

# John 3:22-35 – 1 March 2026

## “Success During The Decline”

### Introduction

\*Jesus has completed the Passover during His 1st of 3 years of public ministry – many are starting to come

\*Jesus just had His encounter w/ “Nic at Night”

\*Now He heads back toward the Jordan River for a time of teaching and further baptisms

**As we pick up the account Jesus & John are both baptizing people in different places (22-24)**

Read 3:22-24

1. There is this period of time in between
  - a. It’s after John turns people over to Jesus
  - b. But before John is thrown in prison to die
2. Now Jesus and John are baptizing people unto their teachings
  - a. They’re a few miles apart along the Jordan

3. Baptism is the sign that people are believing their words...but what were their words?
  - a. Jesus preached repentance (Read Matt 4:17)
  - b. John preached repentance (Luk 3:3-18), but also always pointing people to Jesus

**Here coming the challenge to John: “All the people are coming to Jesus!” (25-26)**

Read 3:25-26

1. Since Jesus has revealed Himself as Messiah, doesn't this ask some timely questions?
  - a. Should John keep going, change or quit?
  - b. How should John think of *Jesus*' ministry?
2. Based on the next verses, I believe John already had these questions settled in his heart
  - a. But here we have a Jew stirring contention
  - b. Now the Lord allows this contention
    - i. For John's listeners to benefit from
    - ii. For us to benefit from

# Today, we'll see 3 keys to spiritual success during a time of decline

## #1 – Seek unity & focus on what God's given you, not what God's given another person (Vs 27-30)

Read 3:27

1. Whatever success a ministry has, it has been allowed by God, so what's the sense in trying to grow or shrink another man's ministry
  - a. Read I Cor 3:3-8 – As God gives to each, use it
  - b. I Cor 3:3-8 – Then God gives the increase
2. But you say, what if that other person's ministry is sinful or has questionable habits?
  - a. When *questionable* habits are involved, God will judge, not us (Read Rom 14:4)
  - b. When it comes to *sinful* habits, we can call it out when we're confronted (Read Gal 2:11-14)
    - i. Don't seek trouble, enough will find you

3. The rain falls on the just & unjust alike (Matt 5:43-48), so don't stress about another person's ministry or life whether they're doing good or evil
4. Seek unity, not division w/ other ministries
  - a. Read I Cor 1:10-13

Read 3:28

1. John was always anticipating putting the emphasis on Jesus
2. It should be this way for us also – if Jesus is being exalted somewhere else, praise God for it!
3. If the center of your life or ministry is always Jesus, then it's unimportant whether *you* rise or fall

Read 3:29-30

1. John knew his role and accepted it
2. He's the best man at the wedding
  - a. Jesus is the groom
  - b. His role - bring the bride & groom together
  - c. That's our role too – to bring people to Jesus not self

3. “Therefore my joy is full”
  - a. Satisfaction *doesn't come* when we gain large influence, but in knowing you're doing God's will
  - b. Satisfaction *comes* as Jesus is exalted, not self

## #2 – Speak truth & focus on God's Words, not earthly thing (Vs 31-33)

Read 3:31-32a

1. Comparing John's ministry to Jesus', John says that he speaks of the earth & Jesus of heaven
  - a. Our words are limited b/c we can only draw from what we see
  - b. Jesus came to bring us *heavenly* knowledge and wisdom (Read John 12:49)
2. In all ways God's words are superior to man's

Read 3:32b-33

1. Comparatively speaking, not many are receiving what Jesus is saying
  - a. There's already anticipation He'll be rejected
  - b. Read Matt 7:13-14 – more reject, than receive

2. “Setting his seal” – When we intentionally receive the testimony of Jesus it seals or confirms in our heart what we know already about God
  - a. When Jesus speaks of *God’s love for us* – YES that aligns with what we already thought of God
  - b. When Jesus speaks of *sin & judgement* – YES that aligns with what we already thought of God
  - c. When Jesus speaks of *the need of a sacrifice for forgiveness of sin* – YES that aligns with what we already know of God

### **#3 – Walk in the Spirit & focus on deliverance from wrath into eternal life (Vs 34-36)**

Read 3:34-35

1. Jesus speaks God’s Word “without measure”
  - a. Every word of Jesus is perfectly from the Spirit

- b. He didn't just speak inspired by the Spirit sometimes, but always
- 2. The Bible doesn't just *contain* God's Word, but every word of it is given by the Spirit of God

Read 3:36

- 1. Because of God's love for us, He sent His Son to give us life
  - a. All we must do is believe that His atonement on the cross was enough
- 2. There are only two eternal destinies
  - a. Jesus doesn't send anyone to hell
    - i. Hell was created for the devil & his angels (Matt 25:41)
    - ii. By our birth nature we are in sin and under God's wrath against it (Read Col 3:5-10)
  - b. Believing the Word of Jesus is what delivers us from the wrath we're under and into eternity with God (Read John 12:44-50)

## Conclusion

If you're tempted to be depressed b/c you're in a season of decline – here's what the Lord wants for you to do

1. **Seek unity & focus on what God's given you, not another**
  - a. We're not accountable for the life God's given someone else – we're accountable for ours
2. **Speak truth & focus on God's Words, not earthly things**
  - a. We accept that we have nothing eternally important to say – unless it comes from God
3. **Walk in the Spirit & focus on deliverance from wrath into eternal life**
  - a. We no longer care what happens to our body, we live in the Spirit longing for eternal life
  - b. Leading every soul to have their wrath removed at the cross of Jesus Christ