

# Luke 3

Keep your nose straight, eyes focused and mouth shut...and wait on the Lord

Salvation begins with knowing our need for a Savior  
Gods got a guy. His name is John. AKA John the Baptist

## I. John begins his Ministry

1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, 2 while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests...

- **Dr. Luke** details of political leaders approx. 27-29 AD
  1. **Tiberius Caesar**      Ruling over Roman Empire      Known for cruelty
  2. **Pontius Pilate**      Roman governor Judea      Known mass murder
  3. **Family of Herod**      Puppet leaders over Jews      Not known for kindness
  
- **Also currently...**
  1. **It is Approx. 18 years** after Jesus found in temple
  2. **Caiaphas** is High Priest w/Annas his father-in-Law

Jesus/John Baptist are late 20s/early 30s  
**Both will begin their ministries in this Chapter**

**2b...the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.**

**Word of God came to John:** Its go time...Let's do this

3 And [John] went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of **repentance** for the **remission** of sins...

**John hits ground running. Call to Baptism**

- **Repentance**      Turn from your sins
- **Remission**      Turn to God for forgiveness

**.... the people were ready.**

There was nothing strange in the ceremony of baptism [ceremonial immersion] itself. The strange thing was that **Jews submitted to baptism**. This was a common ritual for Gentiles who wanted to become Jews. For a Jew to submit to baptism was to say, "I'm as bad as a heathen Gentile." This was a true mark of **humble repentance**, a **radical rededication** to the Lord. [Guzik]

- Tired of living w/out victory
- Tired of living w/out purpose
- Tired of living w/out God...**Empty**.

## John offered hope... but not before hurt

4 ...as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying: "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 brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough ways smooth..."

John prepared the people for Jesus w/the Law of God

God's kindness should lead men to repentance, yet we cannot receive His kindness until **we acknowledge our badness**. That comes by the preaching of the Law. [NJC]

**John's Message:** You are not a good person

- **Have you ever** lied, stolen, committed adultery, Lord's Name in vain, murdered?

**John uses the Bulldozer of God's Law to prepare the way for Grace**

- |                              |                   |   |
|------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| ▪ <b>Lift every valley</b>   | <b>Self-pity</b>  | Repent of feeling sorry for yourself. Low.      |
| ▪ <b>Level mountains</b>     | <b>Pride</b>      | Repent of thinking more of yourself. High       |
| ▪ <b>Straighten crooked</b>  | <b>Perversity</b> | Repent of doing what is immoral/impure          |
| ▪ <b>Smooth what's rough</b> | <b>Anger</b>      | Repent of holding on bitterness. <b>Repent.</b> |

**So far John's Message is not the Good News.  
It is bad news...It's supposed to be**

**Romans 3:20** ...by the deeds of the law **no flesh will be justified** in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

**Purpose of the Law? John's Purpose? To be a Mirror**  
To bring people to point of **What must I do to be saved?**

- **Repent:** Turn from sin and to God....

**6 "...And all flesh shall see the salvation of God."**

After my work is done the world will see the Salvation of God  
Johns Work? Weed out phonies. Make-believers. **Posers...**

7 Then [John] said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, **"Brood of vipers!** Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

John does not seem to be Seeker friendly. Looking for true repentance/humility  
**Brood of Vipers...What's your motive?**

**Do you desire change because you're a wretched sinner?**

Or does that hoit your wittle feewings?

- Deserve nothing/Entitled to nothing

- **Pride or Humility** is revealed in the **way we respond...**

**Mark 7:24** [Jesus]... went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but He could not be hidden. 25 For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet. 26 The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. 27 But Jesus said to her, "Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and **throw it to the little dogs.**" 28 And she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs." 29 Then He said to her, "For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter." 30 And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and **her daughter lying on the bed.**

Humility is demonstrated by our response to God's Word

- **Naaman Commander of Army of Syria**

1. Man of valor/honored by all/Leper
2. Told by Elisha to **wash in Jordan**

**2 Kings 5:12** [Naaman became furious] Are not the...the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage. 13 And his servants came near and spoke to him, and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean?'" 14 So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and **his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child**, and he was clean. 15 And he returned to the man of God, he and all his aides, and came and stood before him; and he said, "**Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel...**"

- Praise God his friends encouraged Naaman to **repent of his pride**

### **Pride is very easy to identify. How?**

If you are easily offended...you are filled w/ Pride need to repent

- **John:** If you are serious about changing prove it...

