A CRITICAL INVESTIGATION OF JOHN 1:33

"AND I KNEW HIM NOT: BUT HE THAT SENT ME TO BAPTIZE WITH WATER, THE SAME SAID UNTO ME, UPON WHOM THOU SHALT SEE THE SPIRIT DESCENDING, AND REMAINING ON HIM, THE SAME IS HE WHICH BAPTIZETH WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT."

By Dallas D. Clausen

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[Signatures]
PREFACE

It is the writer's desire that this effort will be beneficial to a clearer understanding of our Lord's relationship to not only other men, but also to God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. This study was prompted by an interest in the two natures of Christ which was kindled under the instruction of Dr. John C. Whitcomb, Jr. It will demonstrate to the reader that the words of my advisor, Professor Ivan French, were certainly true when he said, "The two natures of Christ provide a study of the most profound sort, and no final answers will be found to some questions this side of glory." With this in mind it is my desire to dedicate this work to all those who love His appearing.

I also wish to express my thanks and appreciation to the faculty and staff at Grace Theological Seminary for their part in making the past three years for me a time of rich spiritual blessing and growth in His Word.

I am also appreciative of the patience, encouragement, and invaluable assistance my wife Marilyn gave me in the final preparation of this paper.
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GREEK TEXT

καύχες αυτοί τί καθενόν αύτον, αλλ' ομαλοί πάντως καθεκτομένοι αυτον ἐθέλη ξενιλέσθαι με καθενὸν. Ἡπ
ὅτι εὖ ῥήμα τὸ προσφέρειν ζωοφανῆς χερσίν οὖν τέκτων καὶ μένον ἢ τί οὖν καθεκτομένοι αὐτῶν συνενθα
eπεν διαλέγειν καὶ ἀνερχόμενοι ἐν μυστήριοι ἰδίῳ.
Κάθωσον ὡς εἶδεν αὐτῶν αλλ' ὁ ἡμείς με βαπτίζειν ἐν ὑδάτι ἐκείνος μοι ἐἵπτεν, Ὁφ' ὁν ἄν ἰδης τὸ πνεῦμα καταβαίνον καὶ μένον ἐπὶ αὐτῶν, οὕτως ἐστεν ὦ βαπτίζων ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ.
ENGLISH VERSIONS

King James Version. 1611

And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

American Standard Version. 1901

And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, he said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining upon him, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit.

Revised Standard Version. 1946

I knew him not: but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizeth with the Holy Spirit.

New American Standard Bible. 1960

And I did not recognize him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizeth with the Holy Spirit.

The New English Bible. 1961

I did not know him; but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "When you see the Spirit come down upon someone and resting upon him you will know that this is he who is to baptize with the Holy Spirit.

Good News for Modern Man. 1966


I did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "You will see the Spirit come down and stay on a man, he is the one who baptizeth with the Holy Spirit."
ENGLISH VERSIONS

King James Version, 1611
And I knew him not; but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

American Standard Version, 1901
And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize in water, he said unto me, Upon whosoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon him, the same is he that baptizeth in the Holy Spirit.

Revised Standard Version, 1946
I myself did not know him; but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit."

New American Standard Bible, 1960
And I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, "He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit."

The New English Bible, 1961
I did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize in water had told me, "When you see the Spirit coming down upon someone and resting upon him you will know that this is he who is to baptize in Holy Spirit."

Good News for Modern Man, 1966
The New Testament in Today's English
I still did not know him, but God, who sent me to baptize with water, said to me, "You will see the Spirit come down and stay on a man; he is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit."
And I did not know Him nor recognize Him; but He Who sent me to baptize in (with) water said to me, Upon Whom you shall see the Spirit descend and remain, that One is He Who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.
ESSENTIAL BACKGROUND

Jesus had come to make the last of the promises of God, the last of the words of God, come to pass. The Holy Spirit was the first to break the silence, as He was in the manger. But during those four hundred silent years, there was a great spiritual and emotional void in the nation of Israel that caused the people to long for and wait for the coming of the promised Messiah. God, in His eternal wisdom, was preparing the world for the coming of His Son. When Jesus came on the scene, He did not go to “put the finishing touches on” the fulfillment of God’s purpose. John preached the immediate need for repentance and the coming of the Messiah. In other words, he put the finishing touches on God’s purpose. The baptism of John was a symbol of repentance, the sign of a new beginning, and a beginning that was not to be associated with any particular family. As the forerunner of Jesus, it was his responsibility to point the way to the coming of the Messiah. Repentance was necessary for the Messiah to come. The one whom John announced would baptize in the name of the Lord (Matthew 3:11).

However, it was not until Jesus, the Messiah, appeared out of the shadows that His first miracle was performed by John. The forerunner of Jesus had been about this work of preparing the people for many years. It was now time for the Messiah to appear. He was sent by the Father to the world in person. Before John could make it to the Jordan to baptize Him, the One who was to be baptized was to be understood with certainty. The holy men who had received from the spirit the
ESSENTIAL BACKGROUND

Since the time of Malachi no inspired words of God had come to Israel by prophets. John the Baptist was the first to break the silence that had lasted over four centuries. But during those four hundred silent years much took place in the political life of Israel that caused the Hebrew people to anticipate the coming of the promised Messiah. God, in His providence, was preparing the world for the coming of His Son. When John the Baptist came on the scene it became his task to put the finishing touches on this preparation. He was to prepare the people spiritually for Christ's ministry. In his fulfillment of God's purpose John preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins (Mark 1:4). His baptism was more than a rite of purification. It was a sign of a new beginning and a complete break with past sins. As the forerunner of Jesus, it was his duty to herald forth the coming of the Messiah. Repentance was necessary because judgment was near. The One whom John announced would baptize in the Holy Spirit and fire (Matthew 3:11).

It was amid this preaching that Jesus the Messiah appeared out of Nazareth to be baptized by John. The forerunner of Jesus had been about his task of preaching for some time. It was now time for the Messiah to be announced officially to the world in person. Before John could make this official announcement he needed the official authority to do so. In John 1:33 it is told how the Baptist came to understand with certainty that Jesus was the Messiah. The prophet had received from the Spirit the
knowledge of what sign would designate to him the identity of the Messiah. The testimony which the Baptist gave concerning the descending of the Spirit upon Jesus is his authority for heralding Jesus as the Messiah. The statement by the prophet in John 1:33 was not spoken until sometime after the actual baptism of Jesus. Some have suggested that the events of John 1:29-34 took place after the temptation of Jesus in the desert.

It should be made clear that the baptism of Jesus and the anointing of the Spirit were two separate events in the life of Jesus. They took place in conjunction with each other, but they did not happen simultaneously. The anointing of Jesus occurred after the baptism while He was praying (Luke 3:21). It is the anointing of Jesus that shall be given primary consideration in this work. But in order to better understand the anointing of Jesus, some consideration must be given to the theological importance of Christ's baptism. Many have wondered why Jesus found it necessary to be baptized at all. If Jesus was sinless, He certainly did not need John's baptism as a sign of repentance. The reason Jesus gave for His baptism was that He might fulfill all righteousness (Matthew 3:15). There was more to John's baptism than a mere repentance of sin. It was a positive dedication of the heart to the will of God. It was necessary for Him to fulfill the righteous requirement of the law.

He must be circumcised, although there is no necessity to put away the body of the flesh in His case (cf. Col. 1:11). He must be presented in the temple, although He does not need deliverance from the house of bondage in Egypt (cf. Luke 2:22).

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By being baptized Jesus gave approval to the ministry of John. There was a vital link between John's work and that of Jesus. Jesus identified Himself with John and all those who submitted themselves to John's ministry. In effect, Jesus' baptism was His identification with Israel and what He would do for Israel. From Matthew 20:22 some have seen in Christ's baptism a foreshadow of His death. The figure of death is seen in His descending into the water and emerging, as He did the grave.
INTRODUCTION TO THE MINOR PROBLEM

Minor Problem: In what sense did John the Baptist refuse to baptize Jesus?

The distinction of John the Baptist, Kýpri akí árakes, has been considered at variance with his hesitancy to comply with Jesus' request when he presented himself for baptism as recorded in Matthew 3:14. In order to reconcile these two passages of scripture, scholars have given various interpretations of what the Baptist meant by the above statement, often confined simply to an interpretation of this statement. It also involves an interpretation of John's action in refusing to baptize Jesus. Therefore, rather than taking a single interpretation of one passage, nearly all the scholars who have dealt with this problem have found it necessary to take some combination of the views presented in this work in order to cope with this complex problem.

Of the following views, the first two will deal primarily with the statement Kýpri akí árakes. The next three views present two various attempts that have been made to reconcile the interpretations that have been given to the Baptist's statement with the Matthew 3:14 passage.
MINOR PROBLEM
In what sense did John the Baptist not know Jesus?

The declaration of John the Baptist, καύω οὐκ ἔβεκχαι αὐτῶν, has been considered at variance with his hesitancy to comply with Jesus' request when He presented Himself for baptism as recorded in Matthew 3:14. In order to reconcile these two passages of scripture scholars have given various interpretations of what the Baptist meant by the above statement. But the problem cannot easily be confined simply to an interpretation of this statement. It also involves an interpretation of John's action in refusing to baptize Jesus. Therefore, rather than taking a single interpretation of one passage, nearly all the scholars who have dealt with this problem have found it necessary to take some combination of the views presented in this work in order to cope with this complex problem.

Of the following views, the first two will deal primarily with the statement καύω οὐκ ἔβεκχαι αὐτῶν. The next three views presented are various attempts that have been made to reconcile the interpretations that have been given to the Baptist's statement with the Matthew 3:14 passage.
VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS
VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS

No Personal Acquaintance View

Even though we understand from the Gospel according to Luke that Jesus and John were remotely related, there are those who argue that John did not know Jesus either personally or as the Christ. The proponents of this position argue their case from the standpoints of manner of life, geography, suspected collusion, family relationship, and the meaning of the Greek texts of John 1:33.

The hypothesis that there was no personal acquaintance between Jesus and John may at first be startling when the relationship of the parties is considered, but it will be more readily believed when the secluded life of the Baptist is taken into account.¹

Though there was some relation between them (Elisabeth was cousin to Mary), yet there was no acquaintance: John had no personal knowledge of Jesus till he saw Him come to his baptism. Their manner of life had been different: John had spent his time in solitude; Jesus at Nazareth, in conversation.²

If John was secluded from the world, his seclusion from Jesus becomes even more apparent for they were not only separated by manner of life, but also by distance.


... for though they were related to each other, yet [they] lived at such a distance, as not to know one another, or have a correspondence with each other: John was in the desert, until the day of his showing unto Israel; and Christ dwelt with his parents at Nazareth, in a very mean and obscure manner, till he came from thence to Jordan to John, to be baptized by him; and which was the first interview they had. . . .

The supporters of this view solve the problem of family relationship in yet another way. It is best stated by Thomas Adam, and is often used in support of the two arguments given above.

It may seem strange that John should never have known Christ, as such, before his baptism, considering what is related in Luke 1. Doubtless, there was an over-ruling providence in it, that his testimony might be the greater weight, by being given him at the instant, from above.

The over-ruling providence of God is said to be necessary to prevent all appearances of collusion on the part of Jesus and John before the people. That John did not personally know Jesus, or that he was to be the Messiah "... proves that there could have been no collusion or agreement between them to impose on the people." And it is only in this way that the testimony given by him [John] to Jesus is raised above all suspicion of bias. This is the reason why John brings out this circumstance with so much stress by the three successive ἔγραψεν. Here is the guarantee of the truth of his testimony.

À Lapide paraphrases ἔγραψεν οὐκ ἠθέλειν αὐτόν.

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As though he said, "Think not, O ye Jews, that I affirm Jesus to be the Messiah for the sake of friendship, or relationship, as though I were His friend and companion; for I declare unto you that I knew Him not, that I never saw Him, or spoke to Him, before His baptism. But as soon as I saw Him I recognized Him by the inspiration of God."  

While John's family relation to Jesus has caused some problems for those who believe John did not personally know Jesus, Godet has used the fact of family relationship as support for this view. John means: I did not know him absolutely when he came to present himself to me; I did not know, therefore, that He was the Messiah. But we must not neglect to draw from this only natural meaning the important consequence which is implied in it: that John also did not know Jesus as a man, as the Son of Mary; for, if he had known Him as such, it would have been impossible for him not to know Him also as the Messiah. He could not be ignorant of the circumstances which had accompanied his own birth and that of Jesus.  

The proponents of the theory that John did not know Jesus personally until Jesus' baptism find some support for their view in the Greek text of the first chapter of John's Gospel. Three successive *kαϊ* are used by John. The first is found in verse 31, the second in verse 33, and the third in verse 34. Godet has given an explanation for this successive usage.

The word *kαϊ* , and neither I, placed at the beginning and repeated, as it is in verse 33, has necessarily an especial emphasis. The meaning is obvious; he has just said to his hearers: "He whom you know not." When, therefore, he adds: "and neither did I know him," it is clear that he means: "And neither did I, when he came to present himself to me to be baptized, know him any more than you now know him."  

Hendriksen, although he realizes the reference here is to something higher

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8 Godet, loc. cit.
9 Ibid., p. 314.
than mere physical acquaintance, argues as Godet does that the Baptist means to say, "I did not know him any more than you did."

Thus far little has been said about how the advocates of this position reconcile their view with Matthew 3:14. The authors mentioned here do not all solve this problem in the same manner. Generally they take either the Special Revelation View or the Intimation View. Both of these views will be considered later in this work.

Among the other authors who have taken this view are Brown, Wesley, Benson, Clarke, and Ryle.

**Messiah View**

κατευθύνων οὐκ ἔδειξεν αὐτὸν is an emphatic statement that John's knowledge of the Messiahship of Jesus was not of natural origin. This view does not exclude the possibility of John's personal acquaintance with Jesus, or knowledge of his personal merit.

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simply saying, "I did not know Jesus was the Messiah or who the Messiah would be." It is upon this statement that John proceeds to explain how he came to know Jesus as the Christ. Whether John knew Jesus or not is rather immaterial. What John is concerned with here is the identification of the Messiah.

In order to reconcile this interpretation with Matthew 3:14, many who hold this view believe John knew Jesus personally before the baptism. John knew Jesus already, but he did not know that he was the Messiah. The purpose of his baptizing mission was to enable the hidden Messiah to be revealed. And when God revealed Messiah's identity, there stood before him Jesus of Nazareth.\(^\text{17}\)

Macgregor,\(^\text{18}\) Erdman,\(^\text{19}\) and Weiss,\(^\text{20}\) while holding this particular view, solve the Matthew 3:14 problem by saying Jesus and John were acquainted by friendship or conversation before Jesus' baptism; and thus John, although not realizing the identity of the Messiah, recognized Jesus' superiority to himself in holiness. The full import of this solution to the Matthew 3:14 problem will be discussed later in this work under the Great Prophet View.

Bengel is also among those who take this interpretation, but his solution to Matthew 3:14 is somewhat different from most of the others.


who hold this view. He believes that John's own spiritual condition and judgment suddenly enabled him to recognize Jesus as the Christ at the time He appeared to be baptized.21 Bengel's view is close to that of the Intimation and Special Revelation Views which shall be treated later in this work.

Unlike most who have taken this view, Westcott is not of the opinion that John was personally acquainted with Jesus prior to His baptism.22 He gives no explanation of Matthew 3:14.

**Great Prophet View**

According to those who hold this view, *káyων οὐκ ἦκεν αὐτῶν* can easily be reconciled with John's refusal to admit Jesus to baptism. This can be done by interpreting John's declaration of his need to be baptized by Jesus to mean he did not recognize Jesus as Messiah, but that he was aware of Jesus' superior wisdom and sanctity, and might have known further that he was a prophet. Bloomfield quotes Alexander Campbell in support of this view. Many suppose that John had frequently seen Jesus, but had not known Him to be the Messiah.

This has been thought by some (says Campbell) not perfectly consistent with ... what we are told in Matthew 3:14, where we find that John, when Jesus came to him, to be baptized, modestly declined the office, and freely acknowledge the superiority of the latter. But there is no absurdity in supposing that this was in consequence of what the Baptist knew concerning our Lord's personal character, his superior wisdom and sanctity. Nay, he might have known further that He was a prophet and highly honored of God, and yet not have known,


or even suspected that He was the Messiah, till the descent of the Holy Ghost at his baptism.  

Among others who have suggested the possibility of this view are Plummer, Valpy, and Erdman.

Some, as Calvin, regard this view as foolishness. It is certain, that John acknowledged Christ to be not only a distinguished prophet, as many foolishly dream, but the Son of God, as he really was: for otherwise he would have dishonoured God by lowering his holy calling to a mortal man.

Trollope argues along the same line. But it can scarcely be conceived that a prophet gifted, as was John, with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb, and evidently acquainted with his own spiritual endowments, would have used those expressions of deep humility in Matthew 3:14 to any other being than the person of whom he had but lately declared himself to be the harbinger.

Intimation View

Those that have proposed this view believe that John not only knew Jesus personally, but also suspected Jesus to be the Messiah. The explanation of the apparent contradiction between John 1:31,33 and Matthew 3:14 turns upon knowing Jesus as Messiah in two different senses, a lower and

23 Jenks and Warne, loc. cit.


26 Erdman, loc. cit.


28 Trollope, loc. cit.
In the lower sense John recognized Jesus before the scenes of his baptism, for he had heard of him; possibly had seen him, and had known many things about him. But the higher and more certain knowledge, the definite and unmistakable certification from heaven, John had not until that visible descent of the Holy Ghost upon him—the supernatural testimony from God himself. 29

Alford has given a concise, but clear presentation of this view. John begins his ministry by a commission from God, who also admonishes him, that He whose Forerunner he was, would be in time revealed to him by a special sign. Jesus comes to be baptized by him. From the nature of his relationship to our Lord, he could not but know those events which had accompanied his birth, and his subsequent life of holy and unblameable purity and sanctity. My impression from the words of this verse [Matthew 3:14] certainly is, that he regarded Him as the Messiah. Still, his belief wanted that full and entire assurance which the occurrence of the predicted sign gave him, which the word ἐνίκησεν implies, and which would justify him in announcing Him to his disciples as the Lamb of God. 30

Others who believe that John suspected Jesus to be the Messiah, and was merely given divine assurance of this at Jesus' baptism are Lenski, 31 Hovey, 32 Morison, 33 Lange, 34 and Roney. 35


Some who take this view believe that it was highly possible that John was not acquainted with Jesus, and the fact that the Messiah stood before him began for the first time to dawn upon John when Jesus came to be baptized. Under this impression John demurred baptizing Him. Barnes says this impression came from claims Jesus had been making about himself. Benson says it was given to John by a secret intimation from the Holy Spirit. Ellicott says John received his information concerning the character of Jesus through special inspiration. The Special Revelation View which follows is very close to the views of Benson and Ellicott.

The Special Revelation View

Those who have taken this view feel that John must have had a revelation concerning the Messiahship of Jesus prior to His baptism. The commencement of John's knowledge proceeded from God, and because he anticipated his testimony might be placed in doubt, John affirms that he had no other knowledge of Christ than what he had obtained by divine inspiration. John knew Jesus Christ first by revelation, and was yet more confirmed by the accomplishment of the promised sign. The knowledge

36 Barnes, loc. cit.
37 Benson, op. cit., p. 48.
that was confirmed was knowledge that had not first been known through kindred relationship or conversation, but by immediate divine revelation.\textsuperscript{41} This was Calvin's view.

Although he [John] recognizes Christ whenever he sees him [Matthew 3:14] still it does not cease to be true that they were not known to each other according to the ordinary custom of men, for the commencement of his knowledge proceeded from God.\textsuperscript{42}

To support this view its proponents have a parallel example in scripture where the Holy Spirit revealed the identity of the person God had chosen to fill an office.

