

John 1:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

Analysis

John reveals a mysterious presence: 'there standeth one among you, whom ye know not.' This is the first hint of Christ's presence in the narrative. The religious leaders question John's authority to baptize if he's neither Messiah nor prophet, yet the true answer stands unrecognized among them. The irony is profound—the one who authorizes all authority stands unnoticed. John's water baptism contrasts with what Christ will bring—Spirit baptism that accomplishes what water only symbolizes.

Historical Context

John's baptism was for repentance, preparing for the Coming One. Proselyte baptism was practiced for Gentile converts; John's innovation was applying it to Jews, implying they too needed cleansing. The leaders' question about authority missed the point—the ultimate authority stood in their midst, unrecognized because of their spiritual blindness.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How might Christ be 'standing among us' today in ways we fail to recognize?
2. What blinded the religious leaders from recognizing Christ, and how can we avoid similar blindness?

Interlinear Text

ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰωάννης λέγων, Ἐγὼ βαπτίζω ἐν
answered them G3588 John saying I baptize with
G611 G846 G2491 G3004 G1473 G907 G1722

ὑδατι· μέσος δὲ ὑμῶν ἔστηκεν ὃν ὑμεῖς οὐκ
water among but you there standeth one whom ye not
G5204 G3319 G1161 G5216 G2476 G3739 G5210 G3756

οἴδατε
know
G1492

Additional Cross-References

Acts 1:5 (Baptism): For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

Mark 1:8 (Baptism): I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

Matthew 3:11 (Baptism): I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

Luke 3:16 (Baptism): 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:

John 8:19 (Parallel theme): Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

Acts 11:16 (Baptism): 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.

1 John 3:1 (Parallel theme): Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

John 17:25 (Parallel theme): O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

John 17:3 (Parallel theme): And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

John 16:3 (Parallel theme): And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.