

Read: Matt. 3: 1-7; Luke 3: 1-14; John 1: 19-23

The beginning of John the Baptist's ministry: Luke 3: 1-2

1. Why do you think Luke mentions the civil and religious authorities at the time of John's ministry?

John's ministry: Matt. 3: 1-7 and Luke 3: 1-14

2. Where did John preach and baptize?

3. Who did he preach to?

4. What was John's message? List three specific things he told people to do to demonstrate repentance.

(See additional study,
topic #8)

Prophecies fulfilled: Matt. 3: 3-6

5. Describe John's personal life and habits.

6. John's way of life was foretold by Gabriel to his father in Luke 1: 16. How does Matt. 3: 5-6 fulfill this prophecy?

7. Matt 3: 3 is a partial quote from Isaiah's prophecy about the forerunner to the Messiah. This verse claims John is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 40: 3-5. Isaiah prophesied more than 800 years before John was born. How did John's ministry fulfill the prophecy?

Was John the Christ?: John 1: 19-23

8. The Jews wanted to know if John was the Christ, the Messiah, the promised Deliverer. What did John say about his ministry in relation to Christ's?

Today's Thought

Luke 3: 8 "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance."
Do I live a life that demonstrates my repentance from sin?

Read: John 1: 24-34; Matt. 3: 11-17

The purpose of John's baptism: John 1: 31

1. Why did John say he had come to baptize?

John compares himself to Christ: Matt. 3: 11 and John 1: 24-27

2. What did John say the difference would be in how they would baptize?

3. Did John consider himself as worthy of honor as Jesus?

Jesus' baptism: Matt. 3: 13-17

4. What was John's reaction to Jesus asking to be baptized?

5. What was Jesus' reason for wanting to be baptized?

6. How did John know that the Holy Spirit was on Jesus?

7. Who said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased?"

John's testimony about Jesus: John 1: 29-34

8. What did John say Jesus was?

9. How did John know that Jesus was the Son of God?

(See additional study,
topic #9)

Today's Thought

Matt. 3: 15- "... it is proper
for us to do this to fulfill all
righteousness."

Am I careful to do
everything I can to be
pleasing to God?

Note:

In chronological order the next event is the temptation of Jesus. However, we will jump ahead in time and follow the life of John the Baptist to its conclusion.

(See additional study, topic #10)

Read: John 3: 22-36; Luke 3: 19-20 & 7: 18-23; Mark 6: 17-29

John the Baptist's attitude about Jesus: John 3: 22-36

1. During the first year of Jesus' ministry, both He and John were baptizing in the Judean countryside. In verse 26, what was the concern of John's disciples about Jesus baptizing nearby?

2. What was John's attitude about Jesus? Why did he feel like this?

3. In verse 36, what is John's warning about believing that Jesus is the Son of God?

Jesus' response to John the Baptist: Luke 3: 19-20 and 7: 18-23

4. During the second year of Jesus' ministry, John the Baptist was imprisoned by Herod. What was the reason for John's imprisonment?

5. John was discouraged and began questioning whether Jesus really was the Son of God. He sent a couple of his disciples to ask Jesus about this. What did Jesus tell the messengers to tell John?

John is martyred: Mark 6: 17-29

6. Herod had put John in prison, but who wanted to kill him for what he had said?

7. How did Herod react to John the Baptist?

8. What finally caused Herod to kill John the Baptist?

Today's Thought

John 3: 30- "He must become greater; I must become less."
Is Jesus becoming greater in my life and am I becoming less?

Read: Mark 1: 13; Luke 4: 1-13; Deut. 6: 13, 16 & 8: 3

Jesus' temptation: Luke 4: 1-2

1. When was Jesus led out into the desert?

2. Why did He go there?

3. What did Jesus do in the desert for forty days?

4. Who tempted Jesus?

(See additional study,
topic #11)

The temptations: Luke 4: 3-12, Deut. 6: 13, 16 & 8: 3

5. What was the devil trying to get Jesus to satisfy by the first temptation? vs. 3

6. What was the devil trying to get Jesus to do with the second temptation? vs. 5-8

7. What was the devil trying to get Jesus to do with the third temptation? vs. 9

8. How did Jesus resist these temptations?

After the temptation: Luke 4: 13; Mark 1: 13

9. What are three things we can see from these two verses?

Today's Thought

I want God's Word to be
such a part of my life that
Scripture will be my
answer to the temptations
I face.

**Knowing
Jesus**

Read: John 1: 35-51 & 2: 1-11

The first disciples to meet Jesus: John 1: 35-51

1. What caused two of John the Baptist's disciples to follow Jesus that day?

2. The Gospel of John was not written by John the Baptist, but rather by John, the son of Zebedee, and brother of James. He had an interesting habit throughout the book. Although he specifically named others present at different occasions, he would not name himself. He always referred to himself in round-about ways like "another disciple", "the disciple Jesus loved", or "the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper." With that in mind, who were the first five disciples to meet Jesus?

