

Matthew Chapter Three

John the Baptist

I. Introduction

- A. Chapter three is mainly about _____ and his _____
- B. Jesus is now about ____ years old (Lk 3:23)
- C. John has been preaching for about 6 months preparing people (especially their hearts) for the soon appearing Messiah
- D. Jesus appears out of the crowd, and gets baptized by John
- E. This is priority before Jesus can begin His ministry of saving the Jewish nation

II. Study Lesson

A. John the Baptist begins to prepare the Jewish people for the soon coming Messiah (Matt 3:1-12)

1. The _____
 - a. The wilderness was an area southeast of Jerusalem
 - b. No villages or inhabitants – just a desert, waste land
 - c. A lot of great things happened in such places – not in ivory towers!
 - 1) God's people learned to trust God to supply their needs and to walk with them
 - 2) Saul of Tarsus learned from Jesus about the Bible
 - 3) Jesus fed 4,000 men in this wilderness (Mt 15:32-38)
 - 4) Israel as a nation got right with God and ready for the Messiah by being baptized in this wilderness (Mt 3:1-3)
 - 5) In the wilderness, Moses lifted up the serpent for the nation of Israel to find healing from the wrath of God (John 3:14)
 - d. Many men spent time in the wilderness
 - 1) Moses – 40 years!!!
 - 2) Elijah
 - 3) Saul of Tarsus (Gal 1:11,12,17; 4:25)
 - 4) Jesus will be fully tempted in this wilderness (Mt 4:1)
 - 5) Jesus spent time praying in this wilderness (Lk 5:16)
 - e. Jesus spoke of the wilderness like where a person gets LOST and found (Luke 15:4)
2. John's Preaching
 - a. Strong, loud, attention getting
 - b. Preaching means _____ something, clearly, succinctly
 - c. John's preaching, not personality drew people OUT of the cities and villages
 - d. They came out DAILY to hear John preach – not only on the Sabbath
3. _____
 - a. A serious change of attitude about one's sin
 - b. Not a bad feeling, or just being sorry about something you have done, but broken, and ready to be changed! There are two kinds of sorrow (2Cor 7:10)
 - c. John commanded the people to repent out of fear of what was coming
 - d. John did not proclaim the love of God, but the wrath of God (Mt 3:7), and that Jesus was coming to fulfil that wrath! People forget this!
 - e. The principle is still true – don't talk to people primarily about the love and grace of God until you have gotten their hearers to NEED the love and grace of God!
 - f. Repentance DOES NOT save anyone – it only prepares their heart and mind to BE SAVED (Cf Acts 20:21)

4. The Kingdom of heaven

a. Three main kingdoms

- 1) The kingdoms of this _____ – Satan owns these (Lk 4:5,6)
 - 2) The Kingdom of _____ – a spiritual kingdom, set up in the heart of every believer – salvation
 - a) Mt 6:33
 - b) Mt 21:31 - harlots were already in the kingdom of God ahead of the religious
 - c) Mark 4:11 – the kingdom of God is a mystery. The kingdom of heaven was not.
 - d) Mark 9:1 – the kingdom of God CAME at the Resurrection, the kingdom of heaven has NOT come yet
 - e) Luke 17:20,21 – the kingdom of God is not visible, but WITHIN a person
 - 3) The kingdom of _____ – a physical, literal kingdom, with Jesus Christ as King, set up over all kings on the earth. This is referred to as the Millennial reign of Jesus Christ. The Jews all expected this kingdom to be the one that Jesus was supposed to set up.
 - a) The kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven overlap – are similar
 - b) You cannot get into the kingdom of heaven until you have entered the kingdom of God
- b. John at first, and later Jesus, was offering the kingdom of heaven to the Jews – they were whetting their appetite for it. The Jews desperately wanted their kingdom back! But now, they would only experience the kingdom of heaven by receiving the kingdom of God (Lk 18:17)
- c. The Jewish nation will not and did not accept the kingdom of heaven on God's terms, so the kingdom offer is removed for the next 2,000 years.
- d. It will be offered again by _____ and _____ DURING the Tribulation, and once they are martyred, THEN and only then will Israel (while being hunted by the antichrist) turn to God and trust Jesus as their Saviour, and Messiah!

