

SERIES: LUKE: THE SON OF MAN, THE SAVIOR  
HAS COME, WEEK 53

TITLE: TRUE SPIRITUAL GREATNESS

TEXT: LUKE 7:24-30

INTRODUCTION: (1) WHERE CAN WE LOOK  
TODAY FOR ROLE MODELS, FOR EXAMPLES, FOR  
HEROES, FOR A GREAT PERSON?

\* WELL, SOME LOOK TO PROFESSIONAL  
ATHLETES, TO PROFESSIONAL SPORTS, AND  
**THERE ARE A FEW THERE, BUT I EMPHASIZE "A  
FEW", BECAUSE ON THE WHOLE MANY**  
PROFESSIONAL ATHLETES, NOT ALL, BUT MANY,  
ARE ANYTHING BUT HEROES AND ROLE MODELS.  
**AND I DON'T THINK I HAVE TO ELABORATE**, YOU  
KNOW WHAT I MEAN.

**\*\* IN FACT SOME WILL TELL YOU, THEY DON'T**  
THINK THEY SHOULD BE ROLE MODELS, YET  
MANY YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR CULTURE LOOK AT  
PROFESSIONAL ATHLETES AS THEIR HEROES  
AND LOOK UP TO THEM.

\*\*\* THEN OTHERS, BELIEVE IT OR NOT, LOOK TO  
POLITICS TO FIND HEROES. BUT I THINK THAT  
MOST OF YOU WOULD AGREE THAT IN POLITICS  
AND IN THE POLITICAL ARENA THERE IS A  
GROWING EROSION OF INTEGRITY AND  
DECENCY. AND THERE ARE POLITICIANS THAT  
**ARE HONEST, GOOD PEOPLE. (BUT IT'S A DYING**  
BREED, BUT THERE **ARE SOME. I DON'T WANT**  
TO BE TOTALLY **CYNICAL TODAY, AND THAT'S A**  
DANGER.)

\*\*\*\* AND THEN IN THE PURSUIT OF FINDING GREAT PEOPLE, SOME LOOK TO BUSINESS LEADERS, YET MANY CORPORATE LEADERS TODAY ARE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT PROFIT OVER PEOPLE. AND PROFIT IS IMPORTANT FOR A BUSINESS TO STAY IN BUSINESS AND FUNCTION, BUT PEOPLE AND FAMILIES WHO WORK FOR BUSINESSES HAVE TO BE A PRIORITY ALSO.

- AND I REALIZE IN A WORLD MARKET THERE IS **A FINE LINE BETWEEN THE TWO AND IT'S** DIFFICULT TO STAY COMPETITIVE.

(2) AND I COULD GO TO OTHER SECULAR ARENAS IN OUR PURSUIT OF GREAT PEOPLE, OF ROLE MODELS, EXAMPLES AND HEROES.

\* LIKE EDUCATORS, MUSICIANS, MILITARY LEADERS, THOSE IN THE MEDICAL PROFESSION AND IN THE HOME, PARENTS.

\*\* BUT ONE PLACE WE CAN ALWAYS GO TO FIND ROLE MODELS, EXAMPLES, HEROES AND TRULY GREAT PEOPLE IS THE BIBLE, THE WORD OF GOD.

\*\*\* AND OUR ULTIMATE PERFECT EXAMPLE IS WHOM? THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. AND TO BE LIKE CHRIST SHOULD BE THE ULTIMATE PURSUIT FOR A PERSON WHO CLAIMS TO BE A CHRISTIAN.

\*\*\*\* JESUS CHRIST WAS AND IS OUR ONLY PERFECT EXAMPLE, ONE WHO WAS THE EPITOME OF TRUE GREATNESS. AND YOU CAN NEVER GO WRONG IN FOLLOWING HIS PATTERN.

