

## Who was John the Baptizer?

### INTRODUCTION.

- A. There are many outstanding Bible characters which we could study. Of course the greatest Bible character is Jesus Christ.
- B. There was one who, while not as great as Jesus, prepared the way for Jesus.
- C. This man lived in the wilderness and ate locust and wild honey. Who was this man? His name was John.

### I. THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIZER.

- A. The story of John begins with an introduction to his parents. (Luke 1:5-10)
  - 1. His father was Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. He served as a priest.
  - 2. His mother was Elizabeth, a daughter of Aaron.
  - 3. His parents were righteous before God. They walked “in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.” (vs, NKJV)
- B. Zacharias, who was old in years, was told by an angel that Elizabeth would bear a son. They were to call his name John. (Luke 1:11-17) Take notice of the angel’s description of the future son.
  - 1. Many would rejoice at his birth. (vs 14)
  - 2. He would be great in the sight of the Lord. (vs 15)
  - 3. He would drink neither wine nor strong drink. (vs 15)
  - 4. From the womb, he would be filled with the Holy Spirit. (vs 15)
  - 5. He would “turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.” (vs 16)
  - 6. He would “also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, . . . to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” (vs 17)
- C. As promised, Elizabeth conceived. (Luke 1:18-25)
- D. When Mary went to visit Elizabeth, the baby leapt in Elizabeth’s womb at the sound of Mary’s voice. Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three months. (Luke 1:39-56)
- E. Elizabeth gave birth to her child. When the time came for the child to be circumcised, Elizabeth told the people the name of the child would be John. Zacharias agreed and was given his ability to speech. He praised the Lord. (Luke 1:57-66)

- F. Zacharias prophesied about the future work of his son. (Luke 1:67-79)
  - 1. John would be called the “prophet of the Highest.” (vs 76)
  - 2. John would “go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways.” (vs 76)
- G. John “grew and became strong in spirit” and he lived in the deserts. (Luke 1:80)

## **II. HOW DID JOHN PREPARE THE WAY FOR JESUS?**

- A. In the “fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, . . . the word of God came to John . . . in the wilderness.” (Luke 3:1-2)
- B. John went throughout the region preaching “a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.” (Luke 3:3-6)
- C. John taught the people to “bear fruits worthy of repentance.” Every tree that does not bear the fruit of repentance would be cut down. (Luke 3:7-10)
- D. The people asked John, “What shall we do then?” John told them what it meant to repent. (Luke 3:11-14)
  - 1. John taught the people to help those who were in need. (vs 11)
  - 2. John taught the tax collectors to collect only what was appointed for them to collect. (vs 12-13)
  - 3. John taught the soldiers not to intimidate anyone or make false accusations. They were to be content with their wages. (vs 14)
- E. The people stood wondering whether or not John was the Christ. John explained that One mightier than he was coming. (Luke 3:15-18)
- F. John baptized Jesus. (Matthew 3:13-17; cf. John 1:32-34)
- G. John bore witness to Jesus being the Lamb of God. (John 1:29-34)
- H. Because of John’s witness to Jesus being the Lamb of God, two of his disciples followed Jesus. (John 1:35-42)
- I. John also rebuked Herod the tetrarch and was thrown into prison. (Luke 3:19-20)
- J. While in prison, John sent his disciples to Jesus. (Matthew 11:2-15)

## **III. THE DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIZER.**

- A. As we read earlier, John was thrown into prison by Herod the tetrarch. (Mark 6:14-20)
- B. Because of Herodias’ daughter’s dance, Herod promised the daughter anything she desired. Herodias told her daughter to ask for the head of John the Baptizer. (Mark

6:21-29)

#### **IV. LESSONS TO LEARN FROM JOHN THE BAPTIZER.**

- A. We must learn the true meaning of repentance.
  - 1. John taught the people the true meaning of repentance. (Luke 3:7-14)
  - 2. To repent of some deed is more than simply saying that one is sorry. Repentance involves change in behavior. When we repent of our sins, we must intend to stop that particular sin.
- B. We must not be afraid to call sin a sin.
  - 1. John told Herod the tetrarch that his relationship with his brother's wife was unlawful. (Luke 3:19; Mark 6:17-18)
  - 2. Speaking as oracles of God (I Peter 4:11) means that we identify sin when we see it. Paul even told Timothy to rebuke those who sin.
- C. We must remember to direct others to Jesus Christ.
  - 1. John directed his disciples to the "Lamb of God." (John 1:35-42)
  - 2. We too must be directing people to Jesus Christ.
    - a. On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached Jesus. (Acts 2)
    - b. Philip preached Jesus to the traveller from Ethiopia. (Acts 8:26-39)
    - c. Paul and Silas preached Jesus to the Philippian jailer. (Acts 16:25-34)
    - d. Just as the apostles, so to must we be preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified. (Cf. I Corinthians 1:23)

#### **CONCLUSION.**

- A. John the baptizer lived a very important life. He was a man of resolve, courage, strength, and faithfulness. I am quite certain that there are many more lessons which we can learn from the life of John the Baptizer.
- B. However, let us carry with us today the following lessons.
  - 1. Let us all learn the true meaning of repentance.
  - 2. Let us not be afraid to call sin a sin.
  - 3. Let us point others to Jesus Christ.
- C. If you have not yet made the decision to follow Jesus today, then listen to the words of John when he said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" Do like Andrew and following

Jesus today.

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