



Luke's Gospel: Son of Man, Seeker of Men.

Part 4

John the Baptist: What It Looks Like to FULLY Follow Jesus

Luke 3:1-20 (NKJV): John the Baptist Prepares the Way

3 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, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. ³ And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, 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;

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

John Preaches to the People

⁷ Then he 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?" ⁸ Therefore 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. 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."

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

¹¹ He 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."

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. 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."

¹⁸ And with many other exhortations he 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.

Series Theme: Luke presents Jesus as the Son of Man who came to seek the sons of men to save them and give them new life in Christ.

What does it look like to fully follow Jesus?

1. I must focus on God's _____ above what's happening in my _____ (v. 1-2).

- Political & religious leaders come and go, but God's Word endures forever (v. 1-2).
- **The wilderness lesson:** Sometimes the greatest spiritual growth and breakthroughs happen in the lonely wilderness.

7 different wildernesses that will go through in your life journey:

➤ The wilderness of _____
➤ The wilderness of _____ and temptation.

2. I must truly have a change of _____ that leads to a change of _____ (v. 3-14).

- Preparing the way for Jesus in our world (v. 4-6).
- Getting rid of excuses and hypocrisy (v. 7-9).

John 3:36-- He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

- Asking the right questions (v. 10).

Let's get practical and personal:

- Practice generosity and get rid of greed (v. 11-13). John told the tax collectors not to overcharge people.
- Learn the art of kindness and contentment (v. 14). John told the soldiers not to take advantage of their power and their position.

3. I must always keep the _____ on Jesus when others want to _____ on me (v. 15-16).

- What's the biggest lesson we can learn from John the Baptist: He must increase, but I must decrease.
- Baptism (v 16)
- When others are wowed by what God is doing in and through you, always remember to point the focus back on Jesus (v. 15-16).

4. I must have a healthy _____ of God (v. 17-20).

- There will be a pay day someday, so don't take God too lightly in your life (v. 17-18).

Scripture Insight: [3:16](#), [17](#) **One mightier than I:** This is the first direct mention of Jesus by John. John's baptism was minor compared to what was coming from Jesus, who would bring **the Holy Spirit and fire** (see [Matt. 3:11](#)). These two facets of Christ's work relate to His first and second comings. Baptism in the Holy Spirit is referred to seven times in the NT—four times in the Gospels (see [Matt. 3:11](#); [Mark 1:8](#); [John 1:33](#)), twice in Acts (see [Acts 1:5](#); [11:16](#)), and once in the epistles (see [1 Cor. 12:13](#)). As a result of Christ's work at His first coming, believers are placed into one family (see [1 Cor. 12:13](#)) and commended to the care of the Holy Spirit. When Christ comes a second time, He will come with the fire of judgment. **Chaff** refers to useless shells of grain that were separated from the useful **wheat** by the **winnowing fan**, a wooden forklike shovel that lifted the grain in the air so that the wind could separate it. The chaff was burned, picturing those who will undergo judgment. The **unquenchable** fire indicates the thorough nature of the judgment.¹

- Don't be afraid to stand up for what is right even it will cost you greatly (v. 19-20).

Take Home Truth: To fully FOLLOW Jesus is to fully SURRENDER my HEART which impacts every PART of my life.

Action Step: Do a spiritual EKG. How is my spiritual heart? Surrender or re-surrender every part of your heart to Jesus today.

Preview for next Sunday: When God Smiles from Luke 3:21-22.

Join us this Tuesday for our Global Missions Conference. *No Wednesday night services this week due to conference.

¹ Quote from Thomas Nelson NKJV Study Bible.