(3) BUT ALSO WE NEED HUMAN PATTERNS. AND WE HAVE THEM IN SCRIPTURE, MEN LIKE JOSEPH, WOMEN LIKE ESTHER AND RUTH, MEN LIKE PAUL IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

\* IN FACT, PAUL COULD SAY IN I CORINTHIANS 11:1 (QUOTE IT). ALSO QUOTE I CORINTHIANS 4:16, PHILIPPIANS 3:17, PHILIPPIANS 4:9.

\*\* AND IN THE N.T. LEADERSHIP IS SYNONYMOUS WITH EXAMPLESHIP, PAUL TOLD TIMOTHY IN I TIMOTHY 4:12: (QUOTE IT).

\*\*\* AND AS LEADERS IN OUR HOMES, IN THE CHURCH AND IN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS WE AS BELIEVERS NEED TO LEAD BY EXAMPLE EVEN THOUGH WE KNOW WE ARE FLAWED, CRACKED VESSELS. BUT LET IT BE SAID OF US FOR **CHRIST'S GLORY, SHE TRULY IS A GREAT WOMAN OR HE IS A GREAT GUY**, MATTHEW 5:16, I PETER 3:15 – NICE PEOPLE.

\*\*\*\* WELL IN OUR TEXT TODAY, JESUS TALKS ABOUT TRUE SPIRITUAL GREATNESS. OUR LORD **SETS FORTH GOD'S MEASURE OF GREATNESS**, FIRST IN THE HUMAN, HISTORICAL DIMENSION AS SEEN IN THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIZER.

(4) AND THEN JESUS BRIEFLY CONTRASTS **JOHN'S GREATNESS WITH THE SUPERIOR GREATNESS OF KINGDOM CITIZENS**.

**\* IN LIGHT OF THAT I'VE TITLED THE MESSAGE TODAY, "TRUE SPIRITUAL GREATNESS".**

\*\* AND MUCH OF THE MESSAGE TODAY WILL POINT TO A HUMAN MODEL, TO A SPIRITUAL HERO OF SPIRITUAL GREATNESS, JOHN THE BAPTIZER.

\*\*\* AND WITH THAT THEME IN THE FOREFRONT, **WE'LL LOOK AT** 4 POINTS, NO. 1 THE CHARACTER OF JOHN, VV. 24&25; NO. 2 THE CALL OF JOHN, VV. 26&27; NO. 3 THE COMPLIMENT BY JESUS ABOUT JOHN, V. 28; AND NO. 4 THE CONTRIBUTION BY JOHN, VV. 29&30.

\*\*\*\* **SO WE'LL LOOK AT THE CHARACTER, THE CALL, THE COMPLIMENT AND THE CONTRIBUTION UNDER THE TITLE OF TRUE SPIRITUAL GREATNESS. AND WITH THAT IN MIND, LOOK AT V. 24 WHERE WE'LL START TO SEE OUR FIRST POINT TODAY, THE CHARACTER OF JOHN.**

I. THE CHARACTER, (READ V. 24)

A. NOW IF YOU RECALL FROM OUR STUDY TWO WEEKS AGO, JOHN SENT TWO OF HIS DISCIPLES TO JESUS TO ASK HIM IF HE WAS TRULY THE MESSIAH OR SHOULD WE LOOK FOR SOMEONE ELSE.

\* AND JOHN TRULY BELIEVED ON JESUS AS HIS LORD AND SAVIOR BUT HAD BEEN IN PRISON FOR UP TO A YEAR AND SOME DOUBTS STARTED TO COME TO MIND, THE QUESTIONS WHY.

\*\* AND TO DEAL WITH HIS DOUBT, JOHN DOES THE RIGHT THING, HE GOES TO JESUS FOR ANSWERS, **AND SINCE HE CAN'T GO IN PERSON, (HE'S IN PRISON)** HE SENDS TWO OF HIS DISCIPLES WHOM HAD BEEN VISITING HIM, AND THEY ASK THE QUESTION FOR JOHN.