5. Who Was John?

- a. A supernaturally born child – born to an old couple, as Isaac was
- b. He was _____ with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb
- c. The half cousin of Jesus
- d. The forerunner of Jesus
- e. He was _____, but not physically – dressed like him (2Kg 1:18), spoke like him, filled with the very spirit of Elijah (Elisha wanted a double portion of Elijah's spirit).
- f. Lived in the rough areas of the country side – ate interesting yet simple meals: _____, and _____

6. The Effect of John's preaching

- a. He “_____” the hearts of the nation so that Jesus could be heard. Most people do not “hear” because their ears are dull, already filled, numb, uninterested.
- b. The idea is that John was trying to rattle people's thinking so to make it easy for Jesus to speak to them and work on them and convert them – John never converted anyone (think about that) – he just prepared them for conversion!!!
- c. The whole nation came out to hear John's preaching
- d. Even ungodly men came out and loved to hear John preach - _____ LOVED to hear John preach (Mark 6)
- e. They repented!
- f. They even _____ that they had repented – not just with words, although that is a good start!
 - 1) Brought their separated wives before John and publically apologised for mistreating them and separating from them
 - 2) Brought their angry children before John and publically apologised for being too passive and letting them get that way
 - 3) Publically confessed to their sins and forsook those sins publically

- g. They got baptized – _____ – never sprinkled
- h. Even the most unlikely people, AND some of the Gentiles came, repented and got baptized
- i. Some _____ (3:7-10)
 - 1) The religious leaders
 - 2) They were prophesied about

B. John Humbles Everybody First _____ Baptizing Them (Mt 3:6-12)

1. It was a _____ baptism (3:6)
2. Pharisees and Sadducees came to see what was going on
 - a. Pharisees – very devout, and strict conservatives – literalists in believing the Old Testament
 - b. Sadducees – very liberal, and basically politicians
 - c. John soundly rebukes them
 - 1) Calls them “generation of vipers” – children of the _____ (Gen 3); deceivers!
 - 2) Wrath was coming not just on the nation of Israel, but upon its LEADERS!
 - 3) Asks them _____ has warned them to flee from the coming wrath?
 - 4) Evidently, the interest of these Pharisees and Sadducees showed that there was a fear in their hearts, and they wouldn’t admit it so John exposes it!
 - d. John commands them to join in the line and prove they are repentant about their _____. It would be like meeting the Pope and commanding him to repent and get saved! Hey! Great idea!
 - e. Debunks the idea that just because a person is a Jew that they are fine with God (Mt 3:9)
 - f. Warns everyone that an axe is laid to the olive tree and about to be cut down – drastic judgment is coming
 - g. John presents THREE baptisms in this context (Mt 3:11)
 - 1) John’s Baptism of _____ into water – burying the old way of failed Judaism in preparation of the new Covenant way through the Messiah
 - 2) Jesus’ Baptism of _____ into the Holy Spirit
 - 3) Jesus’ Baptism of _____ into Hell – note the judgment of DAMNATION related to the baptism of fire in 3:12)
 - 4) The Pentacostals make-up another baptism: the Baptism _____ the Spirit, saying it is a baptism you can get AFTER salvation that gives you special powers! It is demonic!
 - h. There are actually SEVEN Baptisms in the Bible, and NONE of them are Pentecostal
 - 1) _____ (Mt 3:6) One "unto repentance"
 - 2) _____ (Mt 3:11,12) Every unsaved person is ultimately going to be BAPTIZED into Hellfire (note verse 12)!
 - 3) _____ (Mt 20:22; Lk 12:50) Jesus Christ's Death Burial and Resurrection is called His Baptism.
 - 4) _____ (1Cor 12:13; Rom 6:4; Eph 4:5; Col 2:12) The process of being Born Again
 - 5) _____ (I Cor 10:2) When the Jews crossed the Red Sea!
 - 6) _____ (Mt 28:19,20) A testimony and picture to this world of the change that took place in the heart of the believer at the time of salvation!
 - 7) _____
 - a) Under the Old Testament (Mt 7; Heb 10)
 - (i) Shown by Namaan the Leper
 - (ii) The priests in the Temple
 - (iii) Washing of the animal sacrifices
 - (iv) A shadow of things to come
 - b) Invalid under the New Testament.

C. _____ **Gets Baptized** (Mt 3:13-17)

1. This is Jesus beginning His ministry (John 1:31)
2. He is about thirty years old
3. John recognises that this Man is the Messiah at this very moment – John never knew it before
4. John does not feel qualified to baptise Jesus
5. Why does Jesus need to be baptized?
 - a. To prove Jesus was a Jew, UNDER the Law, as were all the Jews at this time
 - b. To prove that Jesus was honoured by God above all other men
 - c. To make the preaching of John primary for people to obey and follow before anyone would be able to come under the ministry of Jesus
 - d. To fully reveal the Messiah to the Jewish nation (John 1:31)
6. The honour from heaven (Mt 3:16,17)
 - a. The opening of heaven
 - b. The presence of the Holy Spirit
 - c. The voice from heaven
 - d. The glory of the Son of God
 - e. Here is the TRINITY! There is no doubt!

III. Study Question