As He drew near for baptism one day, the last of all the crowd, the spirit of the Baptist, perhaps, heaving under a divine presentiment that the moment had at length arrived, . . . the Spirit, we may imagine, said to him as to Samuel of his youthful type, "Arise, anoint Him, for this is He!" (I Samuel 16:12).\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{41}Gill, op. cit., p. 21.
\textsuperscript{42}Calvin, op. cit., p. 68.
\textsuperscript{43}Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, loc. cit.
WRITER'S INTERPRETATION

After one considers the close family relationship of Jesus and John and the marvelous events that surrounded their birth, it is rather incredible that anyone could still assert that John had no knowledge of Jesus the son of Mary. We cannot but infer, from Luke's statement (chapter 1) of the relationship between the two families, that he had heard of the extraordinary circumstances attending the birth of Jesus. From Luke 1:42-45 he knew that Elizabeth, the mother of John, knew that Mary, her cousin, was to be the mother of the Christ Child. This fact is clearly revealed in Elizabeth's words addressed to Mary, "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" Elizabeth must have also known that there was some connection between the future of her own child and that of Mary's. Certain promises had been given to Zacharias concerning John's relationship to the Lord. The son which Elizabeth was to rear would be "filled with the Holy Spirit. He was to go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah, turning the children of Israel to the Lord their God (Luke 1:16-17). Elizabeth herself was given testimony of these things. In Luke 1:46 we are told, "And it came to pass that, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit."

After one considers the close family relationship of Jesus and John and the marvelous events that surrounded their birth, it is rather incredible that anyone could still surmise that John had no knowledge of Jesus the son of Mary. "We cannot but infer, from Luke's statement (chapter 1) of the relationship between the two families, that he had heard of the extraordinary circumstances attending the birth of Jesus."¹ From Luke 1:42-43 we know that Elisabeth, the mother of John, knew that Mary, her cousin, was to be the mother of the Christ Child. This fact is clearly revealed in Elisabeth's words addressed to Mary, "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" Elisabeth must have also known that there was some connection between the future of her own child and that of Mary's. Certain promises had been given to Zacharias concerning John's relationship to the Lord. The son which Elisabeth was to bear would be filled with the Holy Spirit. He was to go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah, turning the children of Israel to the Lord their God (Luke 1:15-17). Elisabeth herself was given testimony of these things. In Luke 1:41 we are told, "And it came to pass that, when Elisabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit."

The two women must have talked and wondered much about these things during Mary's three month visit with Elisabeth (Luke 1:56). In their godly concern for the things about to transpire, they must have kept in as close contact as possible with one another after the termination of Mary's long visit. No doubt these marvelous and wonderful events and the great anticipation which was connected with the birth of both Jesus and John had been related to them many times. At the young age of twelve, Jesus demonstrated that He knew much about His true relationship with the heavenly Father when He said, "know ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49). John, too, apparently knew something of the circumstances connected with his birth. As every child does, John must have wondered how he got his name. As this story (Luke 1:13) was related to him, it would have been difficult not to also have related to him the story of Jesus.

Some believe that John's parents, because of their age, died while he was yet a youth. If this is true, then it is extremely possible that John heard little about Jesus from his parents. But this does not necessarily mean that John was isolated from other members of his family. The fact that he was a Nazarite for life in no way hindered him from taking a part in the normal life of society. How he became connected with wilderness living is not known. But John's abode was in the desert region until his showing to Israel (Luke 1:80). In God's guidance and preparation of John's life it was necessary that he be kept from the distractions of men. This need not imply that the Baptist lived in uninhabited localities as a hermit in complete isolation from Israel.² The desert region was for John

what Nazareth was for Jesus. There is no conclusive evidence that John was completely isolated from the affairs of the Jewish nation. This would include the temple worship in which Jesus participated at an early age (Luke 2:41-50). The showing forth of John was his presentation day. It was the day he began his great work for which God had prepared him. It cannot be inferred from Luke 1:80 that John in every way was hid from Israel. appears in a similar sense in Luke 10:1, and means the public presentation of a person for an office or a work.

When John began his ministry he seemed to be well aware of the situation in which he was to minister. He knew his relationship to the Messiah (John 1:20-23). It is reasonable to believe that John's certain identity of himself must have been gained partly through his knowledge of the promises made to Zacharias, his father, before his birth (Luke 1:13-17). It is difficult to imagine how John could have associated his own ministry with the words of the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 40:3-5) without having had some instruction concerning the revelation his own father had received. If John was aware of these promises, then he must also have been aware of other events connected with not only his birth, but also that of Jesus' birth.

At this point we are reminded of a previous statement by Godet. If he had known Him as such [as the son of Mary], it would have been impossible for him not to know Him also as the Messiah. He could not


be ignorant of the circumstances which had accompanied his own birth and that of Jesus.  

It appears then that one cannot say, without encountering some argument, that John knew Jesus personally before His baptism without saying that John must have also known Jesus to be the Messiah as his mother Elisabeth knew He would be before His birth. This does not present a problem because Matthew 3:14 gives rather conclusive evidence that the Baptist knew Jesus not only personally, but also as the Messiah.

The statement in John 1:33 was spoken by John after the actual baptism of Jesus. But the Matthew 3:14 incident occurred before the baptism, and before the sign of the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove (John 1:32). John's reluctance to baptize Jesus was on account of scruples, and not on account of any previous revelation concerning the person of Jesus. He refused to baptize Jesus because he apparently realized the sinlessness of Jesus, and because he knew his own sin. This gives evidence that the Baptist was clearly aware that Jesus was the Messiah. John must have known that Jesus was more than a great prophet. It is as Calvin said, "He would have dishonoured God by lowering his holy calling to a mortal man."  

Some have thought that John's own spiritual condition and the countenance of Jesus suddenly caused John to recognize the Messiah when He presented Himself at the Jordan. But this view is put to the test when one considers the fact that Jesus' own brothers had failed to see the significance of Jesus' life. We know that at least two of these men, James

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5 Godet, op. cit., p. 315.  
and Jude, were pious Jews, and had apparently received some of the same instruction Jesus had received. These, and others, saw nothing in the physical appearance of Jesus that caused them to believe in Him as Messiah. And nothing is said in Scripture about John being given special revelation concerning the identity of Jesus as the Messiah prior to Jesus’ baptism. Conclusions must be made upon what information is given in Scripture, rather than upon mere speculation or conjecture.

In John 1:33 the Baptist is brushing whatever knowledge he had of Jesus aside. He may have had a great amount of personal conviction as to Jesus’ identity as the Messiah. But personal conviction was not a sufficient source of testimony for a prophet of God. John’s witness of the Christ, the one for whom the nation of Israel had been waiting, had to be beyond all question. The absolute certainty regarding the Messiah had to be given by a special sign. John received this sign after the baptism of Jesus. During the time before Jesus’ baptism John had not possessed this certain knowledge. The verb ἔδεικτο is pluperfect in form. It is not translated like a pluperfect because it carries with it a durative idea, and is thus used like the imperfect.  

The sign not only removed past doubt by giving John certainty, but it also displayed the divine character and qualification of the Son of God.

The kind of knowledge which John speaks of is also significant.

The verb ἔγνω indicates a mental process. It refers to a knowledge by intuition or by reflection, as distinguished from which refers to a knowledge by observation and experience.

7 Lenski, The Interpretation of St. John’s Gospel, p. 131.
8 Hendriksen, loc. cit.
If John had not had the knowledge that arises from personal and long acquaintance, it would have been more natural for him to have used יִרְאוֹקָה, rather than יִרְאָה. The fact that he does not use יִרְאוֹקָה leaves the possibility that John could have known Jesus according to the ordinary custom of men.

