

Sermon Title: The Narrative: A Voice From the Wilderness
Scripture Reading: Luke 3:1-14

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 Iturea 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.”

Luke 3:1-14

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Everything that Christians claim is grounded in history not fantasy.

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John the baptizer is bringing a message of good news

The baptism is dynamic involving elements of reflection, demonstration, affirmation, & connection

The work of John the baptizer was preparation for the messiah & participation in covenant renewal

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Repent & Believe

-John The Baptizer

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Religious

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But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
Matthew 3:7

Everyday people

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.”

Tax Collectors

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Soldiers

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.”

The fruit of repentance is always that which is true, beautiful, noble, good, & just

Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;

remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes;

cease to do evil,

¹⁷ learn to do good;

seek justice,

correct oppression;

bring justice to the fatherless,

plead the widow's cause.

Isaiah 1:16-17

Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. ²⁶ Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷ and give no opportunity to the devil. ²⁸ Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. ²⁹ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

Ephesians 4:25-29

Keep your heart with all vigilance,

for from it flow the springs of life.

Proverbs 4:23

Biblical repentance is not behavior modification, it's identity formation which means heart transformation

If God was calling to repentance right now, what would it look like?

-What areas would I need repentance in & why?

-What actions would He be calling me into & why?

Repent & Believe

-Jesus the Christ

Mark 1:14, Matthew 4:17, Luke 5:32, John 3:5-7

The Grid:

***Perspective:* The very call to repentance is powerful act of love & grace**

***Practice:* Personal & Social analysis through Spiritual Eyes**

Read Isaiah 40 sometime this week

Read the entire book of Isaiah something this week

***Picture from the other side:* People who delight in repentance**