**\*\*\* WELL, JESUS ANSWERS JOHN'S QUESTIONS**  
IN VV. 22&23 IN LUKE 7, AND NOW AS WE COME  
TO V. 24, **JOHN'S DISCIPLES** ARE GOING BACK TO  
GIVE JOHN THE ANSWER FROM JESUS, V. 24A  
**"WHEN THE MESSENGERS OF JOHN HAD LEFT,"**  
**AS JOHN'S DISCIPLES WERE LEAVING,**  
DEPARTING. BUT AS THEY ARE LEAVING, JESUS  
UNDERSTOOD THAT THE MULTITUDES THAT HAD  
LISTENED TO JOHN PREACH WOULD HAVE SOME  
QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT THEY JUST  
WITNESSED.

\*\*\*\* FOR UNDERSTAND, JESUS DID NOT HAVE A  
PRIVATE MEETING WITH THE DISCIPLES OF  
JOHN, IT WAS IN FRONT OF EVERYBODY, IT WAS  
NOT A CLOSED DOOR SESSION.

1. AND AS THE MULTITUDES HEARD ABOUT THE  
DOUBT OF JOHN, WHO WAS PRETTY FAMOUS,  
AND HAD HEARD JOHN PREACH, THEY MUST  
HAVE WONDERED ABOUT JOHN.



\* WAS JOHN NOT AS TRUSTWORTHY AS THEY THOUGHT? WAS HIS MESSAGE RELIABLE? WAS HE A TRUE PROPHET? IS HE THE GREAT MAN OF GOD WE THOUGHT HE WAS? THEIR EXPECTATIONS OF JOHN AS A PROPHET WOULD BE QUESTIONED.

\*\* WELL, THE OMNISCIENT JESUS WOULD HAVE KNOWN WHAT THEY WERE THINKING, SO TO THE MULTITUDES HE ADDRESSES THEIR QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS BY ASKING SEVERAL QUESTIONS IN VV. 24-26.

\*\*\* **AND THE FIRST WAS, "WHAT DID YOU GO OUT INTO THE WILDERNESS, THE JUDEAN DESERT AND THE DESERTED PLACES TO SEE? A REED SHAKEN BY THE WIND?"**

\*\*\*\* AND THE REED TO WHICH JESUS REFERRED WAS COMMON ALONG NEAR EASTERN RIVER BANKS, INCLUDING THOSE OF THE JORDAN WHERE JOHN BAPTIZED.

2. AND THESE REEDS WERE LIGHT AND FLEXIBLE, BLOWING BACK AND FORTH WITH EVERY BREEZE, THESE REEDS WERE A CANE LIKE GRASS THAT GREW AND WOULD BEND ACCORDING TO WHAT DIRECTION THE WIND WAS BLOWING.

\* AND A REED SHAKEN BY THE WIND IS A METAPHORIC WAY OF SAYING A FICKLE PERSON WHO IS EASILY SWAYED BY OPINION.

\*\* ONE WHO VACILLATES, ONE WHO SWAYED BY POPULAR OPINION, TODAY ONE WHO IS SWAYED BY THE POLLS, NOT CONVICTION BUT POPULARITY.

\*\*\* MOREOVER, TO COMPARE A PERSON TO A REED WAS TO SAY THAT THE PERSON WAS WITHOUT MORAL FIBER OR COURAGE, EASILY TOSSED ABOUT BY VARIOUS OPINIONS, NEVER TAKING A STAND ON ANYTHING.

\*\*\*\* AND THE PEOPLE WHO WENT OUT TO HEAR JOHN KNEW THAT HE WAS NOT THAT KIND OF GUY. I MEAN IF EVER THERE HAD BEEN A MAN WITH UNSWERVING CONVICTIONS, IT WAS JOHN.

3. HE STOOD UP TO THE SCRIBES, THE PHARISEES, THE SADDUCEES, AND EVEN TO HEROD HIMSELF FOR WHICH BOLDNESS HE WAS NOW IN PRISON.