John was only told what sign would be given to him (John 1:33). The Baptist's statement, "I knew him not," is his own verification of the fact that the sign at the baptism of Jesus was the divine revelation that gave him the certain knowledge that he needed. Matthew 3:14 provides proof that John, in the John 3:31 and 33 statements, does not mean that he did not know Jesus as a person or as the Messiah. By saying "I knew him not," John raises his testimony of the Messiah above suspicion. By the words which follow this statement in John 1:33, the people must have understood clearly that John was not basing his testimony upon family relationship—a fact which most likely became known to others—or personal acquaintance, but upon a special sign and revelation from heaven. It was in this special sense that John the Baptist did not know prior to the given sign that Jesus was the Messiah.

Some have gone so far as to say that John, even after Jesus' baptism, did not acknowledge the Messiahship of Jesus. If John had known fully that Jesus was the Messiah, he could not afterwards have sent his message from the prison (Matthew 11:3). Those who have taken this view must know little about human nature to think it impossible for doubts to have arisen under such pressing circumstances as John found himself.

That John should have been so long the victim of unprincipled cruelty; and apparently neglected, and even abandoned, by the very person to
whom he had borne witness, and his fidelity to whom had been the occasion of his present suffering; were circumstances to put the strongest faith to the severest trial.  

INTRODUCTION TO THE MAJOR PROBLEM

Major Problem: In what sense did Jesus receive the Holy Spirit at His baptism?

Immediately after His baptism Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit. Various interpretations have been given as to what Jesus actually received on this occasion. Did He receive an actual gift or communication of the Spirit? If so, what significance did this gift have in relationship to the work that He had already done in His life?

In the various interpretations it has been realized that the material used to illustrate this position has been taken from men who are in basic agreement on that particular view of the anointing. Some of these men are less critical on other views than others. And while they are in basic agreement on the subject of the anointing, they are not necessarily in agreement on other important matters concerning the significance of the baptism and the Spirit's work in the life of Christ.
Major Problem: In what sense did Jesus receive the Holy Spirit at His baptism?

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In the various views that follow, it should be realized that the material used to illustrate each position has been taken from men who are in basic agreement on that particular view of the anointing. Some of these men are less extreme in their view than others. And while they are in basic agreement on the subject of the anointing, they are not necessarily in agreement on other important matters concerning the significance of the baptism and the Spirit's work in the life of Christ.
VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS

The heretical view has appeared in various forms throughout Church history. The moderate Decaiser of the first century had this view of the person of Jesus, incorporated into the Jewish system. In early and simple form this idea can be seen in the writings of the second-century church. In some form it continued.

It is notable that this Decaiser heresy is applicable equally to later schools of Arianism and Christology. Both these ideas in the context of Christian doctrine have essential agreement with certain elements of the earlier century and following.

Arianism was the doctrine taught by the emperor Constantine. The view of the final end of the Decaiser heresy is that of the Arianism. Both were rejected by the Church.

The Decaiser heresy in its development was more or less identified with the various schools of thought that have been and are still prevalent in Christian thought.

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VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS

The Adoptionist View

This heretical view has appeared in various forms throughout Church history. The Moderate Docetism of the first century had this view of the person of Jesus incorporated into its doctrinal system. An early and simple form of this false doctrine can be found in the teachings of the second-century Ebionites. It was their theory

... that after the baptism of Jesus the Christ descended upon him in the form of a dove from the Sovereign Power which is over all things, and that he then announced the unknown Father and wrought miracles, but that toward the end the Christ departed again from Jesus, and Jesus suffered and rose from the dead, while the Christ remained impassible as a spiritual being.

It is doubtful that this Judaizing heresy is related historically to later schools of Adoptionist Christology, but this view of the person of Christ is in essential agreement with the adoptionist of the third century and following.

Adoptionism found its greatest disciple in the person of Paul of Samosata, who was basically a rationalistic Unitarian. Like those of the Alogoi and of the Theodotians, he was an advocate of Dynamistic Monarchianism. This form of Monarchianism regarded the man Jesus as one who had been energized by the Divine Spirit. The Paulician disciples

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... denied the personality of the Logos and of the Holy Spirit, and considered them merely powers of God, like reason and mind in man; but granted that the Logos dwelt in Christ in larger measure than in any former messenger of God, and taught, like the Socinians in later times, a gradual elevation of Christ, determined by his own moral development, to divine dignity. 3

They believed that Christ was energized by the divine Logos at His baptism, and that He then began to be exalted to Divine dignity. The process of adoption began in baptism and was consummated in the resurrection. By the eighth century adoptionists believed that what Jesus received at his baptism included the priesthood, the kingdom, and the office of Chief Shepherd. 4

The controversy around Adoptionism extended into the Middle Ages. Some of its sects may have still been in existence during the Reformation and later. Adoptionist Christology has persisted, mainly in certain Eastern religions, in some of its forms until modern times.

**Messiah View**

Whereas the adoptionist believed that Jesus received the Messiah-ship in conjunction with His baptism, those that hold this position believe that it was not until the time of His baptism that Jesus became fully aware that He was from eternity the Messiah. This does not mean that Jesus, in his obscurity, was not conscious of the fact that His relationship to the Father was different from that which was normally human. The unfolding of the Messianic consciousness of Jesus was a fundamental fact in the early religious life of Jesus, and it was completed at His

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The language in Mark and Luke, and the silence of the Baptist concern­ning the voice from heaven (John 1:32-34), indicate that the word came to Jesus alone, and was his summons to undertake the work of setting up that kingdom to which he had just pledged his loyalty. The expression "My beloved Son" had clear Messianic significance for Jesus' contemporaries (comp. Mark 14:62), and the message can have signified for him nothing less than a Messianic call. It implied more than that child-relation to God which was the fundamental fact in his religious life from the beginning: it had an official meaning.

Up to the time of the baptism Christ was not fully aware of His Messiahship because the poor frail flesh which he had inherited from a depraved race could not have borne the presence of full consciousness for thirty years, and when it did come, it consumed Him in as many months.

When Jesus heard the voice of God calling Him, he recognized it as a call to be the Messiah.

It was a tremendous, overwhelming moment, that moment on the banks of the Jordan, when . . . Jesus realized that he was chosen of God to be His Messiah, His servant, His beloved Son! Perhaps the greatest spir­itual crisis in the history of man.

The French New Testament scholar Oscar Cullmann is also of the persuasion that Jesus at the moment of His baptism became conscious that He had to take upon Himself what he defines as the ebed Yahweh role, or that of the πρεσβύτερος Θεοῦ.

