



# The Courage of John the Baptist

## Luke 3:1-17

# John the Baptist

- **Luke 1:13-18** - <sup>13</sup> But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. <sup>14</sup> And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, <sup>15</sup> for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. <sup>16</sup> And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, <sup>17</sup> and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.”

# John the Baptist

- **Matthew 3:4** - <sup>4</sup> Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey.

# Unrepentant Sin – At All Levels of Society

- **Luke 3:1-3** - In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, <sup>2</sup> during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup> And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

# Unrepentant Sin – 1<sup>st</sup> Century Israel and 21<sup>st</sup> Century United States

	1 <sup>st</sup> Century Israel	21 <sup>st</sup> Century United States
Government	Motivated by Power and Greed – Romans and Kings not accountable to the people	Motivated by Power and Greed – Elected Officials more loyal to political donors than the people
Religious Institutions/Leaders	Self-Centered Focus – false teaching for personal gain	Charismatic Leadership Bigger is better – faith measured in numbers and finances
People	Following their own moral codes	Woke Culture – each person determines their own values

# Follow the Example of John the Baptist

- We must follow the example of John the Baptist and have the COURAGE stand up for Jesus and the Holy Scriptures.
- You were made for this moment, to stand strong in the face of adversity shining brightly for Jesus.
- **1 Corinthians 15:58** - <sup>58</sup> Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

# Unrepentant Sin – Government

- **Luke 3:1** - In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene

# Calling Out the Sins of Leaders

- **Matthew 14:3-4** - <sup>3</sup> For Herod had seized John and bound him and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, <sup>4</sup> because John had been saying to him, “It is not lawful for you to have her.”



# Be Courageous

- Find the courage, like John the Baptist, to Stand Up for the Lord.
- **Luke 12:11-12** - .<sup>11</sup> And when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious about how you should defend yourself or what you should say, <sup>12</sup> for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.”

# Unrepentant Sin – Religious Institutions and Leaders

- **Luke 3:7-9** - <sup>7</sup> He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup> Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. <sup>9</sup> Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”
- **Matthew 3:7** - <sup>7</sup> But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?”

# The Decline of Christianity in America

- **Luke 3:8-9** - For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. <sup>9</sup> Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”
- As the rate of church attendance and false teaching continues to rise in America, the Gospel is growing at a great rate in Africa and other parts of the world.
- **Psalms 33:12** - Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!

# The Impact of False Teachers

- **1 Timothy 6:3-5** - <sup>3</sup> If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, <sup>4</sup> he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, <sup>5</sup> and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.

# Jesus – The True Vine

- **John 15:1-4** - “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. <sup>2</sup> Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.
- **John 15:5-7** - <sup>5</sup> I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

# Unrepentant Sin – People

- **Luke 3:10** - <sup>10</sup> And the crowds asked him, “What then shall we do?”

# The Courage to Reach Out to the Lost

- **Luke 15:3-7** - <sup>3</sup> So he told them this parable: <sup>4</sup> “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? <sup>5</sup> And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. <sup>6</sup> And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ <sup>7</sup> Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

# Courage to Save a Brother or Sister

- **James 5:19-20** - <sup>19</sup> My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, <sup>20</sup> let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.



# Alexis de Tocqueville - 1831

“I sought for the greatness of the United States in her commodious harbors, her ample rivers, her fertile fields, and boundless forests—and it was not there. I sought for it in her rich mines, her vast world commerce, her public school system, and in her institutions of higher learning—and it was not there. I looked for it in her democratic Congress and her matchless Constitution—and it was not there. Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits flame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because America is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.

# Separating the Wheat From the Chaff

- **Luke 3:17** - <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”