

## Jesus Series #2 – John the Baptist, a Burning and Shining Lamp.

John 1: 19-30 *This is John's testimony when the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him, "Who are you?" 20 He did not refuse to answer, but he declared: "I am not the Messiah." 21 "What then?" they asked him. "Are you Elijah?" "I am not," he said. "Are you the Prophet?" "No," he answered. 22 "Who are you, then?" they asked. "We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What can you tell us about yourself?" 23 He said, "I am a voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Make straight the way of the Lord—just as Isaiah the prophet said." 24 Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. 25 So they asked him, "Why then do you baptize if you aren't the Messiah, or Elijah, or the Prophet?" 26 "I baptize with water," John answered them. "Someone stands among you, but you don't know Him. 27 He is the One coming after me, whose sandal strap I'm not worthy to untie." 28 All this happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.*

*29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is the One I told you about: 'After me comes a man who has surpassed me, because He existed before me.' 31 I didn't know Him, but I came baptizing with water so He might be revealed to Israel." 32 And John testified, "I watched the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He rested on Him. 33 I didn't know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The One you see the Spirit descending and resting on—He is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' 34 I have seen and testified that He is the Son of God!"*

*35 Again the next day, John was standing with two of his disciples. 36 When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look! The Lamb of God!" 37 The two disciples heard him say this and followed Jesus. 38 When Jesus turned and noticed them following Him, He asked them, "What are you looking for?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which means "Teacher"), "where are You staying?" 39 "Come and you'll see," He replied. So they went and saw where He was.*

### Descriptions of John the Baptist:

1. **John the Baptist was a forerunner**, who's main calling was to prepare the way for Jesus. Vs 23, *"23 He said, "I am a voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Make straight the way of the Lord—just as Isaiah the prophet said."* Straight paths are made for kings - John was identifying Jesus as a king early on. So - John was a prophet, but more than a prophet.

*"9 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and far more than a prophet. 10 This is the one it is written about: Look, I am sending My messenger ahead of You; he will prepare Your way before You."* Matthew 11.

2. Jesus described John as a "**burning and shining lamp, and for a time you were willing to enjoy his light.**" John 5:35. His ministry brought JOY and Light, according to Jesus.
3. **Jesus also described John as the greatest human ever born,** "*"I assure you: Among those born of women no one greater than John the Baptist has appeared, but the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."* Matt. 11:11 What is the Kingdom of Heaven? It is simply Heaven:

A. Matthew 18:4 *Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child—this one is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

B. Matthew 5:20 ***For I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.***

4. **John was a friend of the bridegroom - but NOT the bridegroom.** John 3, ***“29 He who has the bride is the groom. But the groom’s friend, who stands by and listens for him, rejoices greatly at the groom’s voice. So this joy of mine is complete.”***
5. **John the Baptist was the first person baptized in the Spirit in the New Testament,** and (apparently) the youngest, Luke 1 ***“For he will be great in the sight of the Lord and will never drink wine or beer. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit while still in his mother’s womb.”***

So, John the Baptist was greatly used by the Lord, and he had a ministry of repentance. He was an odd fellow, ***“John himself had a camel-hair garment with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey.”*** but great numbers of crowds came out to see him. His ministry stretched all the way into Asia Minor/Turkey. In Acts 19, Paul comes across some disciples of John 600 miles away from Jerusalem!!

We can learn much about what it means to be a minister and pastor from John the Baptist/Baptizer.

### **10 Things we learn about ministry from John the Baptist.**

1. **Given the chance to receive glory, and be considered somebody great, JTB demurred.** John was not seeking glory. In John 1:19-20, ***“This is John’s testimony when the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him, “Who are you?”20 He did not refuse to answer, but he declared: “I am not the Messiah.””***
2. **John knew that it was not ultimately about Him.** He pointed to Jesus. ***”John 3:29-30, the groom’s friend, who stands by and listens for him, rejoices greatly at the groom’s voice. So this joy of mine is complete. 30 He must increase, but I must decrease.”***
3. **John the Baptist was humble in a way that didn’t draw attention to his humility.** John 1:“26 ***“I baptize with water,” John answered them. “Someone stands among you, but you don’t know Him. 27 He is the One coming after me, whose sandal strap I’m not worthy to untie.””*** Illustration: Me winning the servant award at Camp during 5th grade.
4. **John pointed to Jesus** That is the role of the minister - NOT to draw followers, but to always reflect and point people to Jesus. John 1:“29 ***The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is the One I told you about: ‘After me comes a man who has surpassed me, because He existed before me.””*** ILLUSTRATION: Hayne sandifer as exemplar of John the Baptist
5. **John is the first human in Scripture to recognize Jesus as the Son of God because He listened to the Lord!** ***“33 I didn’t know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The One you see the Spirit descending and resting on—He is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ 34 I have seen and testified that He is the Son of God!”*** John 1:33-34

6. **John knew that God is the source of all success, leadership, promotion, and ministry.** John 3: *"27 John responded, "No one can receive a single thing unless it's given to him from heaven. 28 You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Messiah, but I've been sent ahead of Him.'"*
7. **Doubts and dark periods come to even the greatest and most mature.** Matthew 11: *"2 When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent a message by his disciples 3 and asked Him, "Are You the One who is to come, or should we expect someone else?" 4 Jesus replied to them, "Go and report to John what you hear and see: 5 the blind see, the lame walk, those with skin diseases are healed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor are told the good news. 6 And if anyone is not offended because of Me, he is blessed.""* 5 Reasons many pastors struggle with depression - Thom Rainer.
8. **It is possible to be both incredibly bold and incredibly humble.** In fact, we must be both of those things if we are to be ministers of the good news. Luke 3, 7 *He then said to the crowds who came out to be baptized by him, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? 8 Therefore produce fruit consistent with repentance.*
9. **We learn from John that following God has very practical implications on every part of our life - our finances, our business dealings and our personal lives.** Luke 3 *"10 "What then should we do?" the crowds were asking him. 11 He replied to them, "The one who has two shirts must share with someone who has none, and the one who has food must do the same." 12 Tax collectors also came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" 13 He told them, "Don't collect any more than what you have been authorized." 14 Some soldiers also questioned him: "What should we do?" He said to them, "Don't take money from anyone by force or false accusation; be satisfied with your wages.""*
10. We learn from John that being a minister is, most of all about proclaiming good news about Jesus, Luke 3 *"I baptize you with water, but One is coming who is more powerful than I. I am not worthy to untie the strap of His sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 His winnowing shovel is in His hand to clear His threshing floor and gather the wheat into His barn, but the chaff He will burn up with a fire that never goes out." 18 Then, along with many other exhortations, he proclaimed good news to the people."*

Why look to John The Baptist? Because it was his life and character that Jesus called the GREATEST EVER BORN TO A WOMAN. CLOSE with the good news – pointing to Jesus exactly how John would have done.