

Matthew: Jesus, The King of Kings

Beloved Son

Matthew 3:7-17

Last week: Repent!

Not just an emotion (being upset), or even saying sorry.

More of “forgive me” and action. Action of changing heart and changing course.

It takes effort.

John - a voice crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord

i. “The idea is taken from the practice of eastern monarchs, who, whenever they entered upon an expedition, or took a journey through a desert country, sent harbingers before them, to prepare all things for their passage; and pioneers to open the passes, to level the ways, and to remove all impediments.” (Clarke)

DGC

- **Repent** was the first word of John the Baptist’s gospel (Matthew 3:1-2).
- **Repent** was the first word of Jesus’ gospel (Matthew 4:17 and Mark 1:14-15).
Jesus goes out and carries on John’s message - passing of the torch
- **Repent** was the first word in the preaching ministry of the twelve disciples (Mark 6:12).
- **Repent** was the first word in the preaching instructions Jesus gave to His disciples after His resurrection (Luke 24:46-47).
- **Repent** was the first word of exhortation in the first Christian sermon (Acts 2:38).
- **Repent** was the first word in the mouth of the Apostle Paul through his ministry (Acts 26:19-20).

(Spurgeon) “Men’s hearts were like a wilderness, wherein there is no way; but as loyal subjects throw up roads for the approach of beloved princes, so were men to welcome the Lord, with their hearts made right and ready to receive him.”

Today we’ll see two very different encounters:

- One with the religious leaders and John
- The other with Jesus and John

Where are we? Right now? What is our posture in the inward parts?

[Pray]

3:7-12

DGC ii. *Baptism was practiced in the Jewish community already in the form of ceremonial immersions, but typically it was only among Gentiles who wished to become Jews. For a Jew in*

John's day to submit to baptism was essentially to say, "I confess that I am as far away from God as a Gentile and I need to get right with Him." This was a real work of the Holy Spirit.

Pooler: They believed that one was made righteous by keeping the law, and they believed themselves to be righteous in this way.

They often misinterpreted the law.

They held many traditions to be of equal authority to Scripture.

They were often hypocrites in their practice, neglecting the core and spirit of the law for aspects of outward observance.

Bruce called the Pharisees "Legal precisians, virtuosi in religion." Of the Sadducees, he said they were "Men of affairs and of the world, largely of the priestly class.

These guys were coming down to John

- Did they really want to repent? Obviously not. They thought they had no need for it.
- Popular - all the people, who they lorded over, and wanted the praise of, were down there

Beware of the religious wanting to get involved in real works of God!

They will come to try and make it their own, steal the glory, maintain their control

The real works of God happen almost magically - by the Spirit. They don't need programs. They don't need fame. It starts with the proclamation to repent.

Great revivals, the Jesus Movement, could it be today in our wilderness!? Will the rural areas repent and bring revival to the nation?

Brood of vipers! Strong language

- These men weren't used to being called out
- They liked prayers and recognition and the ringing of the bell
- Today they're getting a real rebuke.

John didn't mess around. He wasn't a respecter of persons because God isn't.

Romans 2:11 KJV For there is no respect of persons with God.

Don't think of John as harsh - Jesus said even "worse" things to them - Matthew 23

It doesn't matter your education, seminary. Your robes. Your title. If your heart isn't right before God you're a whitewashed tomb. An open grave

Painted the RV - imagine a painted gravestone

Abrahamic family - instead, a family of vipers - snakes (the comparison to evil was not lost on them I'm sure)

John 8:37-47 NKJV - "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. "I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father." They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. "But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. "You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father--God." Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. "Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. "You are of [your] father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own [resources], for he is a liar and the father of it. "But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. "Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? "He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."

DGC We can learn much from John the Baptist's preaching, "Flee from the wrath to come."

- *This wrath is the wrath of God.*
- *This wrath is fair and well deserved.*
- *This wrath is often ignored or disregarded because it is not immediate; it is to come.*
- *This wrath is not any less certain just because it is delayed and is to come.*
- *****This wrath is terrible when it comes because it is God's wrath.*****
- *This wrath cannot be stood against; the only way to survive is to successfully flee from it.*
- *v. What John told them to do is also instructive: flee.*
- *To flee implies immediate action.*
- *To flee implies swift action.*
- *****To flee implies straight movement with no diversions.*****

V8 Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance

Dgc - real repentance will show itself in life

Real repentance bears real fruit

Trust but verify

*You have to watch. It isn't about earning trust in a selfish way like the world gaining friends back
Is the life - in secret and in public - one that is showing a heart change*

Again - we cannot do it on our own. We must come to God and let Him change us.

"Saying sorry" many times before truly repenting in Nov 2003

1 Timothy 5:22a NKJV - Do not lay hands on anyone hastily

Same is true for ministry, for relationships, etc.

Those you can trust are those who have repented - and live a life of continual repentance.

It's not just a one-time act. It's a continual seeking

Salvation is the first act of repentance. Sanctification is brought through the continuation of the first.

Repentance isn't a one-and-done - it's a continuing action word. It's never finished.

But these guys weren't here for that.

John really lays into them. Their birthright means NOTHING.

God can make more than stone soup - he can make children out of the rocks if he wanted!

in a way saying they're as dumb as rocks!

Because their hearts were as hard as one!

Ezekiel 36:25-28 NKJV - "Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. "I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do [them]. "Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.

