

## JOHN the BAPTIST'S GOSPEL

Luke 3:1-22

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, 2 during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. 3 And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 4 As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness:  
'Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight.  
5 Every valley shall be filled,  
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,  
and the crooked shall become straight,  
and the rough places shall become level ways,  
6 and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

7 He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. 9 Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

10 And the crowds asked him, "What then shall we do?" 11 And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise." 12 Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" 13 And he said to them, "Collect no more than you are authorized to do." 14 Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages."

15 As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, 16 John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. 17 His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

18 So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people. 19 But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reproved by him for Herodias, his brother's wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done, 20 added this to them all, that he locked up John in prison.

21 Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, 22 and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

ESV

Ask and answer two questions:

**First: WHO WAS JOHN the BAPTIST?**

Malachi 3:1; 4:4-6 Remember Elijah? rough clothing;  
confronted King Ahab; "troubled" Israel; Baal prophets; fire from heaven!

Luke 1:13, 17 John was the answer to prayer.

Matthew 11:7-15; 17:3,10-13 John came in the spirit of Elijah;  
rough clothing; confronted King Herod.

Luke 3:2 John received revelation from God after 400 years of silence

John the Baptist was indeed the last O.T. prophet, "and more."

He was also the first N.T. preacher. John 1:29-37.

## Second: WHAT DID JOHN the BAPTIST PREACH?

As we examine John's message ask yourself, "What is the Gospel?"

*"...Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.... "*

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

There's an odd-looking man down by the Jordan River; let's go hear what he has to say. Not too many of John's words are recorded, but the Holy Spirit gave us exactly what we needed.

John dealt with at least 8 subjects:

### 1. A baptism of repentance (3)

Notice that baptism was conditioned on repentance, it did not cause repentance; it was the public declaration of what had already happened in the heart.

Repentance is defined as a change of mind, and fruit is demanded!

Let's use a 2014 example: Can a homosexual be saved?  
Of course. Can they continue their homosexual lifestyle and be saved? NO! Not unless they can get the Holy Spirit to remove Romans One; 1 Corinthians 6:9 and several other passages from the Word of God.

The agenda of the Sodomites is that you must accept them as Sodomites.

Repentance is not conviction.

It is not a sorrow for the consequences of sin; it is sorrow for the sin itself.

Illustration: alarm clock = conviction; getting out of bed = repentance;  
I repent **from** my bed and **to** the floor.

We repent **from** sin and **toward** righteousness. Or, we have not repented!

**Repentance is a change of mind:**

**Have I changed my mind about myself?**

Am I a beggar before Christ?  
Do I deserve to be in Hell?  
Is Christ on the throne in my heart?

**Have I changed my mind about God?**

Do I still refer to God in vulgar and profane ways? OMG!  
Do I still use Jesus' name for profanity?  
What forms my opinion (glory) of God?  
My imagination or the Bible?

**Have I changed my mind about God's claims?**

My will or God's will?  
Don't talk about a sovereign God who is not your Sovereign.

**Have I changed my mind about my need for repentance?**

**Robert Brimsmead:**

"I am so sinful, most of the time I don't think I am sinful"

**Ask: "Would John baptize me?"**

## 2. A baptism of repentance for the remission of sins (3)

Remission is the sending-away pictured by the Scapegoat in Leviticus 16.

It is clear in this passage that the little word "for" means "in reference to" repentance. It cannot mean "in order to..." repentance. But some do teach that "for" means "in order to..." For example, they teach that Acts 2:38 means that water baptism is necessary "in order to be saved."

My dear people it is the blood of Christ that takes away sin, not some act of obedience on your part! No act of obedience from the offering of the blood of bulls and goats to water baptism ever removed a single sin.

Look at the way the word "for" is used consistently in the Bible.

Romans 5:6 says "Christ died **for** the ungodly."  
Now did Christ die **in order to** make us ungodly,  
or did He die **in reference to** the ungodly?

John baptized **in reference to** the remission of sins.

## 3. Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come (7) - judgment

Salvation is judgment come before its time.  
I agree with God! I deserve to be in hell!  
Until I can see the just condemnation of my sin I can't see my need for Christ.  
I don't need a Substitute if I'm not bound for hell!.

There is a sure and righteous judgment to come (9, 16-17).

## 4. Fruits worthy of repentance (8)

Confession of sin and acts of mercy

Have no confidence in the flesh; mine or Abraham's; not my heritage; not my church membership; some teach that you must belong to a particular group to be saved! Judas was a member of the "First Baptist Church of Jerusalem!"

Not "the Old Ship of Zion; " of the Primitive Baptists; not the Church of Christ; not any Landmark Baptist Church; not the Roman Catholic Church; all of these teach that you must be a member of their church in order to be saved!

They are saying: "We have Abraham as our father."

## **5. The matter is urgent! Even now (9)**

"Even now the ax is laid to the root of the tree...!"

Did you ever cut down a tree with an ax?

That last swing of the ax; the tree stands there waiting to fall??

No it comes down right now!

"Now is the accepted time...." 2 Cor. 6:2

Do not boast yourself of tomorrow!

## **6. Reformation is demanded (10-14)**

Reformation does not save you, but you are not saved apart from reform as evidenced by:

Unselfishness (11)

Honesty (12-13)

Contentment (14)

## **7. Live in expectation (15)**

Literally "on tiptoe" looking for Christ.

Are you anxious to know Christ?

## **8. Regeneration (16)**

John preached Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God - the Substitute for sin. John 1:36  
It is the Holy Spirit who regenerates; quickens the dead spirit; and Who sovereignly performs the new birth.

How does the Holy Spirit know whom to regenerate? Answer that correctly and you will understand something about the sovereignty of God.

The Gospel is preached in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Christ reveals Himself to the lost sinner; the Holy Spirit of God convinces a person of sin. If it pleases Christ to reveal Himself to you, the Holy Spirit will quicken you; make you alive in spirit, change your heart, and grant repentance.

It is Jesus Christ who is the Savior.

John the Baptist preached the Gospel (18).

All John or any other preacher can do is to point you to Christ.

The tests of a Gospel message"

Man the sinner;  
Christ is the Savior;  
Judgment is certain;  
Jesus is not a beggar.

### **What did John the Baptist preach? He preached the Gospel?**

repentance is demanded  
remission of sin is in evidence  
judgment is coming  
fruits are the evidence of repentance  
the need for repentance is urgent  
reformation is required (unselfishness, honesty, contentment)  
regeneration is in God's control  
Substitution (Lamb of God)

### **What did John preach?**

Cf. Acts 19:1-7 This was 20 years after John's murder!

These men had believed someone who had misrepresented what John preached and Paul sets them straight. Paul told them that John preached Jesus Christ!

**John the Baptist preached the Gospel.**

Vineland Park Baptist Church, Hueytown, AL	Oct 02, 1977
Wayside Baptist Church, Anniston, AL	Jan 20, 1980
Vineland Park Baptist Church	Jun 05, 1988
Vineland Park Baptist Church	Jun 21, 1992
Vineland Park Baptist Church	Dec 26, 1999
Vineland Park Baptist Church	May 21, 2014