\* THE PEOPLE KNEW JOHN WAS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE FROM BEING SPINELESS OR DOUBLE-MINDED.

\*\* AS JOHN BUNYAN POINTS OUT IN HIS **PILGRIM'S PROGRESS**, "**MR. PLIABLE DOES NOT GO TO PRISON TO BE MARTYRED FOR THE TRUTH.**" (A PRETTY LOGICAL STATEMENT)

\*\*\* AND LIKE WILLIAM PENN, JOHN BELIEVED **THAT "RIGHT IS RIGHT, EVEN IF EVERYONE IS AGAINST IT, AND WRONG IS WRONG, EVEN IF EVERYONE IS FOR IT."**

\*\*\*\* AND OH HOW WE NEED MEN AND WOMEN OF CONVICTION LIKE THAT TODAY, WHOM DETERMINE WHAT IS RIGHT BY WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS NOT BY WHAT THE MAJORITY OF AMERICANS BELIEVE IS RIGHT BY THE LATEST POLL. (AN ASSUMPTION THAT THE MAJORITY IS RIGHT.)

4. BELOVED WE NEED MEN AND WOMEN, MOTHERS AND FATHERS WHO LIVE THEIR LIVES ACCORDING TO THE UNCHANGING TRUTHS OF THE WORD OF GOD, WHO KNOW WHAT THEY BELIEVE AND WHY BIBLICALLY THEY BELIEVE WHAT THEY BELIEVE!!

\* WE NEED CHRISTIANS WHO DO RIGHT OVER WANTING TO FEEL **RIGHT AND STAND FOR GOD'S** TRUTH IN A WORLD OF LIES, SPIN AND DECEPTION.

**\*\* AND THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT WE NEVER**  
CHANGE OUR MIND, FOR AS WE GROW IN THE  
WORD AND IN GRACE, GOD CHANGES US, BUT  
WHEN WE KNOW AND ARE ASSURED THAT  
SOMETHING IS TRUE FROM THE WORD WE  
STAND ON IT AND ARE NOT DOUBLE-MINDED,  
QUOTE JAMES 1:8, EPHESIANS 4:14 AND  
ROMANS 16:17&18.

\*\*\* AND BELOVED, JOHN THE BAPTIZER WAS  
NOT DOUBLE-MINDED BUT A MAN OF  
CONVICTION AND COURAGE, HE WAS NOT A  
REED SHAKEN BY THE WIND, HE WAS A SOLID  
OAK AND THE MULTITUDES KNEW IT AS JESUS  
REMINDED THEM OF THAT.

\*\*\*\* BUT NOT ONLY WAS JOHN A MAN OF  
COURAGE, WHICH MADE HIM SPIRITUALLY  
GREAT BUT HE WAS ALSO A MAN OF SELF-  
DENIAL, LOOK AT V. 25 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 25. NOW JESUS ASKED ANOTHER QUESTION TO COMMUNICATE JOHN'S SPIRITUAL GREATNESS, HE SAYS, "DID YOU GO OUT TO SEE A MAN DRESSED IN SOFT CLOTHING OR FINE CLOTHES?"

\* AND WHAT SOFT OR FINE CLOTHING WAS, IS **MADE CLEAR BY CHRIST'S WORDS, THOSE WHO WEAR SOFT CLOTHING ARE IN ROYAL PALACES, KING'S PALACES.**

\*\* AND PEOPLE IN THE PALACES OF THAT DAY WERE PEOPLE WHO DRESSED IN A WAY THAT WAS SELF-INDULGENT, NOT WITH GOOD CLOTHES, BUT CLOTHES THAT WERE EXTRAVAGANT, INDULGENT BEYOND WHAT WAS NORMAL, TO DRESS IN LUXURY.

