

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

Overview: We are in the to the 4th Sunday of Vision Month at New Roots. We have been looking at Luke 3 and studying the story of John the Baptist in a sermon series we have been calling – Vision in the Meantimes. Last week we looked at how John reacts in these challenging times – We recognized that he went into the wilderness, he remembered God’s promises and he inspired the people to build a movement. Today we are going to lean a little more into looking at that movement.

Recap –

- John recap – his birth is heralded at the beginning of Luke and his father doesn’t get with the program at first, but by the time John is born, his father prophesies over him
- John is born into relative privilege but he lives his life out of the mainstream
- He is clear that Jesus is coming and his job is to prepare the way; In verses 10-14 the people ask him for really concrete ways that they can engage and he speaks to them and particularly the tax collectors and soldiers about what they can do to engage is the vision that God is bringing to pass.

The Key Points – How does John learn to wait?

1. **Treat the people’s needs as holy** (Obery Hindricks) – John sees that people are struggling and he knows they can’t move forward if their bellies are always empty or their bodies exposed. He challenges folks to take care of each other as a necessary step towards change.
2. **Bring justice to the systems you are engaged in** – He tells them not to wait for justice from elsewhere but to be active agents of justice in the places they are. To do their work with integrity and to demonstrate what it means to truly respect people in concrete ways in the places you have influence.
3. **Be clear that you are the messenger and not the Messiah!** – John keeps pointing people towards the coming of Jesus. He is very clear that folks should not look to him but to look for the bigger change that is coming. Far too often we lionize leaders rather than seeing the broader movement that they should take leadership from. Sometimes we have a savior complex where like people to be dependent on us. John pushed back on these things.

Questions

1. Where are you able to meet people’s needs in a way that honors their sacred status as children of God? How are you called to do this? How might New Roots create more collective opportunities for us to treat the people’s needs as holy?
2. What opportunities are there to bring more justice to the spaces that you are in? With whom could you do that work to begin system change in the places you are already rooted?
3. How can you use your engagement with others to point them back to the deeper change that only comes from divine movement? How can you bring sacred hope and rootedness into spaces were folks are trying for system change exclusively in their own human strength?