

John the Baptist Introduces Christ

His Appearance

April, October, 25 A.D.

Matthew 3:1-6

Mark 1:2-6

Luke 3:1-6

John 1:6-18

Ministry of John the Baptist

Text:

Matthew 3:1-6,

- 1. In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea**
- 2. and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”**
- 3. This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: “A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”**
- 4. John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey.**
- 5. People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan.**
- 6. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.**

Commentary:

I. “In those days” refers to a time some thirty years after John’s birth.

A. John was called “the Baptist” because he baptized people.

B. John served as both a prophet and forerunner of the Messiah.

C. John preached the imminent coming of the kingdom of heaven and the Jews of his day, longing for the overthrow of Rome, flocked to hear him.

II. The “wilderness of Judea” was a desert, a strip of wasteland which is located west of the Dead Sea near the mouth of the Jordan River.

III. John preached repentance!

- A. This is a subject today's world needs so badly!
- B. 2 Corinthians 7:10, Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.
- C. Matthew 18:3, And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

IV. The kingdom of heaven is found where the laws of the king live within our hearts and lives.

- A. Daniel 2:44, "In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever.

V. John preached that the kingdom was "at hand," soon to appear, imminent.

- A. Moffatt's translation reads, "The reign of heaven is near."
- B. Mark 9:1, And he said to them, "I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

VI. Isaiah had spoken of John.

- A. Isaiah 40:3, A voice of one calling: "In the desert prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God."

B. Malachi 4:5, 6, “See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse.”

C. Matthew 17:9-13, As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, “Don’t tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.” The disciples asked him, “Why then do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?” Jesus replied, “To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things. But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.” Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.

D. Luke 1:15-17, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth. Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous – to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

VII. John’s clothing and food were reminiscent of Elijah’s clothes and food. 2 Kings 1:8, They replied, “He was a man with a garment of hair and with a leather belt around his waist.”

A. Elijah and John, by their food and avoidance of luxury, protested the opulent life of the rich.

B. John was dressed with camel’s hair and a leathern girdle.

C. Locusts were likely insects larger than our grasshoppers although they could have been edible pods of the Carob tree called St. John's bread.

D. John also ate wild honey.

VIII. Multitudes went out to hear John.

A. "All Judea" is a hyperbole referring to masses of people.

B. John baptized penitents in the Jordan River who had confessed their sins.

C. John 3:23, Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptized.

Text:

Mark 1:2-6,

2. It is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way."

3. "A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"

4. And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

5. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

6. John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

Commentary:

I. Mark mingled Isaiah's statement here with Malachi's statement.

A. Both prophets had said essentially the same things.

B. Mark attributed the statement to the earlier major prophet Isaiah instead of to the later minor prophet Malachi.

C. The ministry of John the Baptist was God ordained and approved.

II. John preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins.

A. By preparing through penitence, confession of sins, and baptism a forgiven people, a large contingent of people was made ready to follow the Messiah when he appeared.

B. Luke 7:30, But the Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John.

C. Multitudes went out to hear John preach and were baptized of him **in** the Jordan River.

D. John was a sensational preacher who attracted the attention of the multitudes.

E. John focused public attention on the coming Messiah.

F. Some of those who were baptized of John evidently went back into their old way of living after the excitement wore off. This is not at all surprising. John's popularity did not last!

G. John 5:35, John was a lamp that burned and gave light, and you chose **for a time** to enjoy his light.

III. The clothing and food of John the Baptist would connect him in the minds of the people with Elijah the prophet.

Text:

Luke 3:1-6,

1. In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar – when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene-

2. During the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the desert.

3. He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

4. As is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: “A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.

5. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth.

6. And all mankind will see God’s salvation.””

Commentary:

I. The word of God by inspiration came to John the son of Zechariah:

A. in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar.

B. during the time Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea. Pilate was governor of Judaea 16 A.D. – 36 A.D.

C. during the time Herod Philip was tetrarch of Ituraea and Trachonitis. Herod Antipas ruled 4 B.C. – 34 B.C.

D. during the time Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene.

E. during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas. Annas was high priest from 7 B.C. – 15 A.D. Caiaphas was one of 5 sons and sons-in-law of Annas who became high priests and through whom Annas continued to exert priestly control.

II. . . and in the wilderness.

III. We have here the picture of a herald going before a king announcing his approach.

A. In this way John as herald went before Christ announcing the coming of the Messianic King.

B. “. . . all flesh shall see the salvation of God” clearly indicates that the gospel is for all races and nations of people, not just Jews.

IV. John did not mince nor “sugar coat” his words. He told it like it was.

A. The insincere hypocritical religious leaders, spies and curiosity seekers who mingled with the crowds that went to hear John preach were called “offspring of vipers” (children of snakes).

B. What if our preacher used this expression in a sermon to describe people in attendance?

C. John asked these evil people, “Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?” What are you doing here? Don’t think that you can fool anybody by just “going to preaching” without changing your heart and life.

Text:

John 1:6-18, There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’” From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father’s side has made him known.

Commentary:

John 1:6, There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

I. God sent John into the world!

A. How simple this statement is, and yet how profound!

B. No long introduction was given and none was needed!

II. When the holder of the highest office in the free world speaks to the assembled Congress, he is introduced, “Ladies and Gentlemen, The President of the United States.”

A. Nothing else needs to be said.

B. Nothing else needed to be said of John.

John 1:7, 8, The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

I. John came for a witness of the light to the end that all who heard might believe on the Light/Word because of him.

A. It is our task as Christians to be reflections of the Light pointing all men to the Light.

B. John 5:35, He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

II. John was not the Light, but he pointed seekers to the light.

John 1:9, That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

I. Christ came to provide light for everyone revealing the good life here and the eternal life in the world to come!

II. Unfortunately multitudes close their eyes to the light.

John 1:10, He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

I Jesus was in the world, Jesus created the world, but the world did not even recognize him!

