

## Chapter 3, Verse 16

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Survey with me some of the important doctrines taught at “3:16” of various New Testament books.

1. “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water; and lo, the heavens were opened unto him and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, coming up on him” (**Mat. 3:16**). Jesus was baptized, not for remission of sins (Mark 1:4), but to “fulfill all righteousness” (Mat. 3:15). It is evident from verse 16 that Jesus was immersed. It is observed that the coming of the Spirit and the voiced approval of the Father came **after** he was baptized (cf Acts 2:38). This marked the beginning of his ministry. Our baptism marks the beginning of our ministry. This is a key passage concerning the Godhead.
2. “And Simon he surnamed Peter” (**Mark 3:16**). This is the beginning of the discipleship of the apostle who was so strong, yet so weak. He left all to follow Christ, yet for lack of faith, sank in the Sea of Galilee. He was renamed “rock,” yet when under pressure, crumbled and denied the Lord. The strongest can sometimes fall. Despite our weaknesses, the Lord can use us if we will let him.
3. “John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but there cometh he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire” (**Luke 3:16**). Note John’s humility, ever pointing to Christ. Jesus quotes the first part of these promised baptisms, applying it to Pentecost (Acts 1:5). Baptism in fire refers to eternal judgment against sin (v. 17; Rev. 20:14–15). Not all will be baptized in fire; hence not all were promised Spirit baptism.
4. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life” (**John 3:16**). Here is the most beautiful and beloved summary of the Bible’s theme. God loved us for a moment more than his own Son. Our response is belief in that Son. Saving belief is always an obedient belief (John 3:5, 21; Mat. 7:21–23; Heb. 5:9; Jam 2:17–26).

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