**8 ... bear fruits worthy of repentance**, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.

- **Therefore...**If your real prove it. If you want God prove it...

1. **Turn from what offends Him**                      Good fruit [change]
2. **Don't come w/entitled**                              Know you deserve only judgment

### **Own your sin...Demonstrate sincerity to God by listening to Him/Repenting Turning from Sin/Turn to God**

- **Repentance is not optional:** Can't continue to...
  1. ...have sex before/outside of marriage      Think we're going to heaven
  2. ...love booze/drugs more than God      Think we're saved
  3. ...love money/pleasure more than God      Think we're born-again

Doesn't matter [at all] that you go to church or have Christian friends/parents  
**Real Question:** Do you desire to change because you know judgment is coming?

9 And even now **the ax is laid to the root** of the trees. Therefore every tree which **does not bear good** fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

No mere pruning and trimming work did John come to do: he was the handler of a sharp axe that was to fell every worthless tree [Spurgeon]

- **Repentance is not optional:** Eternal Judgment is coming!

**Hebrews 9:27** ... it is appointed for men to die once...**after this the judgment**

**Revelation 20:11** Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, **standing before God, and books were opened**. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the **dead were judged according to their works**, by the things which were written in the books...**14** Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was **cast into the lake of fire**.

- **Bear good fruit of be judged:** Fruit of repentance. Turn from sin to God.

### **John preached Judgment Repent and Believe...or be cast into Eternal Hell**

Just how seriously people take the doctrine of eternal hell to heart is inconsequential regarding its existence as described by Jesus Himself in Matthew 25. [NJC]

**Matthew 25:46** [Goats] ...will go away into **everlasting punishment**, but the righteous into **eternal life**."

10 So the people asked him, saying, **"What shall we do then?"**

- **Great answer!** How do we start...?

11 [John] answered and said to them, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise." 12 Then 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 what is appointed for you." 14 Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages."

- **Practical Repentance:** Turn from selfishness? Do a 180

- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. <b>General Population</b> | <b>Be generous</b>                         |
| 2. <b>Tax Collectors</b>     | <b>Don't steal</b>                         |
| 3. <b>Soldiers</b>           | <b>Don't abuse people.</b> Ordinary stuff. |

Integrity in the ordinary things is still the best mark of one genuinely repenting; we often think that what God requires of us as an impossible, huge task. In reality, the things God

tells us to do are very simple and straightforward... Often we are more willing to be faithful in great, dramatic tasks than in the ordinary things. [Guzik]

15 Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether **he was the Christ or not** 16 John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but **One mightier than I** is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the **Holy Spirit and fire.**

Repentance alone will not save you...  
But repentance will lead you to the One who can/will save you

- **I'm not Messiah...**I brought the bad news/He's bringing the Good News

**One Mightier than me is coming to do that.  
I'm not worthy to wash His feet...**

- **He will also baptize...**
  1. **Holy Spirit** Power over sin/Power to witness for God
  2. **Holy Fire...**
    - a) Purification for those who repent
    - b) Judgment for those who do not...

17 His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with **unquenchable fire.**"

**John describes Jesus as the Judge of men's souls**

- **Wheat Gathered** Saved into His barn Place prepared in Heaven
- **Chaff Burned** Cast off into eternal fire Devil/Demons. Unbelievers/deniers

**Threshing Floor of Soul Separation:** Good/bad. Believers/Make-believers.

18 And with many other exhortations [John] **preached to the people.** 19 But **Herod the tetrarch**, being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, 20 also added this, above all, that he shut John up in prison.

- **Herod:** Not known for kindness
  1. Later called-out by John for adultery
  2. Imprison John for rest of his life. **For now...**

**SUMMARY John** [God's Law] **Prepares the Way for Jesus** [God's Grace]

If John was the Mirror showing us our filthiness Jesus is the Living Water that washes it away. [NJC]