- A. Isaiah 53:1, Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?
- B. God was not taken by surprise by man's refusal to believe in Jesus.
- C. He knew what would happen and directed his prophets to foretell his Son's rejection.

John 1:11, He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

I. Jesus came to his own, the Jews who were God's chosen people who should have received him joyfully, but they rejected him nailing him to the cross.

II. John wrote his gospel some 50 years after the coming of Christ into the world, but he remained bewildered by the Jewish rejection of Christ. Paul was likewise bewildered by this Jewish rejection of Jesus.

III. Romans 9:1-5, I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the father, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

John 1:12, But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

I. However, those who believed in Jesus were given the privilege, right, the power, the means to become the children of God.

II. Believing enables a person to yield himself to the Master and to be transformed into his likeness.

III. We who submit our hearts and lives to Christ through faith are God's children in this life and in the life to come!

John 1:13, Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

I. The new birth is essential to our becoming children of God.

II. The new birth is not produced by human blood, the will of the flesh (family planning), but strictly through the instrumentality of Almighty God.

A. John 3:1-7, There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

B. John 8:38-45, I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath

told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Then Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.

John 1:14, And the Word was made 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.

I. The Word (Logos) became flesh at the birth of Jesus, the first advent, and dwelled on earth among the people.

A. He did not reside in a Tibetan Monastery in the Himalayan Mountains far away from everyone.

B. The people associated with him and beheld his glory and magnificence.

II. Jesus was seen to be full of glory and wonder as befits the only begotten son of God.

A. Jesus was full of grace.

B. Jesus was full of truth.

III. “The Word became flesh” speaks of the incarnation of Christ.

- A. Jesus was truly **God** and truly **man**.
- B. Jesus was human, but sinless.
- C. Jesus did not inherit the guilt of Adam's sin by being physically born.
- D. We do not inherit the guilt of Adam's sin by being physically born.
- E. Phillipians 2:5-8, Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

IV. Jesus is the only begotten Son of God.

- A. John 1:18, No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.
- B. John 3:16-18, For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.
- C. 1 John 4:9, Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

V. Jesus is full of grace and truth.

- A. Luke 2:40, And the child grew, and waxed strong in the spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.
- B. Romans 1:3-6, Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ.
- C. John 14:6, Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.
- D. John 18:37, 38, Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

John 1:15, John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake. He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.

I. John proclaimed Jesus to be the one who was born before him and lives after him.

- A. John pointed his disciples to Jesus.
- B. Some did not get the message because they continued to be followers of John.

C. Acts 19:1-7, And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: finding certain disciples. He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve.

II. John taught: "Jesus existed before my birth (John was 6 months older than Jesus), and even before his (Jesus') own birth, as the eternal Son of God, and his ministry will come after mine."

John 1:16, And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.

I. All blessings come from the riches of God.

II. Those of great ability and wealth would be nothing except for the grace of God.

III. New International Version, "From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another."

John 1:17, For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

I. Jesus was greater than...

A. John the Baptist

B. Moses and the Law of Moses

II. The law was given through Moses. Grace and truth, far better than the law, came through Jesus Christ.

III. Jesus was the personification of deity, the essence of grace and truth.

John 1:18, No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

I. No one has seen God at any time. What we know of God has been revealed through Jesus his Son.

A. John 14:9, Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Phillip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

B. While secret mystic cults were concealing their teachings, Jesus was proclaiming the Father's grace and truth to all who would listen.

II. In some ways people had seen God (Exodus 24:10; Job 42:5), but never before nor since has God been seen as clearly as he was revealed in Jesus.

John The Baptist Introduces Christ

His Appearances

Questions

1. "In those days" refers to a time when John was about _____ years of age. John was called "The Baptist" because he _____ people. John served as both a _____ and _____ of the Messiah.

2. The "wilderness of Judea" was a _____, a strip of _____ located _____ of the _____ near the mouth of the _____.

3. John preached _____ and that the _____ of heaven was "_____." Moffett's translation reads, "The _____ of heaven is near."

4. John's _____ and _____ were reminiscent of _____ and _____.

5. John ate _____ and _____ and wore a _____ about his loins.

6. John preached the _____ of _____ for the _____ of _____.

7. In the _____ year of the reign of _____ when _____ was _____ of _____, his brother _____ of _____ and _____, and _____ of _____, during the

_____ of _____ and _____, the word of God came to _____ son of _____ in the _____.

8. Isaiah's prophecy, "And all mankind will see God's salvation," clearly indicates that the _____ is for all _____ and _____ of people, not just _____.

9. John did not _____ nor "_____" his words.

10. Both _____ and _____ were men _____ from _____.

11. John was not the anticipated _____. He came to bear _____ of the _____, that men through him might _____.

12. The _____ was in the _____ and the _____ was made by him, and the _____ knew him not.

13. He (_____) came unto his own, and his own _____ him not. To as many as _____ him, he gave the _____ to become the _____ of _____, even to them that _____ on his _____.

14. The saved are spiritually _____, not of _____, nor of the _____ of the _____, nor of the _____ of _____, but of _____.

15. The _____ (_____) was made _____, and dwelt among us, full of _____ and _____.

16. Jesus is the _____
of _____.

17. The *incarnation* refers to the _____ of
_____.

18. "From the _____ of his _____ we have all
received _____ after
_____." NIV

19. The _____ was given by _____, but
_____ and _____ came by _____
_____.

20. No man hath seen _____ at any time; the only
_____, which is in the
_____ of the _____, he hath _____
him.

Finished exam can be mailed or dropped off at:
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