\*\*\* BUT NOT JOHN. FOR THE SELF-INDULGENT PERSON DRESSED IN SOFT CLOTHING DOES NOT LIVE IN THE WILDERNESS AS JOHN DID. JOHN **DIDN'T LIVE IN A PALACE, HE LIVED IN THE WILDERNESS BEFORE HIS IMPRISONMENT.**

**\*\*\* JOHN DIDN'T WEAR FANCY SELF-INDULGENT CLOTHES, HE DIDN'T LIVE LIKE A KING, HE WORE A GARMENT OF CAMEL'S HAIR, AND A LEATHER BELT ABOUT HIS WAIST; AND HIS FOOD WAS LOCUSTS AND WILD HONEY, ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 3:4.**

1. JOHN LIVED A LIFE OF SELF-DENIAL. AND HIS LIFESTYLE WAS A LIVING VISUAL PROTEST AGAINST SELF-INDULGENCE AND SELF-CENTEREDNESS.

\* JOHN THE BAPTIZER WAS NOT A SELF-SEEKER OR A SELF-SERVER. AND PHYSICALLY HE DRESSED, ATE AND LIVED FAR APART FROM THE HYPOCRITICAL AND CORRUPT RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL SYSTEMS.

**\*\* AND I'M NOT SAYING WE CAN'T DRESS NICE. I WANT TO LOOK NICE FOR THE LORD AND REPRESENT HIM WELL, BUT I DON'T NEED A THOUSAND DOLLAR SUIT TO DO THAT!**

\*\*\* AND AS BELIEVERS WE HAVE TO WATCH OUT FOR WHAT WE LIVE FOR, MORE CLOTHES, MORE **THINGS. AND HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH? I CAN'T** ANSWER THAT FOR YOU, BUT AS YOU WALK WITH THE LORD, **YOU'LL KNOW WHEN YOU** CROSS THE LINE INTO SELF-INDULGENCE AS YOU ARE SENSITIVE TO THE PROMPTINGS OF THE SPIRIT.

\*\*\*\* AND THE PEOPLE WHO WENT OUT TO SEE AND HEAR JOHN KNEW THAT HE WAS NOT A SELF-INDULGENT MAN BUT A MAN OF SELF-DENIAL. JOHN WAS A MAN OF CHARACTER AND CONVICTION, AND THOSE WERE TWO REASONS HE WAS SPIRITUALLY GREAT.

- BUT ALSO JOHN WAS SPIRITUALLY GREAT BECAUSE OF HIS CALL, LOOK AT V. 26 WHERE **WE'LL START TO SEE OUR 2'D POINT TODAY, THE** CALL.



## II. THE CALL, (READ V. 26)

**A. NOW JOHN'S** THIRD MARK OF GREATNESS WAS HIS PRIVILEGED CALLING AND JESUS COMMUNICATES THAT BY ASKING ANOTHER **QUESTION, "WHAT DID YOU GO OUT, TO SEE A PROPHET?" AND THE ANSWER WAS YES. JOHN** WAS A TRUE PROPHET OF GOD AND THE PEOPLE KNEW IT.

\* AND MOST OF THE PEOPLE DID INDEED CONSIDER JOHN TO BE A PROPHET. IN FACT IN MATTHEW 14:5 IT SAYS THAT, AND WAS THE **REASON HEROD DIDN'T KILL JOHN RIGHT AWAY** BECAUSE THE PEOPLE REGARDED JOHN AS A PROPHET.

\*\* MATTHEW **14:5 SAYS: "AND ALTHOUGH HE** WANTED TO PUT HIM TO DEATH, HE FEARED THE MULTITUDE, BECAUSE THEY REGARDED HIM **AS A PROPHET."**

\*\*\* SO THE PEOPLE CONSIDERED JOHN TO BE A PROPHET, BUT HE WAS MORE THAN JUST A REGULAR PROPHET, AND WHAT JESUS MEANS BY THAT STATEMENT IS COMMUNICATED IN V. 27, SO LOOK AT V. 27 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 27. NOW IN V. 27, JESUS QUOTES THE OLD TESTAMENT, SPECIFICALLY MALACHI 3:1, AND BY QUOTING THAT TEXT JESUS IS SHOWING THAT JOHN WAS A SPECIAL PROPHET WITH A SPECIAL CALL.