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7Ecce Deus (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1867), p. 46.
Progress in the Consciousness View

The proponents of this particular view believe that Jesus, at His baptism, was already sure of His Divine call of Messiahship, but was not, in all probability, conscious of all that that calling entailed. Because of His humanity He was limited in consciousness during His obscurity. As it behoved Him to be man, to be made like unto His brethren, and to occupy the servant's place as the one Mediator between God and man, He NEEDED THAT UNCTION with which He was supplied at the incarnation, at His baptism, and at the ascension. 10 "The Baptism of Christ was the last act of His private life; and, emerging from its waters in prayer, He learned: when His business was to commence, and how it would be done." 11

In the development of His consciousness, He had [at His baptism] just reached that point in which He clearly apprehended the vocation given to Him by the Father; and at this very point the fulness of the Spirit is assured and granted to the conscious life within Him. 12

The descent of the Spirit, which coincided with His baptism, was intended to confirm and encourage the Lord Jesus before entering on His arduous work. 13 The visible descent of the Spirit provided a testimony for both Jesus and John. From this time forward, by the unction of the


13 Smeaton, op. cit., p. 129.
Holy Spirit, Jesus was conscious of a divine power in His life. The Spirit, whatever else is involved in it, always includes the idea of power, and power in which God is active. This consciousness of Jesus was attested by the future course of His life. When He appeared again among men it was in the power of the Spirit, and mighty works were wrought by His hands.

Thus, by the anointing of the Spirit, Jesus was given greater awareness the divine powers that were already within Him as the Son of God. The anointing served to bring to utility the divine attributes in Jesus.

The advocates of this position believe that their view detracts in no way from Christ's deity. "The Son of God, as such, needed no further teaching as to divine things." He had known the heavenly Father from eternity. It was His human consciousness that stood in need of divine enlightenment. "God gave to His human consciousness a perfect revelation of the majesty and glory of the Father, and of the fact that He was the Son of God in an absolute sense." Rather than detracting from Christ's deity, this view, its proponents say, throws into bolder and more peculiar relief the elements which contradistinguished Him from all others, while it retains Him amongst us as the Man Christ Jesus.

Among others who give support to this line of thinking are A. L.

15 Ibid.
16 Smeaton, loc. cit.
18 Ecce Deus, op. cit., p. 49.
Communications of the Holy Spirit

Many scholars go beyond the point of saying that the purpose of the chrism of the Holy Spirit upon Christ was to complete His own consciousness of Messiahship. They maintain that the purpose of the anointing was to invest Jesus with new powers and gifts for a new mission.

The Messiah was about to enter on His official life, and at this new inception of His Messianic work, He must receive a new outpouring of the Spirit. As He had been conceived by the Spirit, so He must now be anointed by the Spirit for His supreme office as the prophet, the Priest, the King of the Israel of God.

"The Spirit with which He was anointed on the occasion of His baptism shows Him what He had to do as the Messiah, and gives Him the power to accomplish it..." 

Before this, he had only occasionally manifested the presence of God with him... as when he filled them with astonishment at his discourse with the doctors in the temple, Luke 5:1. And though he

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22 August Tholuck, Commentary on the Gospel of St. John (Dublin: John Robertson and Company, 1870), p. 89.
probably performed many such extraordinary actions during his course of a private life, yet he did not receive the fulness of gifts for his work, till the time of his baptism.26

This anointing of the Spirit was one of the ten operations of the Spirit, which Owen gives, of which the person of Christ in His human nature became an immediate object.27

Those that hold this view find support for their position in the fact that there is no evidence in the canon of Scripture that Jesus wrought miracles before His public ministry began.

We have no reason to suppose that He was even conscious of any miraculous power. The Spirit had been His from the beginning as the Spirit of truth and grace . . . . The Spirit as a revelation of His filial relation to God did not first come to Him at His baptism. But the manifestation of the Spirit at His baptism was, as at Pentecost, a communication of supernatural power.28

Those who have taken this view generally believe that Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and that He was previous to His baptism filled with the Spirit. The anointing merely indicated that He had now been equipped by the Holy Spirit with all official gifts to appear openly as Messiah and Redeemer.29

At the time of His conception by the Holy Ghost it was a question of the forming and development of His human nature, but at the baptism it is a question of the public declaration of His Messiahship and His equipment with the gifts necessary for this official and public fulfilling of His vocation as the Christ of God.30


27 Ibid., pp. 90-107.


29 Geldenhuy, loc. cit.

30 Ibid., pp. 146-47.
Inauguration into the Messianic Office View

It is the position of the proponents of this view that Christ's anointing by the Spirit signified nothing more than the inauguration and consecration of Jesus to His Messianic office. Other events that coincided with Jesus' baptism may have had more significance than this, but the anointing gave Jesus no new knowledge or power. Christ had been filled with the Holy Spirit, and had received Him without measure from His conception. "The descent of the Holy Spirit upon Christ at His baptism does not make any essential change in His relationship, but it does mark the beginning of a new phase of His ministry." This can only be explained by keeping in view the difference between the personal and official life of Jesus. The baptism was the inauguration of His official life. "This situation [Jesus' baptism], as seen in the light of John's statement, was an adequate setting for this testimony, in which the Father in Heaven publicly announced His only begotten Son to the world."

This inauguration was the official presentation of the Son of God. While it gave Divine testimony of the Christ to the world through the Baptist, for Jesus it was an official introduction into the office of

33 Kuyper, loc. cit.
Messiah. Even though Christ's divine attributes were not in every way manifested during His relative obscurity, He was filled with the Holy Spirit. But following the inauguration of Christ into His official role, the Holy Spirit effected the outward signs of Messiahship in the miracles and the prophetic ministry of Jesus.


36 Walvoord, loc. cit.
From the testimony of John it seems reasonable to conclude that there was an actual communication of the Holy Spirit upon Him at His baptism. In Matthew 3:16-17 it is recorded that John the Baptist anointed Jesus by the Spirit as a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy as given in Isaiah 42:1-4. In this regard, the passage cited from Isaiah would have claimed a fulfillment of this prophecy. The actual communication of the Holy Spirit should have taken place at Jesus' baptism, as Jesus claimed such fulfillment (Luke 4:18-19). However, He left unfulfilled by the prophecy of Isaiah. The same result is recorded in the words of Isaiah 61:1, which states that He will be the One to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and to heal the brokenhearted. These passages serve to prove that the anointing of the Holy Spirit was being conducted and approved by the Holy Spirit. These events, especially the announcement of Isaiah 61:1-4, are particularly in mind.

Peter also gives testimony that shows that an actual communication of the Spirit upon Christ was by the Spirit as a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy that God anointed Jesus, not only on His baptism, but also immediately before His crucifixion. In reference to this, Peter quotes Isaiah 53:10, which states that He was bruised for our offenses and He was wounded for our transgressions. In reference to this, Peter quotes Isaiah 53:10, which states that He was bruised for our offenses and He was wounded for our transgressions. This is to say that Christ was not a mechanical endurance of the Cross, but that His own personal and voluntary sacrifice.
From the testimony of Jesus, it seems most reasonable to conclude that there was an actual communication of the Holy Spirit upon Him at His baptism. In Matthew 12:18-21, it is recorded that Christ viewed His anointing by the Spirit as a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy as given in Isaiah 42:1-4. In this prophecy the promise was given that Jehovah would put His Spirit "upon" His servant. If there had been no actual communication of the Spirit, it is hardly possible that Christ could have claimed a fulfillment of this prophecy in Himself. This was not the only time Jesus claimed such fulfillment of Scripture. In the synagogue at Nazareth He read from Isaiah, chapter 61, concerning the presence of the Holy Spirit as a result of anointing. At the conclusion of this reading He remarked, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21). These passages serve to prove that Jesus was conscious that His ministry was being conducted and empowered by the Holy Spirit. In these two passages judgment (Isaiah 4:1-4) and preaching (Isaiah 61:1-2) are particularly in mind.

