

Series: Luke

Title: One Mightier Than I

Text: Luk 3v15-20

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Place: SGBC, NJ

**Luke 3: 15: And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;**

The people were in expectation. They expected Christ to come. But most thought he would deliver them from Roman rule. So when John came preaching, the people mused in their hearts, whether he was Christ or not. But John the Baptist made sure they understood, he was not the Christ.

**Luke 3: 16 John answered, saying unto *them* all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: 17 Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.**

**Subject:** One Mightier Than I

**Proposition:** When the Spirit of God gives a sinner a new heart then we are made willing to decrease in our esteem of ourselves and Christ is exalted in our hearts--we are made willing to give Christ all the glory.

## **THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD JESUS**

**Luke 3: 16 John answered, saying unto *them* all, I indeed baptize you with water;... he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:**

John declares that there was a difference in John's baptism and the baptism performed by the Lord Jesus. The way that John baptized believers pictured what the Savior's baptism actually accomplished. Water-baptism pictures what Christ accomplished by his baptism. We will see in moment that this baptism our Lord Jesus performs is more than water-baptism. It speaks of what Christ accomplished on the cross and in the hearts of his people.

John declared, "*One mightier than I cometh.*" The Lord Jesus is the Power of God; we are not. The Lord Jesus is God in the flesh; we are not. The Lord Jesus is the One Mediator between God and men, the only one to reconcile his people unto God and we are not. The Lord Jesus accomplished the salvation of his people; we cannot accomplish salvation or even contribute to it. We cannot contribute to our own salvation nor to anyone other sinners. It is by the baptism of our Lord Jesus that God gives a sinner this new heart to own our Savior as mightier than I. In the new birth a sinner is given a new heart to own Christ as the Power and Wisdom of God who saves his people, apart from our works.

John said, "*The latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose.*" We are proud by nature. God hates pride. All sin, all self-righteousness and all contention between men and toward God is due to pride.

Proverbs 13:10: Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised *is* wisdom.

The new contrite heart that Christ alone is able to create within a sinner humbles us. When the Lord Jesus makes us to be born of the Spirit, the new spirit is contrite. The Lord Jesus makes us willing in the day of his power to bow to his feet and confess we are not worthy to unloose the latchet on his shoes.

What is water-baptism? What is believer's baptism? It is a public confession by the believer. What are we confessing when a believer is baptized in water? The act itself is a confession that we are the sinner.

Matthew 3: 6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

It does not mean that they stood up before men and gave out a long list of their sins and then were baptized. Baptism itself, the act itself, is a new believer confessing publicly, "I am the sinner."

The Lord instructs us through James that we are to "confess our faults one to another" (James 5: 16). We confess to one another that we are sinners. If we have trespassed against a brother we acknowledge it to him and ask mercy and forgiveness. But it does not mean we confess all the details of our sin to one another. We have one High Priest. Christ Jesus is the only High Priest to whom we confess our sins. There are no priests on this earth to whom we are to confess our sins. We confess the details of our sins to Christ our High Priest. In prayer, we go directly to God through our Lord Jesus and confess like David did,

Psalm 51: 4: Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.

So the public act of baptism is a believer confessing before all he is the sinner. In water-baptism the believer is confessing that his nature is sin and all his deeds are sinful. It is a believer publicly justifying God's judgment against us. We are publicly declaring, "I agree with God's counsel against myself."

Luke 7: 29: And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. 30: But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

In the public act of water-baptism, we publicly justify God and his counsel against us. We confess by baptism that we are the sinner who is ruined, unable, and incapable of contributing to our salvation. That is God's counsel against all the elect who God saves and God brings his child to confess it publicly by being baptized in water.

Water-baptism pictures what Christ accomplished by his baptism. He said, "*I have a baptism to be baptized with and how am I straightened till it be accomplished*" (Luke 12: 50). He was not speaking of his water-baptism but of the cross.

As the Substitute for God's elect, the sinless, holy and just Lord Jesus, was made sin for his people. The Lord laid on him the iniquity of all his people (2 Cor 5:21; Is 53: 6). Christ was made worthy of the fire of God's justice. On the cross, the Lord Jesus was manifesting God's righteousness. So before God would make our Savior a curse and pour out justice on our Substitute, God made the spotless Lamb of God sin for us.

Then God justly baptized, immersed, the Lord Jesus in judgement. John declared he shall baptize you in fire. In Christ, all God's elect were baptized in the fire of God's wrath. God's just

judgment was poured out on the elect in Christ on the cross. Christ bore the fire of God's wrath when he was made a curse for God's elect. We were in Christ so that we were baptized in that fire of God's just judgment when Christ was made a curse for us.

If any questions whether the Lord was made sin and made a curse, the proof is that our Lord really died. He "died unto sin once" (Rom 6: 10). In Christ, all God's elect died under the fire of God's wrath. Then our Savior's lifeless body was immersed in a tomb when his body was buried. Our body of sin was buried in Christ.

That is why water-baptism is immersion. We are submerged under water. It pictures our immersion in the fire of God's judgment, the death and burial of our body of sin in Christ. The Lord Jesus accomplished our death under the justice of God on the cross.

What are we confessing when we come up out of the watery grave? We confess we believe our Savior arose from the grave and all his people arose in him justified! When we arise out of the watery-grave of baptism we are confessing that we are alive unto God in Christ Jesus our risen Redeemer. We are confessing we are committed to Christ, walking in newness of life, walking by faith, not sight, constrained by his love in the new heart. We have committed all to Christ.

Romans 6: 3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of his resurrection: 6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7 For he that is dead is freed from sin. 8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13 Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

## **BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY GHOST AND FIRE**

**Luke 3: 16: John answered, saying unto *them* all, I indeed baptize you with water;... he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: 17: Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.**

On the day of Pentecost, as promised by the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles and disciples and appeared as fire.

Acts 2: 3: And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4: And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

There were present men who spoke many different languages. The apostles were given ability to preach Christ to them in their own language. They "heard them speak in his own language"; "we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God" (Acts 2: 6, 11).

Then later, the Lord called Peter to preach to Gentiles. Peter said,

Acts 11: 15: And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. 16: Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. 17: Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as *he did* unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ;...

John the Baptist declared of Christ, "*Whose fan is in his hand.*" The fan in the hand of our Savior is the preaching of the gospel. By which the Lord Jesus "*will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.*"

The threshing floor is where they brought the wheat. The threshing floor could bounce like a trampoline. As the stalk bounced up, they waved a fan. The threshing separated the wheat and the chaff. The fan blew away the chaff because chaff was lighter. So all that remained was the kernel of wheat. THAT IS WHAT CHRIST ACCOMPLISHES THROUGH THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL. By the Holy Spirit he gives a new heart, Christ separates our personal chaff, from the wheat of the new man that he creates. He burns up our own personal chaff--granting us repentance from dead works--and he gathers us, the wheat, into his garner--into Christ himself, into his church above.

In the new birth, we are made to be in the Spirit, in the Holy Spirit, and the Lord Jesus purges us--"*he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.*"

On the cross, the Lord Jesus purged all this sins of his people by his precious blood.

Hebrews 1:3 Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Through the preaching of the gospel, the fan in Christ's hand, he purges the conscious in us by the Spirit, making us know that his blood put away our sins--his blood made us righteous--not our works.

Psalms 51:7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Isaiah 1:25 And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin:

Christ burns our own personal chaff. By his might, by his gospel, by the fan in his hand, by the Holy Ghost. He grants us repentance from dead works by making us know he alone purged all our sins away. He makes us see that on the cross, he burned up our chaff. So he grants us repentance from dead works and faith in him alone.

Hebrews 9: 14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Hebrews 10: 1: For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins...

By the Holy Spirit, Christ sanctifies us creating a new holy man within and makes us know, he alone made us holy.

Hebrews 10:10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.

He makes us know he made us righteous.

Hebrews 10: 14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified...

The Spirit makes us know God remembers our sins no more.

Hebrews 10: 15 *Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us:... 17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18 Now where remission of these *is, there is* no more offering for sin.

We are made to know we have welcome access to come into the presence of holy God by the righteousness and holiness of Christ. That is when a sinner is baptized in water. Confessing we are the sinner! Christ is our Salvation! We are his, committed to him. Trusting him alone!

## **THE LAST DAY OF JUDGMENT**

In the last day, the Lord will gather his wheat [those he gave faith] into his garner--into glory with him--but the chaff (those that reject Christ for their own works), he will burn with fire unquenchable.

We see in John the spirit of one in whom Christ has worked this work. He believed on Christ, he had no confidence in his flesh, he gave Christ all the glory and said he was not worthy to unbuckle his shoe. We confess our sin and we confess Christ in water baptism showing forth what Christ accomplished for us.

But here is the response of chaff.

**Luke 3: 18 And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people. 19 But Herod the tetrarch, being reprov'd by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, 20 Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.**

Which are you? If Christ has given you a new heart and faith and repentance, his child will confess Christ publicly in believer's baptism. But the chaff will reject Christ and the gospel because it reproves them for all their evils. For the self-righteous those evils, include not only their evil sins but the evil of all their best religious works. Which are you?

**Amen!**