

Sermon Outline - Sun, Jan 23, 2021 - Vision in the Meantimes – Building Movement
Luke 3:1-20

Overview: We are in the final week of our series Vision in the Meantimes. We spent the last couple of weeks looking at the movement that John is building, and how he is preparing folks to receive Jesus. Last week we talked about how the movement treated the people's needs as holy, how he challenged people to do justice in the systems they were already in, and we looked at John's constant emphasis on him being the messenger but not the Messiah. This week we look at that ritual that John is most known for – Baptism.

Recap –

- John – born to great fanfare –first casualty of the Jesus movement
- How did he survive all those years with the knowledge of Jesus in a world that had no idea what was about to happen to them?
- He recognized the season that he was in and was faithful to
- He built a movement in preparation for the moment
- Was most known for his focus on baptism. A ritual tevillah → mikvah (monthly ritual married women preparing for new life- reset)

The Key Points – How does John learn to wait?

1. **Connected them with the natural spaces** – In this time and even now baptism was done in natural spaces not man-made space.
2. **Connected them with the Holy Spirit** – Water was a symbol of the Holy Spirit and her movement in the world.
3. **The ritual was an outward signal of an inward change** – They were called to repentance and to join this new movement. The baptism was a covenant towards that.

This Sabbath Sunday we've been looking at the notion of wintering. The idea that winter is not just something we tolerate for a few months as we pine for summer. It is the notion that there can be sacred benefit to following God's rhythm. Ecclesiastes 3 reminds us (There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens)

Winter is a time first of rest and Sabbath, and then a time when inner work begins that doesn't manifest right away until the Spring, but that work is absolutely crucial.

Questions

1. How can you welcome the cleansing of the natural spaces around you. Where can you lean into the rhythm that God creates and step out of the bustle?
2. Where do you need to welcome new life and the Holy Spirit? What issues do you need to deal with? What trauma do you need to attend to? What work can you do in this winter time to prepare yourself to be ready for spring?
3. What rituals might you embrace on a big and small level that can serve as an outward sign of your inner change? As we head towards Lent, Easter and beyond when and how do you want to practice these rituals?