

Luke 3:1-20 – The Ministry of John the Baptist, Part 3

Introduction: Gospel Preaching is Good News (vv 3, 8-9, 18)

1. Gospel Preaching (Repentance & Faith) is Loving to do
2. John the Baptist: Bold, Confrontational, Preached Repentance & the Forgiveness of Sins
3. How would you characterize John's Preaching?
4. God calls His Preaching: Good News!
5. Our Culture is guided by Self-Esteem and Toleration

Main Truth: Preaching repentance from Sin is Good News and bearing fruit in keeping with repentance is evidence of conversion.

Gospel Preaching is Loving for it Confronts Sin

1. The world does not think it is sinful & many Christians do not think they are that bad
2. Failing to speak up is unloving – they will never hear their problem (Sin) nor the Cure (Jesus) (**Romans 10:14-15**)

Gospel Preaching does not Deal with Sin Causally (v 7a)

1. True Christian Preaching deals with Sin as it is: Rebellion against a Holy God
2. Sinfulness: the core characteristic of the human condition
 - a. By nature we are evil (**Matthew 7:11**)
 - b. Our hearts are wicked (**Jer 17:9-10, Matt 12:34**)
 - c. We are born sinners (**Psalms 51:5**)
 - d. Before Christ, we followed Satan (**Ephesians 2:1-3**)
 - e. We are sinners from infancy (**Prov 22:15, Gen 8:21**)
3. The Lord sees Nothing but Sinners who do not understand His Word or Seek after Him, who are unrighteous, apart from Christ (**Psalms 14:2-3; see also Romans 3**)
4. John's confrontational preaching: *You brood of vipers*
 - a. He understands that by nature the sinner is not a child of God, but a child of Satan (**see 1 John 3:10**)
 - b. Without Jesus, we belong to the Kingdom of Darkness

Gospel Preaching Confronts the Motives of the Heart (v 7b)

1. *Why are you fleeing?* Are you truly converted, or are you playing religious games?
2. Have you turned to Jesus? Are you coming to Him for the right reasons?

Gospel Preaching Warns of the Consequences of Sin (v 7c, 15-17)

1. *Who warned you of God's wrath to come?*
2. God's anger toward sinners is real and it is coming
3. Unless there is conversion to Jesus, there is nothing but wrath
4. Some try to deny this truth in the Church today
5. Christ will Judge: He will separate the wheat from the chaff
6. The problem is not what Man DOES, but who he IS

Gospel Preaching Confronts False Confidences (v 8)

1. Our religion, ethnic heritage, goodness – these cannot save you
2. *Relying on Good Deeds is Deathly and Damnable (Lk 18:9-14)*
3. Fallen humanity is wired to think all I have to do to go to heaven is be good and do good – this is a Satanic Lie
4. Morality does not save you! (**Matthew 5:20**)
5. Only the Blood of Jesus poured out on the Cross can save you

Gospel Preaching Points People to Jesus (vv 9-14)

1. Gospel Preaching Should be Urgent – the axe cuts down bad trees (individuals who do not bear good fruit)
2. Gospel Preaching Is Universal – Everyone without Jesus will incur Judgment
3. What shall we do? Repent!
 - a. Gospel Preaching gives Answers to the Convicted Heart
 - b. Answers are Appropriate to the Individual (Crowds, Tax Collector, Soldiers, Husbands, Wives, Parents, etc)
 - c. Repent of Self-Centered Existence
 - d. Repentance is not Moralism – changing behavior to live better, but a response of the believer to care about what God cares about and desire to please the Lord
 - e. Repentance bears Fruit = visible evidence that is it true

Gospel Preaching Proclaims Jesus as Redeemer and Judge (vv 15-20)

1. Gospel Preaching is About Christ Crucified (**1 Cor 1:22-24**)
2. Jesus is the Answer to Our Sin Problem = He Saves
3. Jesus Baptizes with Fire = He Judges Sin
4. Preaching the Good News means you will be hated in the world and persecuted for the Truth (**1 Peter 4:12-14, John 15:18-19**)
5. The Gospel is for Everyone: The Peasant and the King
 - a. Herod Antipas did not respond to John's preaching like the crowds – he did not repent of his incestuous marriage
 - b. John calls Herod Out – this is unlawful (**Leviticus 18:16**)
6. Herod jails John for Preaching Good News

Invitation: What is your response to preaching like John the Baptist? Do you ignore it, angered by it, hostile toward it? Or do you receive it?