

## John 3:22-36 – Heavenly & Earthly, Increase & Decrease

### Introduction

1. Learn by Paradox – *The Valley of Vision*
2. John the Baptist understood his role and place in light of Christ
3. To be humble is to be exalted

**Main Idea: In joyful response of God’s power drawing us to the light of Jesus Christ, we must decrease and Jesus must increase. The reason: Jesus is above all things. He is from Heaven and we are from the earth, He is full of God the Spirit without measure, loved by God the Father, with full authority. He is the way of eternal life.**

### I Must Decrease (vv 22-30)

1. Change in Scenario and Setting: John the Baptist Reintroduced
  - a. The disciples of Jesus are Baptizing (**John 4:2**)
  - b. John is present baptizing nearby
  - c. Many were going to Jesus faith and repenting of Sin
2. Clash over Jewish Purification Rituals
  - a. Jewish Ritual included Cleansing of hands, clothes, etc.
  - b. Related to the baptisms of Jesus & John – John is losing followers, Jesus is gaining followers
  - c. Which baptism should be followed – which purifies?
  - d. Maybe John’s disciples were jealous of Jesus’ success
3. John the Baptist’s Responses to Jesus’ Ministry
  - a. All gifts are from Heaven
    - i. There is a reason people are going to Jesus – the Father is giving Jesus His Sheep (**John 3:21, 6:37**)
    - ii. The work of Heaven is to give the Son of God a people for His own possession
    - iii. How do we respond to others’ successes? Everything good is from the Lord (**Matt 20:13-16**)
    - iv. Do we see through the lens of grace or through the lens of equality and fairness (**James 1:17**)
  - b. I am NOT the Messiah – John was not sent to BE the Way, but to Prepare the Way: Jesus is the Way!
  - c. I am Grateful to be the Groom’s Best Man
    - i. John knows his role – he does not marry the bride
    - ii. The best man celebrates & rejoices in the groom’s wedding day
    - iii. The Bride is the Church, given to Jesus by the Father
    - iv. An Answer for the Debate over Purification: God sent the Son to purify His Bride (**John 1:29, Matthew 3:11, Ephesians 5:25-27, Revelation 21:9**)

- d. Completed Joy in Christ
  - i. John rejoices that the people go to meet the bridegroom
  - ii. He sees his role and purpose fulfilled
  - iii. The Voice in the Wilderness exchanged for the voice of the Bridegroom
- e. He increase, I must decrease
  - i. To be great in the Kingdom is to be the Least; to be first, you must be last (A Paradoxical Kingdom)
  - ii. Freedom in the Gospel to be invited to the banquet table
  - iii. There is a reciprocal relationship between your exaltation of Jesus Christ in your life and your joy

### He Must Increase (vv 29, 31-36)

1. How Must Jesus Increase? The Bridegroom has a voice (**v 29**)
  - a. The Bridegroom’s Voice is Superior to the Voice in the Wilderness: Greater, Stronger, Effectual, Transforming
  - b. The Shepherd Calls His Sheep, they hear & follow (**Jn 10**)
  - c. The Bride knows the Voice of her Husband when He calls
  - d. The Voice of the Groom gathers the Bride: Exactly what is happening to John, for people are going out to Jesus
  - e. This is God’s Divine Plan – It MUST happen: Jesus will be exalted and God will be glorified
2. Why Must Jesus Increase?
  - a. Jesus is From Heaven Above
    - i. The Glory of Heaven is Jesus’ natural environment
    - ii. Everyone else is of the earth, born naturally (**John 3:6**)
    - iii. Jesus is from above, begotten, not made
    - iv. There is a difference between Creature/Creator, Adam/Jesus (**John 1:1, 14**)
  - b. Jesus is Above All
    - i. Above life, family, schedule, plans, etc. – He is God!
  - c. Jesus Words are God’s Words (**vv 32, 33, 34**)
    - i. He speaks of what He has seen and heard because Heaven is where He is from – He created Heaven
    - ii. Jesus utters the words of God because He is God
      1. People do not receive His testimony; They must be born again to do so – when they receive Him, they testify that God is true
  - d. Jesus has been given all things
    - i. The love of the Father expressed in His giving the Son all things: The Holy Spirit without measure, His sheep
  - e. Jesus is the Source of Eternal Life
    - a. Belief = Eternal Life; Disbelief = Remaining Wrath
    - b. Obedience to Jesus springs from Belief in Jesus
3. For Jesus to Increase is for Him to have His rightful place