

February 5, 2023 – Pastor Kevin Olivier

Luke 3:1-20 – “Fruits of Repentance”

A. The preaching of John the Baptist includes some of the most vivid & frightening threats in all of the Holy Scripture.

B. Let us review the prior context concerning Zacharias & Elizabeth & their miracle child.

To be saved you must embrace Christ by faith & demonstrate fruit in keeping with repentance.	I. <u>PREPARATION FOR CHRIST</u> II. <u>FRUITS OF REPENTANCE</u>
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I. PREPARATION FOR CHRIST → **vv2-3**

A. Key in John’s preaching was the necessity of “**a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.**”

1. “**Repentance**” is one of the most important words in the NT & in the Christian life.
 - a. The Greek word here is “**metanoia**” which means “to change one’s way of life as the result of a complete change of thought and attitude with regard to sin and righteousness—‘to repent, to change one’s way, repentance.’”¹
 - b. The Holy Spirit’s intent wasn’t that we just believe in Jesus; true repentance involved a change in one’s way of life— especially the turning from one’s sinful ways.
2. Those who were coming to be baptized by John were making a commitment to repent of their sinful ways.

B. While writing his gospel account, Luke inserted the prophecy of Isaiah foretelling John’s preparation for the Christ. → **vv4-6**

1. Don’t miss the transportation imagery here. Imagine travel with a mule-drawn cart through ravines, mountains, hills, crooked & rough roads; it seems almost impossible.
2. Those hearing John preach didn’t make the connection between John & Isaiah’s prophecy; **v15** makes that evident: “**the people were in a state of expectation & all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he was the Christ.**” Some even asked him.

C. “**John answered**” them that he was not the Christ—the Messiah. → **v16**

1. Any good preacher indwelt by the Holy Spirit, like John, will not exalt themselves but will exalt the Messiah—the Christ— instead.
2. Some preachers want to preach themselves, your best life now, health, or wealth.

D. John said that the Messiah was divine doing the work of God as the Judge of mankind. → **v17**

1. It is the prerogative of God alone to judge the living & the dead.
2. It should be your desire to be found as the wheat of Christ rather than the chaff to be burned with unquenchable fire.

¹ Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 509). United Bible Societies.

II. FRUITS OF REPENTANCE → v7

A. Although Dale Carnegie pushed an agenda of *How to Win Friends & Influence People*, the Holy Spirit taught John it was more important to bring the proud down a notch or 2 or 3 notches.

1. No doubt many he was speaking to were the religious elites such as the Scribes & Pharisees.
2. In Mat 12, Jesus called the Pharisees a “**brood of vipers**” because they committed blasphemy of the Holy Spirit by calling His divine work the work of Satan (vv24-37).

B. One of the massive, damnable sins John pointed out was that of covenant presumption. → v8

1. A young person today shouldn't say, I know I am going to heaven because I have a Christian pastor, elder, or deacon as my father.
2. You kids have heard me often cite Gen 17:7 wherein God promised Abraham: “**I will establish My covenant between Me & you & your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you & to your descendants after you.**”
 - a. You have heard me also mention this promise in how it is connected to Peter's sermon in Acts 2 when he said, “**For the promise is for you & your children & for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself**” (v39).
 - b. It is a very wrong interpretation that God is your God just because your parents are Christians. Just as it was necessary for your parents to repent & believe the gospel, you must do the same. You kids grow up under the blessed means of grace; however, as you come to an understanding, you likewise must repent & believe the gospel to be saved. Thereafter you must likewise “**bear fruits in keeping with repentance**” (v8).

C. John's words have a vital warning for you who profess faith yet are fruitless. → v9

D. John's preaching put the fear of God in many who heard him. In v10 they asked, “**Then what shall we do?**” → Look at John's answer in vv11-14.

1. Some may say these words of John sound more like salvation by good works rather than salvation by faith alone.
2. What John is saying by the Holy Spirit is that saving faith should transform what sort of person you are— a loving, giving, fair, honest, & content person.

E. Herod likely didn't ask John, “what shall I do?” John told him anyway. → vv19-20.

1. John did what was right despite the consequences.
2. If a nation says preaching against sexual immorality such as homosexuality is illegal hate speech, true men of God must speak the truth in love even if prison is the consequence.

Review, further application, & conclusion: