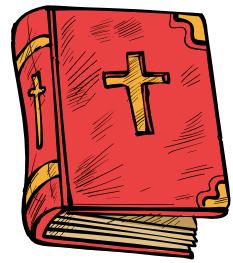




# For Further Study



Read and meditate on the passage below:

*13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. 14 But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?”*

*15 Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented. (Matthew 3:13-15)*

The above verses come from Matthew's version of the baptism of Jesus. Remember that Matthew is writing to a more Jewish audience, which influences things that he shares about from the life and experiences of Jesus.

Note how John the Baptizer tried to deter Jesus from being the one to baptize him. Instead, John thought that Jesus should baptize him rather than the other way around. It is normal for us, like John, to feel unworthy of serving Jesus and others. We say to ourselves, “Who am I to do this?” Yet, when we say things like this, we undermine God's worth in us and our potential in him.

Jesus replied to John by saying that it was proper for John to baptize him. Remember that Jesus is cultivating (even before he begins his ministry) a kingdom of equality and shared-value. All of us have an important part to play in the advancement of God's kingdom on earth. Each person is divinely created with intentionality and worth. Jesus said to John that this was to happen for “righteousness.” Jesus was not referring to his baptism as necessary for him (or John) to be cleansed from sin. Rather, he is speaking about right living. It is more important to treat people right (as John and Jesus are doing in this passage) than it is to have right belief.



## REFLECTION:

If you have been baptized, recall what your experience was like.

## PRACTICE:

How will I prioritize living rightly with other people?