

WEEK 3

Who was John the Baptist, what did he say?

Begin this week's study with John 1:6

V6 There came a man sent from God, whose name was John.

John, the Immerser or Baptist, is not the same man who wrote the gospel of John. This John the Baptist was a relative of Jesus, probably a 2nd cousin as we are told that his mother, Elizabeth, and Mary the mother of Jesus were relatives.

John's birth was miraculous in that his mother was well past childbearing age when he was conceived. The birth of this special child was foretold to his father, Zacharias, a Priest as he was serving in the temple. The angel told his father; he would have a son, his name was to be John, he would bring joy and gladness to them and many would rejoice at his birth. He would be great in the sight of the LORD; and he will drink no wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb. He will turn the hearts of many sons of Israel back to the Lord their God. He will go as a forerunner before Him (God) in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of fathers back to the children and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" Luke 1:13-17

John the gospel writer immediately makes a distinction between Jesus and John the Baptist. Don't miss the significance of this; John was a man and he was sent from God, notice the contrast between Jesus and John. John the gospel writer wants us to be sure to notice that Jesus was God and John was a man sent from God. We will soon see several more passages where the difference between them is made clear.

John's stated purpose was to witness, to bear witness of the Light, and to testify, that is tell, that all men might believe. John the Baptist made several witness statements about Jesus, which we will see here in the first chapter.

John was living in the desert and teaching and preaching repentance. He probably began his teaching and preaching at the age of thirty, which was typical of the Jewish rabbi.

John was preaching about sin and the need for repentance.

Sin is real, it separates you and me from our God, because He is Holy and the bible says He is unable to look at sin. By the way, Romans 3:23 says "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God", all means everyone. To be able to be His child there needs to be a remedy for this separation or falling short.

What does it mean to repent? John was telling people they must do this, what is repentance? Repentance is admitting your sin and turning away from it, literally going the other way. It is not regret for getting caught but genuinely agreeing with God that you are wrong, asking His forgiveness and determining to not do it again.

V9 Jesus was the true light, which lights every man who comes into the world. Jesus shines sufficiently for the salvation of all mankind, though the majority of men are so blinded by sin, they do not see Him. Jesus has enough power and love to light the lives of everyone, but men love the darkness. Darkness is any attitude of ignorance or wrong belief. Rejecting the truth of God's Word is darkness.

Make no mistake, He came for every man, woman and child.

V12 As many as received Him, that is, as many as believed on Him, He gave the power to become the children of God. That is, those who believe and acknowledged Him as the Messiah; To receive Christ is to accept Him with a willing heart and to take Him as our Savior believing and trusting that His death burial and resurrection are all that is required as sacrifice for your sin and what you need to be forgiven by God, not any works of righteousness of your own. Again notice the universality of His coming, it was for anyone or "as many as". Note there is no special merit, gender, race or status required, whosoever will may come. It was no doubt surprising to the Jews of that day, that the invitation was to everyone, they were used to thinking of themselves as a special chosen group and due to the influence of the Greeks; they were also used to thinking that women were

inferior and not equal in the sight of God.

Coming to Jesus is a choice, have you made a choice to come to Jesus? There are only 2 decisions about Jesus, yes, I will come to Him, and no I won't come to Him. He won't drag you kicking and screaming, it is all up to you.

To them, the ones who will come, He gave the power to become the Sons of God; this means "He gave them the privilege of adoption into God's family. They became the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. Friends, please be convinced that what you commonly hear "O we are all children of God", is not true according to the scripture. No, only those who believe that Jesus is the Christ are given the privilege to be called the children of God. To talk of God being everyone's Father and all people being God's children, while they do not believe on the Son of God, is contrary to scripture. He has created everyone but only those to acknowledge Him and ask, are His children. Those are not children of God who do not receive Jesus.

This is not my opinion this is what the bible says.

Notice also that believing and receiving are the same. Yes, instant salvation, undeserved salvation, glorious, eternal salvation to the one who receives Christ.

V14 and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

This is one of my favorite verses, and I think the most mysterious verse in the bible. It is the statement of the incarnation of Jesus, what a marvel that God should become man.

Remember the Word is Jesus, the Word became a person, Jesus, and He chose to live in the world. Can you imagine leaving the glorious beauty and peace of heaven and living on earth as a peasant, in a dusty village like Nazareth, not too different from Loudonville? In order to understand our needs and express His love to us, He became one of us. Whoever heard of a God who would become a man? No other religion makes such a claim, no the gods of religions remain aloof and far off. Not so the living one true God.

He became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory,