prophecies that attest to His Messiahship.
41. Further the proclamation, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased," is the Father's public recognition that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah.
42. The revelation by the Father that Jesus is His Son leads to the use of the term "Son of God" to identify Jesus as the Jewish Messiah. There are several others Messianic titles assigned to Jesus, "Lord," "Son of Man," and "Son of David."