

## STUDY GUIDE

**NEW VISION**  
THE MIDDLE  
BELIEVER'S  
BAPTISM  
MATTHEW  
3:13-17  
08/06/2017



# NEW VISION

## MAIN POINT

God's love for us compels us to turn to Jesus and trust in Him. Baptism is the act that symbolizes we have done so.

## INTRODUCE

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**What is the biggest change you've experienced in life?**

**Was it a good change or a bad change? What made it so difficult or wonderful?**

**When you became a Christ follower, what changed?**

Our lives change significantly when we come to know Christ, though sometimes we don't see or recognize the full extent of that change in ourselves until months or years later. Baptism is an important picture of just how much our lives are changed—we died to sin and have been made alive in Christ. It's a big step, but it's also a simple step.

## READ AND REBUILD THE STORY

**HAVE A VOLUNTEER TELL THE STORY (MATTHEW 3:13-17) DO AS BEST YOU CAN, DO NOT STOP AND TEACH, TRY NOT TO MAKE POINTS (COMMENTARY), JUST TELL THE STORY.**

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**REBUILD THE STORY AS A GROUP: CHRONOLOGICALLY REBUILD THE STORY FROM MEMORY. ASK QUESTIONS IF NECESSARY. LIKE – "WHAT HAPPENED FIRST?", "WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?", "DID WE LEAVE OUT ANYTHING?" FINALLY, HAVE PARTICIPANTS LOOK AT THEIR BIBLES AND SEE IF ANYTHING WAS ADDED OR LEFT OUT OF THE STORY AS THEY GO THROUGH IT ONE MORE TIME.**

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## Ask Questions

General questions to ask after each story. These questions may lead to follow up questions that you ask as you dig deeper into the groups/individuals response to the initial questions.

What do we learn about Jesus/God in this story?

What do we learn about man in the story?

What did you learn new in the story?

What questions does this raise for you?  
What should I do differently because of this story?

## APPLY

How does God confirm to you that he is pleased with you?

God is pleased when we obey - how are you currently pleasing God?

What does Jesus baptism say about your baptism?

How has this story changed your view of the meaning of baptism?

What do you recall about your decision to be baptized?

If Jesus baptism initiated the start of his public ministry what does that say to us about the starting a new life in Christ?

If Jesus baptism is the start of his public ministry, and was followed by temptation, what does that say about our new life in Christ?

Remind your group members that Battlefield's baptism celebration is Sunday night, August 13th at 6pm.

## PRAY

Thank God for Jesus' example in being baptized and beginning His public ministry. Pray that we would understand Jesus' role as a bridge between us and God, and that we would faithfully follow Him. Pray for those who need to take the next step of obeying God through baptism.

## COMMENTARY

### MATTHEW 3:13-17

3:13-15. The placement of Jesus' name and the connecting word "then" immediately following John's description of the Messiah's ministry of judgment (and salvation) identifies Jesus as that very same Messiah, judge, and Savior. It also indicates that the messianic era characterized by judgment and salvation is now beginning, even as we watch Jesus walk up to John in the River Jordan.

To this point, Jesus has spent His nearly three decades of earthly life in quiet obscurity. Galilee was the backwater of Israel, so Matthew's choice of wording here implies a "coming out," and a readiness to begin public ministry.

The need for Jesus to be baptized, and thereby to serve as our representative and model, was not optional for Him. It was important to the fulfillment of His mission on earth, in identifying with the "righteous remnant" of Israel. He said it was a necessary step in order to fulfill all righteousness (3:15). So Jesus' baptism was unique. It was not a "baptism of repentance" (as John's was) nor was it a "Christian baptism" (as ours is today). But it was an identifying step of obedience at the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. Jesus would not have been fully obedient if He had bypassed this step that seemed to John to be unnecessary for the Holy One (3:14).

3:16-17. When Jesus came up out of the water from being baptized by John, He received an immediate confirmation from His family. He saw the Spirit of God, and he heard His Father's approval. This scene is something like a family reunion—all three members of the Trinity manifesting their presence in such a way that bystanders could see or hear them. This was a testimony to human witnesses about the identity of Jesus, the Messiah. It serves as one of hundreds of exhibits in Matthew's Gospel for Jesus as the Messiah.

It was also a personal affirmation from the first and third members of the Trinity to the Son. This fact reminds us of the emotional-relational side of the Godhead, a side we often forget. Even God the Son enjoyed personal affirmation from His family. And certainly the people needed to hear from the Father (John 11:42).

Twice in Matthew the Father speaks from heaven. In both cases He speaks in third person, addressing listeners other than Jesus (compare the second-person “you are” in Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22: and the third-person “this is” in Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35). The second instance is in Matthew 17, on the Mount of Transfiguration. The wording in this warm, fatherly statement is reminiscent of the threefold emphasis on Isaac’s uniqueness and value to Abraham in Genesis 22:2. There has never been, nor will there ever be, a prouder father in all the universe than God the Father.

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