

Matthew 3:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

Analysis

Jesus' explanation that baptism 'fulfills all righteousness' indicates He came not to abolish the law but to fulfill it perfectly (Matthew 5:17). His baptism inaugurates His public ministry and identifies Him with the sinners He came to save, though He Himself had no sin. This demonstrates the active obedience of Christ—His perfect law-keeping on behalf of His people. 'It becometh us' includes both Jesus and John in God's redemptive purposes.

Historical Context

Christ's baptism occurred around AD 27-29 at the beginning of His public ministry, approximately age 30 (Luke 3:23). This fulfilled the requirement for Levitical priests to begin ministry at 30 (Numbers 4:3), connecting Jesus' baptism to His priestly office.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's baptism demonstrate His active obedience in fulfilling all righteousness on behalf of His people?
2. What does Jesus' identification with sinners at baptism foreshadow about His substitutionary death on the cross?

Interlinear Text

Ἀποκριθεὶς	δὲ	ὁ	Ἰησοῦς	εἶπεν	πρὸς	αὐτόν	ἀφίησιν
answering	And	G3588	Jesus	said	unto	him	Suffer
G611	G1161		G2424	G2036	G4314	G846	G863
ἄρτι	οὕτως	γὰρ	πρέπον	ἐστὶν	ἡμῖν	πληρῶσαι	
it to be so now	thus	for	it becometh	G2076	us	to fulfil	
G737	G3779	G1063	G4241		G2254	G4137	
πᾶσαν	δικαιοσύνην	Τότε	ἀφίησιν	αὐτόν			
all	righteousness	Then	Suffer	him			
G3956	G1343	G5119	G863	G846			

Additional Cross-References

John 4:34 (References Jesus): Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

Isaiah 42:21 (Righteousness): The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable.

John 13:15 (Parallel theme): For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

John 15:10 (Parallel theme): If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

1 John 2:6 (Parallel theme): He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

Luke 1:6 (Righteousness): And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

John 8:29 (Parallel theme): And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

Hebrews 7:26 (Parallel theme): For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

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