Peter also gives testimony that there was an actual communication of the Spirit upon Christ (Acts 10:38). Peter's statement indicates that God anointed Jesus not only with the Holy Spirit, but also with power. In reference to His humiliation the Spirit and the power had come upon Him. But this does not mean that He had no power of His own, or that His own power was inoperative. The works which Christ performed were
demonstrations of the power of God, and they continue to serve as evidence that Jesus is the Son of God. In reference to His humanity Jesus was anointed with power from the Father. On two specific occasions Christ is revealed to have performed His miracles in the power of the Spirit (Matthew 12:28; Luke 4:14-18).

[But] in view of the fact that this is mentioned only twice and hundreds of miracles were performed, it would seem clear that Christ exercised His own power when He chose to do so as, for instance; when He commanded the waves to be still and caused Lazarus to come forth from the tomb at His command.¹

Some find it difficult to accept the fact that divine attributes were manifested not only in the power of the Holy Spirit, but also on the basis of Jesus' own authority. On closer examination of the passages which seem to be in opposition to this view (John 5:19,30; 8:28; 14:10) one will notice that the primary consideration of these verses is not the nonuse of divine attributes, but rather the voluntary subjection of the will of Jesus to that of the Father in the use of these attributes for obtaining divine objectives. An example of how Jesus was willing to set His own desires aside for those of the Father can be seen from His prayer in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:39).

The context of the verse under consideration in this work also gives certain evidence that Jesus received a genuine communication of the Spirit. The passage clearly speaks of the Spirit as Καταβαίνω, ὥσ περιοταπάν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ἔμνοεῖς ἐπὶ αὐτῶν (John 1:32), and Καταβαίνων καὶ μένος ἐπ' ἅμα.

The Spirit descended in a visible form and abode upon Him. *ἀναστήλω* used to describe the activity of the Spirit in both verses, means to stay with someone. It literally means to stay, and is used in a special sense to indicate living or lodging. In Acts 27:31 it is used in reference to remaining in a ship. Thus the Spirit came down upon Jesus and stayed upon Him. This simple language certainly seems to imply that Jesus received something that He did not before possess.

Aside from this anointing, there are other indications in Scripture that Jesus' life was closely connected with that of the Holy Spirit. From John 3:34 it is understood that the Son of God received the Spirit without measure. He was given to Jesus in complete fulness. This was possible because Jesus was without sin. The Holy Spirit met no resistance in His human nature. The resistance of sin keeps the Holy Spirit from properly equipping a person for service. This was not so with Jesus. From His conception, as was His forerunner (Luke 1:15), Jesus was filled with the Spirit. The verb in John 3:34 is in the present tense. This would indicate that this is characteristic and continual in the life of Jesus. As far as Christ's humanity is concerned His relationship with the Holy Spirit began at His conception (Luke 1:35), and not at His baptism. Therefore, even though Christ was filled with the Holy Spirit from His conception, it was still possible for Him to receive an anointing of the Spirit which must be understood as a direct communication of Holy Spirit in the manner of a gift. But this communication of the Spirit must be differentiated from those spiritual gifts that were innate to the

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incarnate Son of God. This communication of the Holy Spirit was concerned with Christ's consecration to the office of Messiah. It was not the bestowal of gifts pertaining to personal attributes.

The fact that Christ was sinless not only indicates that He was filled with the Spirit before His baptism, but it also signified that His baptism was not an occasion for revealing to Him that He was the Messiah. His view of Himself must have already been confirmed. If Jesus had not known of His Messiahship, it would appear that He went to the Jordan to confess sin and repent as did the other subjects of John's baptism. It is also argued that without the right view of Himself, Jesus could never have overruled John's objection as He did.3

What happened immediately after the baptism of Jesus must be understood in the light of His two natures. Jesus' divine nature needed nothing added to it. It was perfect and therefore immutable in all its attributes. In the incarnation Christ took the form of a servant, but He did not lose the form of God. The eternal person of Christ was brought to a new relationship in the incarnation, but this does not mean that anything was diminished or added as to the perfection or completeness of His attributes. Neither does it mean that His human nature, when it was assumed, needed to undergo a process of moral perfection. But Scripture does make it clear that the human nature was subject to development. In Luke 2:40 we read, "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him." Reference is made here, as it is again in Luke 2:52, to physical, mental, and spiritual develop-

Even as Jesus developed as a child in these areas, it must be understood that He possessed at the same time all spiritual gifts from His conception. This must have been so because He possessed the fulness of the Spirit and a perfect human nature. These gifts were at no time in Christ's life acquired. They were His from the time of conception. Therefore, Jesus could not have acquired this type of spiritual gift at His baptism because He needed no such gift. The human nature was perfect and possessed all spiritual gifts. These gifts did not arise from the divine nature. They were communicated by the Holy Spirit to the human nature at conception. In every moment of His existence He possessed the Holy Spirit without measure.

Even in His conception and birth the Holy Spirit effected not only a separation from sin, but He also endowed His human nature with the glorious gifts, powers, and faculties of which that nature is susceptible. Hence His human nature received these gifts, powers and faculties not from the Son by communication from the divine nature, but from the Holy Ghost by communication to the human nature.4

No one is able to work out a solution to all the contradictions that seem to arise when considering the incarnation. One cannot explain fully how the limitations of human nature and the divine attributes could exist in one person. But we do know that even as Christ possessed all spiritual power, He was limited in certain respects by His humanity. In Hebrews 5:8 it is told that, "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Christ, then, learned through the experience he had, even though He was omniscient. It is not unreasonable then to conclude that in the experience of His baptism Jesus may have

4Kuyper, op. cit., pp. 94-95.
learned something about Himself. Certain information seems to have been conveyed to His human consciousness. In Luke 3:22 and Mark 1:11 the voice from heaven is directed to the Lord, "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased." In Matthew 3:17 the words are, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." There is general agreement on the part of conservative scholarship that Luke and Mark give the actual form spoken, while Matthew is an indication that the message was intended for others that all might receive knowledge of the testimony of Christ from the Father. But it can in no way be inferred from this announcement by the Father, that the voice was intended as a revelation to Jesus that He was the Son of God. Jesus had already demonstrated His knowledge of this in the temple before the doctors (Luke 2:49). "At the age of twelve he knew most clearly that God was his Father in a way in which he was not Father to anyone else." If anything was added to the consciousness of Jesus at this time, it must have been that which is related in the latter part of the announcement from heaven. The Father puts divine approval on all that has transpired in the personal life of Jesus. It is a signification that there has been nothing in the development of His human nature that could hinder Him from entering into the office of Messiah.