\* FOR JOHN WAS THE PROPHET WHO WAS TO **PAVE THE WAY FOR THE MESSIAH'S COMING, HE** WAS TO DECLARE AS A PROPHET THAT THE LORD WAS COMING, THE MESSIAH.

\*\* AND JOHN IN ESSENCE WAS BOTH PROPHET AND FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY. HE WAS **GOD'S** MESSENGER WHO WAS TO PREPARE THE WAY FOR THE MESSIAH AND WHO WOULD EVEN BAPTIZE HIM.

\*\*\* JOHN ANNOUNCED THE MESSIAH AND MINISTERED TO THE MESSIAH WITH HIS OWN HANDS AS NO OTHER PROPHET HAD DONE OR WOULD EVER AGAIN DO.

\*\*\*\* AND AFTER A FEW THOUSAND YEARS OF **GOD'S PREPARATION AND PREDICTION, JOHN** WAS GIVEN THE UNEQUALED PRIVILEGE OF **BEING THE MESSIAH'S PERSONAL HERALD**, A GREAT PRIVILEGE AND A SPECIAL CALLING, HE **WAS THE LORD'S MESSENGER WHOM WOULD** PREPARE THE WAY.

1. WHICH LEADS TO OUR THIRD POINT TODAY, THE COMPLIMENT BY JESUS ABOUT JOHN. LOOK AT V. 28 PLEASE.

### III. THE COMPLIMENT, (READ V. 28)

A. NOW IN V. 28, JESUS PAYS JOHN THE ULTIMATE COMPLIMENT THEN BRINGS SOME BALANCE TO IT.

\* AND CONTINUING HIS PRAISE OF JOHN, JESUS SAID, **"I SAY TO YOU."**

**\*\* AND HERE'S THE TRUE TRUTH, "BORN OF WOMAN, THERE HAS NOT ARISEN ANYONE GREATER THAN JOHN THE BAPTIZER."**

\*\*\* NOW THE PHRASE BORN OF WOMAN WAS A COMMON ANCIENT EXPRESSION THAT SIMPLY REFERRED TO BASIC HUMANNES, TO IDENTIFICATION WITH THE HUMAN RACE.

**1. AND JESUS' POINT WAS THAT, AS FAR AS MANKIND IS CONCERNED, THERE HAS NOT ARISEN ANYONE GREATER THAN JOHN THE BAPTIZER.**

\* IN OTHER WORDS, HE WAS THE GREATEST HUMAN BEING WHO HAD LIVED UNTIL THAT TIME.

\*\* I MEAN FROM AN EARTHLY PERSPECTIVE, **JOHN'S CHARACTER AND CALLING MADE HIM** THE GREATEST MAN YET BORN BESIDES JESUS HIMSELF. IN SUPERIOR QUALITIES AS A HUMAN BEING, JOHN WAS UNEQUALED.

\*\*\* BUT. BUT LEST THE PEOPLE **MISUNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF JOHN'S GREATNESS, JESUS ADDED, "YET HE WHO IS LEAST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS GREATER THAN HE."**

\*\*\*\* THE MEANING BEING ALTHOUGH JOHN WAS A SPIRITUAL GIANT AMONG MEN, **JOHN'S** UNIQUE GREATNESS WAS IN HIS ROLE IN REDEMPTIVE HISTORY, NOT IN HIS SPIRITUAL INHERITANCE, IN WHICH AS A HUMAN BEING HE WOULD BE EQUAL TO EVERY BELIEVER.

2. THEREFORE, THE LEAST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION, IS GREATER THAN HE, THAT IS, THAN ANYONE IN THE HUMAN DIMENSION, INCLUDING JOHN.

