

## John the Baptist, Week Two. 1/10/2021

### “Warning and Foretelling” FBCLA

Matthew 3:7-12 Dr. Scott T. Arnold.

#### Introduction: *“Warnings to heed”*

<sup>7</sup> But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?” <sup>8</sup> Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. <sup>9</sup> And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. <sup>10</sup> The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>11</sup> “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” (Matthew 3:7-12 NIV)

I. John the Baptist Issues a Warning (3:7) <sup>7</sup> But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?”

II. John offers a remedy of repentance (3:8) <sup>8</sup> Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

III. John confronts spiritual delusion and pride (3:9). <sup>9</sup> And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.

IV. John foretells impending judgment (3:10) <sup>10</sup> The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

#### V. Baptism of water, the Holy Spirit, and fire (11)

<sup>11</sup> “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

#### VI. The Christ comes as Judge, Wheat and Chaff (12)

<sup>12</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

Conclusion: John the Baptist came warning people who thought they were spiritually superior. We must be careful not to exalt ourselves, but instead humble ourselves before God. In the times we live in, we must heed the warnings of injustice, a fragile earth ecology, a raging deadly pandemic, the delusions of deceptive political leaders who would advance their cult over democracy and freedom. We live in a fragile, broken, and tentative time; it is imperative to take heed to the warning signs that indicate we must prepare for the work of God in the second coming of Jesus. Today is the day to heed the warnings and engage in the ministry of reconciliation and new life.

#### Questions:

1. What are the warning signs of our time for us to get right with God and one another?
2. How did John the Baptist speak “truth to power” to the religious leaders of his time? How would he do this to today’s church?
3. Does spiritual pride infect Christians today? Why does John the Baptist use the concept of “producing good fruit” to confront them?
4. What is the difference between baptism by water and the baptism of water, the Holy Spirit and fire?