With the perfect development of the human nature, Jesus was ready to be ordained into His Messianic ministry proper. His human nature had been developed under the influence of the Spirit. In the days of His humiliation He had been in the constant care and fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Now as He enters His official office He receives the official

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communication of the Spirit. The anointing of the Spirit is a sign that Christ's gifts, powers, and faculties are exercised in cooperation with the Third Person of the Trinity. Jesus was to be controlled and impelled by the Spirit in His official capacity. Christ had adopted our human nature, and that nature was to work in cooperation with the divine nature under the operation of the Holy Spirit. This communication was necessary to lead Jesus in His official capacity as Prophet, Priest, and King. In these offices His power is demonstrated by the work of the Holy Spirit, but His anointing could have given Him no spiritual gift that He did not already possess.

Because Jesus had a divine nature it is incorrect to say that He was installed or inaugurated into the Messianic office only at His baptism. The Messianic task was His before Adam fell. In regard to His divine nature there was never a time in which He was anointed for the task. In relation to the nation of Israel He was foreordained to the Messiahship in eternity. But the baptism is the only time Christ was ordained or actually consecrated to the office of Messiah.

The leading of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' life was manifested immediately following His baptism. The Scripture says Jesus was led into the wilderness by the Spirit (Matthew 4:1). There He was sustained under temptation by the Spirit. When He entered into His public ministry it was under the power of the Spirit. While on earth Christ operated under the limitations of the human nature (Philippians 2:7-8), but His life was lived in the power of the Spirit. It was the Holy Spirit that justified the claims of Christ by furnishing the evidence that He was the Son of God (I Timothy 3:16).
It is evidently the purpose of the Scripture to emphasize the fact of the inability of the human nature which Christ had adopted to accomplish the work of the Messiah without the constant operation and powerful leading of the Holy Spirit, whereby it was so strengthened that it could be the instrument of the Son of God for the performance of His wonderful work.6

But it cannot be concluded from Scripture that Christ never acted in power arising from His divine nature. At times Jesus' own power is seen at work. Such was the case when He healed all them that touched Him with unclean spirits (Luke 6:19).

The doctrine of the kenosis (Philippians 2:5-8) does not deny that Jesus could, if He wished, exercise His own power. The kenosis was a vailing of His preincarnate glory. In order that He might come as the Saviour to die the atoning death, the Lord put aside the expression of divine glory. But He did not lay aside the glory, for we see it being manifested on at least two occasions. He showed Himself as the glorified Lord on the Mount of Transfiguration. In a lesser sense His glory was seen in the Garden of Gethsemane when He said, "I am he." Those who saw Him "went backward, and fell to the ground" (John 18:6). By emptying Himself, Christ did not lose any of His deity, but rather He took upon or added to Himself the form of a servant. This was necessary so that He might walk among men and die for them. Christ would have been prevented from fulfilling the work of salvation if the expression of glory had not been laid aside. In taking upon the form of a servant the divine attributes of omnipotence and omniscience were limited in their manifestation during the incarnation. These powers were limited in their usefulness not because they were weakened by the presence of the human

6Kuyper, op. cit., p. 100.
nature, but because the human nature was in subjection to the will of the Father.

In saying that He sets His own desires aside to do something willingly which He does not desire to do, and in doing that He sets self aside, makes self void, empties Himself of self.7

Christ's life was lived in the will of the Father, and His will was always subject to the Father's will. It was apparently the will of the Father that Jesus not use His divine attributes for His own benefit. Scripture never portrays Christ as engaging in such activity. But all limitations were related to the human nature, and not to the divine nature. When it was the Father's will that Christ act in the Spirit with whom He had been anointed, He did so. At other times it was apparently the perfect will of the Father that Jesus exercise His own divine attributes of power and knowledge if He wished to do so. Christ's own power seems to be revealed in many of His miracles, and omniscience is demonstrated in His prophetic ministry.

It should be remembered that the kenosis passage was given by Paul not necessarily as a statement of the incarnation, but rather as an example from Christ's own life which should be followed. Christ suffered the inconveniences, limitations, and temptations that men still face (Hebrews 4:15). As Christ submitted His will to the Father, so should every follower of Christ. Jesus lived His life on earth under the direction of the Holy Spirit according to the will of the Father in heaven. And because Jesus Christ faithfully followed that direction, His followers

continue to receive the Spirit's guidance.

This one who received the anointing of the Holy Spirit at His baptism is described as the One who would in turn baptize with the Holy Spirit. "Some have thought this to mean, 'This is He who shall institute Christian baptism, with which the gift of the Holy Ghost shall be connected.' But this view is inconsistent with the fact that nowhere in Scripture is Christian baptism connected with the baptism of Jesus, or is Christian baptism connected directly with the regenerating power of the Spirit. This reference by John to Christ as doing the baptizing could have only been made in respect to a future circumstance. Nowhere in the Gospels is it recorded that Christ baptized either with water or with the Spirit. In John 20:22 a foreshadow of Pentecost is seen as the Lord imparted the Holy Spirit to those present. This "... was probably for their quickening in preparation for their full endowment with the Spirit in power at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4)." Christ promised a baptism of the Holy Spirit which had yet not occurred when He ascended from the earth (Acts 1:5). The promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. It was at this time that Christ baptized believers with the Holy Spirit. The Lord continues to baptize all with the Spirit who believe on Him. This baptism is open to both Jews and Gentiles (Acts 11:16) in the Church Age. From this verse (John 1:33) it is understood that Christ does the baptizing, and the instrument is the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit baptism, then, is really Christ's work.


And in John did not officially recognize Jesus as the Messiah until I had received the certain sign of Him that had been promised to me by the One who sent me to prepare the way. This promised sign was the descending and the presence of the Holy Spirit upon one, not as the means of a new spiritual birth, but anointing for the purpose of consecrating and identifying to be sent and associated to the Messiah—into eternity. The Holy Spirit descending shall in turn baptize with the instrument of the Holy Spirit all those who believe on Him. This Spirit baptism shall mark us as Christians. It shall eventually include both Jew and Gentile. And this shall mark the Church Age.
And I John did not officially recognize Jesus as the Messiah until I had received the certain sign of His Messiahship that had been promised to me by the One who sent me to baptize by water. This promised sign was the descending and the remaining of the Holy Spirit upon one, not as the bestowal of a new spiritual gift, but as an anointing for the purpose of consecrating and identifying the One who was foreordained to the Messiahship in eternity. The One who receives this anointing shall in turn baptize with the instrument of the Holy Spirit all those who believe on Him. This Spirit baptism shall begin at Pentecost. It shall eventually include both Jew and Gentile. And it shall last through the Church Age.
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**Second Problem**

"... the Spirit descending, and remaining on him ..."