\* TO ADD TO THAT, THE MACARTHUR STUDY **BIBLE SAYS AT THIS POINT, "JOHN WAS** GREATER THAN THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS BECAUSE HE ACTUALLY SAW WITH HIS EYES AND PERSONALLY PARTICIPATED IN THE FULFILLMENT OF WHAT THEY ONLY PROPHESED.

\*\* BUT ALL BELIEVERS AFTER THE CROSS ARE GREATER STILL, BECAUSE THEY PARTICIPATE IN THE FULL UNDERSTANDING AND EXPERIENCE OF SOMETHING JOHN MERELY FORESAW IN SHADOWY FORM, THE ACTUAL ATONING WORK OF CHRIST." **(END QUOTE)** AND IN THAT SENSE WE ARE GREATER THAN JOHN, ALL OF IT IS UNFOLDED TO US, THE CROSS IS A FACT, NOT A PROPHECY FOR US.

\*\*\* SO JESUS BALANCES OUT HIS STATEMENT, BUT JOHN OBVIOUSLY WAS A GREAT MAN OF GOD, WHICH LEADS US TO V. **29 WHERE WE'LL** START TO SEE OUR FOURTH AND LAST POINT, THE CONTRIBUTION OF JOHN, LOOK AT V. 29 PLEASE.

#### IV. THE CONTRIBUTION, (READ V. 29)

A. NOW IT IS HARD TO DETERMINE WHETHER VV. 29&30 ARE SPOKEN BY JESUS OR ARE **LUKE'S EDITORIAL COMMENT**, A KIND OF PARENTHESIS.

\* ARGUMENTS ARE MADE BOTH WAYS. BUT THE **IMPORTANT THING TO SEE IS JOHN'S** PREACHING CAUSED TWO REPOSSES TO JESUS.

**\*\* IT IS TO SAY THAT JOHN'S CONTRIBUTION OF** PREACHING A BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE IN PREPARING **PEOPLE FOR CHRIST IN GOD'S** PROVIDENCE CONTRIBUTED TO SOME PEOPLE TURNING TO SEE THEIR SIN AND OTHERS REJECTING THEIR NEED OF REPENTANCE.

\*\*\* AND SPECIFICALLY IN V. 29 WHEN SOME PEOPLE HEARD THE MESSAGE OF JOHN, INCLUDING DOWN AND OUT TAX COLLECTORS, THE LOWEST LEVEL OF JEWS ON THE JEWISH FOOD CHAIN, WHERE THE TAX COLLECTORS AND ALL THE PEOPLE, WHICH MOST LIKELY REPRESENTS OTHER LOW PEOPLE, MEANING COMMON PEOPLE, NON-RELIGIOUS LEADERS, **THEY ACKNOWLEDGED GOD'S JUSTICE.**

\*\*\*\* **WHICH MEANS THAT THROUGH JOHN'S POWERFUL PREACHING THEY ACKNOWLEDGED GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

1. IN OTHER WORDS, THEY CONFESSED, THEY ADMITTED THAT THEY WERE SINNERS AND THAT GOD WAS RIGHTEOUS, THAT GOD IS HOLY AND THUS JUST TO CONDEMN THEM FOR THEIR SIN AND CALL THEM TO REPENTANCE



\* AND THE FRUITS OF THEIR REPENTANCE WAS THEY, ACCORDING TO THE LAST PART OF V. 29, THEY AGREED TO BE BAPTIZED WITH THE BAPTISM OF JOHN, PUBLICLY CONFESSING **THEMSELVES TO BE OUTSIDE OF GOD'S** KINGDOM AND NO BETTER OFF THAN THE PAGAN GENTILES.

\*\* BELOVED THE GROUP IN V. 29 SAW THEIR SIN AND NEED TO REPENT, JOHN WAS USED BY THE LORD FOR THEM TO SEE THEIR NEED OF THE COMING MESSIAH. GOD WAS RIGHT ABOUT THEIR SIN.

