

The Meaning of John the Baptist

Study of Matthew, Part 6

Matthew 3:1-6

Sermon Outline

*John the Baptist was a man
caught up in the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

I. A Herald apart from the World

- Set apart from birth (Lk. 1:14-17)
- Set apart in location (Mt. 3:1)
- Set apart in diet (Mt. 3:4)
- Set apart in appearance (Mt. 3:4)

How does the gospel of Jesus set us apart from the world?

II. A Herald against the World

- Against the world's kingdom (Mt. 3:2)
- Against the world's assumptions (Mt. 2:2,7)
- Against the world's religion (Mt. 2:7-10)
- Against the world's sin (Mt. 3:2, 4:4)

How does the gospel of Jesus set us against the world?

III. A Herald appealing to the World

- Announcing the good news of heaven's kingdom (Mt. 3:2)
- Announcing the good news of heaven's grace (Mt. 3:2)

How does the gospel of Jesus compel us to appeal to the World?

IV. A Herald attacked by the World

- Mocked (Mt. 11:15)
- Arrested (Mt. 14:3)
- Beheaded (Mt. 14:10)

How does the gospel of Jesus put us at risk for attack by the world?

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1. Read Matt. 3:1-12. What do observe about John the Baptist?
How do you react to him?

2. What is a herald? What does a herald do? Who has one? Why was Jesus "heralded?" Why is Jesus' Herald such a shock?

3. Why is it valuable for us to linger a while with John the Baptist?
What does he teach us about ministry?

4. What would we and others think if someone like John appeared on the scene today? What would we make of him?

5. How did the gospel of Jesus set John apart from the world? What are some ways that the gospel might set us apart from the world?

6. How did the gospel set John against the world? How does the gospel challenge the world's assumptions about money, politics, social standing, etc? How does the gospel challenge the religious legalist and the religious liberal?

7. How might the gospel set us against the world today?

8. What was John's appeal to the world in 3:2? How is this an appeal of God's grace? What does it mean to repent?

9. Read Matthew 14:1-10. Where did John's relationship to the gospel of Jesus get him? How does the gospel put us at risk for attack by the world? Why does the world respond in such a hostile way to the gospel?

10. How is John's role different than ours? How is John's role the same as ours? How have we been "caught up" in the gospel of Jesus Christ?