

Matthew 3:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

Analysis

John's protest reveals his understanding of Christ's superiority and sinlessness. His statement 'I have need to be baptized of thee' shows recognition that Jesus, unlike all others, did not need repentance baptism. This creates a theological problem: why would the sinless one undergo a baptism signifying repentance? The answer lies in Christ's representative role—He identifies with sinners He came to save.

Historical Context

John had likely known Jesus from infancy (they were relatives through Mary and Elizabeth). However, John may have received special revelation of Jesus' identity, as indicated in John 1:33-34 where God revealed that the Spirit descending would identify the Messiah.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What does Christ's willingness to be baptized teach about His identification with sinners in His work of redemption?

2. How does John's humility in recognizing Jesus' superiority model the proper response to Christ's lordship?

Interlinear Text

ὁ	δὲ	Ἰωάννης	διεκώλυεν	αὐτὸν	λέγων,	Ἐγὼ	χρείαν	
G3588	But	John	forbad	G846	him saying	I	need	
	G1161	G2491	G1254		G3004	G1473	G5532	
ἔχω	ὑπὸ	σοῦ	βαπτισθῆναι	καὶ	σὺ	ἔρχῃ	πρός	με
have	of	thee	to be baptized	and	thou	comest	to	me
G2192	G5259	G4675	G907	G2532	G4771	G2064	G4314	G3165

Additional Cross-References

Romans 3:23 (Parallel theme): For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Romans 3:25 (Parallel theme): Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

John 1:16 (Parallel theme): And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

Luke 1:43 (Parallel theme): And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

Galatians 4:6 (Parallel theme): And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

Galatians 3:22 (Parallel theme): But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.