\*\*\* HOWEVER, THERE IS A HUGE CONTRAST IN V. 30. LOOK AT V. 30 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 30. NOW IN CONTRAST TO TAX COLLECTORS AND COMMON JEWS, THE RELIGIOUS ELITE IN ISRAEL, THE PHARISEES, **THE LAWYERS OR SCRIBES, REJECTED GOD'S PURPOSE IN JOHN'S PREACHING. THEY REJECTED GOD'S SALVATION.**

**\* THEY REJECTED GOD'S CALL TO REPENT, THEY REJECTED GOD'S VIEW OF THEIR SIN AND NEED. THEY REJECTED THAT THEY WERE UNRIGHTEOUS IN GOD'S HOLY VIEW OF THEM.**

\*\* THUS, AT THE END OF V. 30, THEY WERE NOT BAPTIZED BY JOHN, A BAPTISM THAT WAS A FRUIT OF REPENTANCE, NOT AS A MEANS OF REPENTANCE, BUT GAVE EVIDENCE OF REPENTANCE.

AND IN WRAP UP AND IN APPLICATION: (1) THESE TWO GROUPS OF PEOPLE REPRESENT THE TWO RESPONSES OF PEOPLE TO THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST TODAY.

\* SOME SEE THEIR SIN AND THE HEINOUSNESS OF THEIR SIN AND LACK OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND THEY SEE THEIR NEED OF REPENTANCE AND FAITH, THEY SEE THEIR NEED OF A SAVIOR, THAT THEY CANNOT EVER BE RIGHTEOUS OR RELIGIOUS ENOUGH ON THEIR OWN TO BE MADE RIGHT WITH GOD.

\*\* THEY NEED TO BE JUSTIFIED BY GRACE ALONE, THROUGH FAITH ALONE IN JESUS CHRIST ALONE. AND THOSE PEOPLE WHO SEE THAT AND TURN IN REPENTANT FAITH TO JESUS ARE JUSTIFIED, DECLARED RIGHTEOUS, MADE RIGHT WITH GOD.

\*\* BUT SELF-**RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE DON'T SEE** THAT, MANY OF THEM ARE RELIGIOUS FOR THEY TRUST IN THEMSELVES, THEIR GOODNESS, THEIR RELIGION. THEY ACKNOWLEDGE SIN BUT DOWNPLAY THEIR OWN SIN.

\*\*\* THEY HAVE SMALL THOUGHTS OF SIN AND LARGE THOUGHTS ABOUT SELF. BUT IF YOU HAVE SMALL THOUGHTS ABOUT SIN, YOU WILL NEVER HAVE RIGHT THOUGHTS ABOUT GOD.

\*\*\*\* IF YOU SEE YOURSELF AS WORTHY RATHER THAN BEING WORTHLESS WITHOUT THE FORGIVENESS OF A HOLY PURE GOD OF LIGHT, YOU WILL NOT TURN TO THE SAVIOR.

2. AND ONE OF THE REASONS JOHN WAS GREAT AND GREATLY USED BY GOD, WAS HE PREACHED A MESSAGE OF REPENTANCE, HE PREACHED ABOUT SIN, SO GOD WOULD GRANT REPENTANCE AND FAITH.

\* AND THE FINAL QUESTION TODAY BEYOND THE APPLICATIONS I HAVE ALREADY MADE EARLIER TO CHRISTIANS IS, HOW DO YOU VIEW YOURSELF IN THE SIGHT OF A HOLY GOD?

\*\* WORTHY OR UNWORTHY? ONLY JESUS CHRIST CAN DECLARE US WORTHY, FOR WITHOUT HIM WE ARE UNWORTHY. COME IN REPENTANT FAITH TO HIM TODAY IF HE IS NOT **YOUR LORD AND SAVIOR. (LET'S PRAY)**