

A question I recently received –
Why did Jesus speak so little about baptism while
He was on earth? Only Matthew and Mark say
anything about baptizing while Luke and John
don't even mention it. Jesus never told anyone
they had to be baptized to be saved. Is it really
that important?

Matt 28:18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them,
saying, "All authority has been given to Me in
heaven and on earth. 19 "Go therefore and make
disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the
name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit

Mark 16:15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.

The passage in Mark is disputed in the Greek texts.

At first glance and without a proper understanding of the Jesus' preaching, the person asking the question might appear to have a point.

Jesus came to save His people from their sins.
Matt 1:21 "And she will bear a Son; and you shall
call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His
people from their sins."

He also came to set up His eternal Kingdom.
Dan 2:44 "And in the days of those kings the God
of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never
be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for
another people; it will crush and put an end to all
these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.
He did not preach that they were in the Kingdom
during His lifetime but that the kingdom was near.

At the beginning of His ministry— the kingdom was
near.

Matt 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach
and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at
hand."

Six days before His transfiguration – the kingdom
was near.

Mark 9:1 And He was saying to them, "Truly I say
to you, there are some of those who are standing
here who shall not taste death until they see the
kingdom of God after it has come with power."

At the Last Supper— the kingdom was near.
Luke 22:17 And when He had taken a cup and
given thanks, He said, "Take this and share it
among yourselves; 18 for I say to you, I will not
drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the
kingdom of God comes." 19 And when He had
taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it,
and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which
is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."
20 And in the same way He took the cup after they
had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out
for you is the new covenant in My blood.

As He stood before Pilate – the kingdom was near.

John 18:36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm." 37 Pilate therefore said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

How often did Jesus teach on how men were to enter into that Kingdom?

John 3:1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; 2 this man came to Him by night, and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." 3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." 4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" 5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God

In all other instances He taught of the nature of those who would enter the Kingdom

Matt 5:20 "For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matt 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.

Matt 18:3 and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matt 19:23 And Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matt 23:13 "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from men; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.

We find characteristics required of those who
would enter the kingdom –

righteous
humble like children
not trusting in riches
not hypocrites

But how can we achieve these characteristics?

Jesus told tells us we must be born
again!

The old self is neither righteous,
humble and trusts in riches and is
often hypocritical.

This new birth will be of water and
the Spirit.

Why would Jesus not teach about the entrance to the kingdom in all of His lessons to the Jews?

1) The kingdom was not yet established!

Matt 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Even John had not entered

Matt 11:11 "Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. 12 "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force. 13 "For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John. 14 "And if you are willing to accept it, John himself is Elijah who was to come.

2) Jesus was not crowned until He was crucified.

Acts 2:32 "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. 33 "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. 34 "For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, 35 Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet.'" 36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ-- this Jesus whom you crucified."

3) The apostles had not yet been given all truth!

John 16:12 "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

4) The apostles were not told to baptize for the remission of sins until after Jesus' ascension at Pentecost.

Mark 16:14 And afterward He appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table; and He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had risen. 15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.

Acts 2:38 And Peter said to them,
"Repent, and let each of you be
baptized in the name of Jesus Christ
for the forgiveness of your sins; and
you shall receive the gift of the Holy
Spirit.

5) His covenant (including baptism to enter the covenant) was not established until Jesus' death on the cross and the offering of His blood to God

Heb 9:15 And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. 16 For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. 17 For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives.

Heb 9:24 For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; 25 nor was it that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood not his own.

Men could not be saved by the blood of Christ
until it had been given.

Men could not enter the kingdom until it was
established.

Until God's plan was revealed in the death of
Jesus, there was no reason to preach lessons
about the entrance into the kingdom.

Jesus came to prepare men for the kingdom once
it was established. He left the teaching about the
entrance into the Kingdom for His apostles.

Col 2:11 and in Him you were also circumcised with a
circumcision made without hands, in the removal of
the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;
12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which
you were also raised up with Him through faith in the
working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13
And when you were dead in your transgressions and
the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive
together with Him, having forgiven us all our
transgressions, 14 having canceled out the certificate
of debt consisting of decrees against us and which
was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way,
having nailed it to the cross.

The token of the covenant under the Old Law --
you were also circumcised.

The token under the New Law - *with a circumcision
made without hands, in the removal of the body of
the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been
buried with Him in baptism*

One could not enter the Old Covenant without the
token of circumcision.

One cannot enter the New Covenant without the
token of baptism.

If you would enter the kingdom, you must be born again.

Joh 3:5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Acts 22:16 'And now why do you delay? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.'