John 15:1-2, 6, 8 NKJV - "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every [branch] that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ... "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw [them] into the fire, and they are burned. ... "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

Mightier than I - that's a relief

Worthy to carry - not even worthy enough to be lower than a slave

A Rabbi's disciple was expected to act virtually as his master's slave, but to remove his shoes was too low a task for even a disciple

Paul calls himself a bondservant

The holy spirit and fire (fire is not more important than the hs, hs is required to survive the fire)

Judgment - our works burned up, only what is of Jesus remains

Trials and tribulations - to all who think that following Jesus means an easier life. No! A better one, but not easier.

Winnowing fan

Cut the wheat, take the chaff, throw it up in the air, chaff blows away, grains fall

His wheat into the barn - Jesus is looking to fill up heaven's storehouses with us! The fruit of the cross.

Gives new light on what God did through Joseph in Egypt

DGC These proud and unrepentant leaders were just as useless to God

Hardness of heart is what makes us useless to God

Religion without relationship

Words without wisdom

Love without sacrifice

:13-15

Galilee to the Jordan - 40 miles (based on a traditionally-held route of Jesus)

His journey was not out of convenience or on the way somewhere else

It was intentional and purposeful

3mph - 13+ hours

John tried to prevent him

yet Jesus didn't rebuke him like Peter

Matthew 16:21-23 NKJV - From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

John was not about the things of men, but the things of God.

He recognized that Jesus had no need of repentance.

He had an acute awareness of his own lack all believers should be aware of this, especially as we are believers more and more - Paul did.

If a minister isn't aware of his own lack - his own desperate need for Jesus,

He will only minister works - what righteousness can be accomplished in his own strength

Permit it to be so now Jesus was telling John to go along with it, even if he didn't understand it yet. How much of our faith needs to be this way. The understanding will come! And if not, we can't expect to have the capability to fathom all God is doing.

Fulfill all righteous Jesus was perfect in every way. He "fulfilled the law and prophets" He was doing this to do the right thing, even if it wasn't necessarily needed personally

*Bruce- Yet it would be easy for any onlooker to think that Jesus was just another sinner being baptized; so He identified with sinful man. "Christ's baptism might create misunderstanding, just as His associating with publicans and sinners did. *He was content to be misunderstood.**"*

This was John's struggle, but coming to Jesus with it directly helped him quickly get back his theological troubles

Our doubts, our understanding of God and His plans may be incomplete (Apollos)

But when they come, our appeal should be directly to God.

He will comfort us and give us understanding when needed - and faith to carry on, even when not.

:16-17

Barclay - There are some old and false traditions that Jesus was baptized because of pressure from His mother and brothers. Since everyone else was doing it, they thought He should also.

Immersion baptism - basically all we see in scripture (anointing is poured out oil on head)
Clean conscience towards God

Heavens were opened to Him

There's this veil before us, a dimension unseen, yet even more real than the dimension we live in.

Acts 7:54-58 NKJV - When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with [their] teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; and they cast [him] out of the city and stoned [him]. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

He saw the spirit of God descending like a dove (image of dove, birds in the bible, Noah's ark)

Alighting on him

to come from one place to another, and used both of persons arriving and of those returning to appear, make one's appearance, come before the public
be established, become known, to come (fall) into or unto

Jesus received the Holy Spirit - to begin his work. The church was born on pentecost, also receiving the holy spirit

If Jesus needed to be One with the Father He was also One with the Holy Spirit.

There is no ministry of God apart from the trinity working in unison.

(Spurgeon) Jesus was about to begin His public ministry, and He would do it in the power of the Spirit of God. "It was the Spirit of God who gave success to Jesus Christ's ministry."

DGC iii. How a dove represents the work of the Holy Spirit:

- Like a dove, the work of the Holy Spirit can be swift.
- Like a dove, the work of the Holy Spirit can be soft and gentle.
- Like a dove, the work of the Holy Spirit brings peace.
- Like a dove, the work of the Holy Spirit is harmless.
- Like a dove, the work of the Holy Spirit speaks of love.

Not painless or uncomfortable but harm is not the end. A bone being set might feel like harm but it is the first measure of healing**Voice from heaven** - the Father (revelation)

This is my *beloved* son, in who I am well pleased

Beloved agapetos beloved (David), esteemed, dear, favourite, worthy of love

Well pleased - choose, preferred, to be well pleased with, take pleasure in, to be favourably inclined towards one

Abel, Noah, Joseph, David, Samuel, Jeremiah - the list goes on. Different pictures of God's favor in people's lives - choosing them

Psalm 45:7 NKJV - You love righteousness and hate wickedness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.

Jesus was chosen over all. Preferred before all. Firstborn over all creation. First to rise from the dead. Name above all names.

DGC - By this everyone knew Jesus was different

(Verse about trifold witness...john?)

ii. There is no suggestion that Jesus became the Son of God with this experience. "We need not assume that Jesus had no previous experience of the Spirit; the vision symbolizes his commissioning for his Messianic work, not a new spiritual status." (France)

Psalm 2:6-12 NKJV - "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You [are] My Son, Today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give [You] The nations [for] Your inheritance (remember this in Matt 4), And the ends of the earth [for] Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' " Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish [in] the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed [are] all those who put their trust in Him.

The point of baptism is to be shown pleasing to God - to show that He is pleased with you already, in Jesus - and that you want to please Him with your life in return

Do you know in Jesus, you are his beloved son or daughter? He has loved you with an everlasting love. He has given you access to Himself, to heaven's riches, and not let you an orphan on earth. His Spirit is with you - if you'd allow Him in and to alight on your life.