3. What was the first thing Andrew and Philip did after spending time with Jesus?

4. What convinced Nathanael that Jesus was the Son of God?

Jesus changes water to wine: John 2: 1-11

5. Who were among the guests invited to the wedding at Cana?

6. What did Mary do about her hosts' problem?

7. What did Jesus tell the servants to do?

8. How do we know that Jesus turned water into wine?

9. Why did Jesus do this miracle?

Today's Thought

Jesus changed Simon's name to Peter or Cephas. Simon means "Reed." Peter (in Greek) or Cephas (in Aramaic) means "Rock." Peter's relationship with Jesus changed him from a shaky reed to a solid rock. Is your relationship with Jesus changing your nature?

Day 1

- 1.** Luke lists the civil and religious leaders so that the events can be placed in their proper historical setting. If this were a fictional account, these details would not be included.
- 2.** John preached and baptized all around the Jordan River.
- 3.** John preached to the crowds from Jerusalem, Judea and Jordan. Among them were religious leaders (Pharisees and Sadducees), tax collectors, and soldiers.
- 4.** John's message was to "repent for the Kingdom of heaven is near." Specific things he told them to do to demonstrate repentance were: to share their excess with the poor, not to collect more than was required, and not to extort money or accuse people falsely.
- 5.** John wore clothing made of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.
- 6.** John brought many back to God as Gabriel had said in Luke 1: 16.
- 7.** John showed the people in his preaching that they were sinners and needed to repent. Many came and confessed their sins and were baptized by John. He constantly showed them that they needed to change their whole way of life. In this way he prepared the people to see the Messiah, God's salvation.
- 8.** John said he was not the Christ, but that he was sent to prepare the way for the Lord.

Day 2

- 1.** John said that the reason he came baptizing was that Jesus might be revealed as the Messiah to Israel.
- 2.** John said he baptized with water but the Christ would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Note: fire refers to the purifying work of the Holy Spirit. See Malachi 3:2-4)
- 3.** No. John said he was not even worthy to untie Jesus' sandals.
- 4.** John refused at first saying he should be baptized by Jesus instead.
- 5.** Jesus said it was a way for them to demonstrate righteousness.
- 6.** John saw the Spirit come down like a dove and light on Jesus.
- 7.** God, the Father, spoke from heaven.
- 8.** John called Jesus the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.
- 9.** God, who had sent John to baptize, had let John know that he would see the Holy Spirit come down and remain on the One who was the Son of God.

Day 3

- 1.** They were afraid John was losing his power. They didn't want to see the crowds dwindle and begin to follow Jesus instead.
- 2.** John was glad to see Jesus' ministry growing. Because John knew he was only the forerunner of the Christ and not the Christ Himself, he felt fulfilled and happy.
- 3.** John warns that having eternal life depends on believing and accepting God's Son.
- 4.** John had rebuked Herod for his wicked behavior, including his adultery with his brother's wife, Herodias.
- 5.** He told them to report what they had seen and heard: the blind received their sight, the lame walked, lepers were cured, the deaf heard, the dead were raised and the poor had good news preached to them. The testimony of miracles would build his faith.
- 6.** Herodias, Herod's wife, nursed a grudge against John because he pointed out her sin. She wanted to kill him.
- 7.** Herod protected John because he knew he was a righteous and holy man. He liked to listen to John, but was puzzled by what he said.
- 8.** He had made a rash promise in the presence of guests to Herodias' daughter. Because he didn't want to look like a weakling in front of guests, he had John beheaded.

Day 4

- 1.** Immediately after Jesus' baptism by John, He went out into the desert.
- 2.** Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit to be tempted by the devil.
- 3.** Jesus fasted (he ate nothing) for forty days.
- 4.** The devil tempted Jesus. James 1: 13 says that "God cannot be tempted, nor does He tempt anyone." God did not tempt Jesus, but He did allow the devil to tempt Him.
- 5.** The devil wanted Jesus to satisfy his physical hunger in a supernatural way. The devil appealed to His desire for physical comfort. In order to fulfill God's will He had to live within normal human limitations without sin. Jesus obeyed God.
- 6.** The devil was trying to get Jesus to take the "easy" way to fulfill God's plan for Him. Jesus had to resist letting the end justify the means. (Note: Jesus would have the authority and splendor of all the kingdoms of the world, but God's way for Him was through death on the cross. The devil was offering an easier way.)
- 7.** The devil wanted Jesus to prove His relationship with God, by "forcing" God to rescue Him. Jesus' relationship with God had to rely on trust, not proofs.
- 8.** Jesus knew God's will and trusted God to fulfill all His purposes. He quoted scriptures that demonstrated His total reliance on God and His desire to totally fulfill God's will for Him.
- 9.** God had protected Him from wild animals in the wilderness during the temptation. Angels came and attended to Him when He had passed the test. This was not the only time Jesus was tempted. The devil would try to tempt Him again.

Day 5

- 1.** They followed Jesus because John called Jesus the Lamb of God. Since this was a reference to the Messiah, they wanted to get to know Jesus.
- 2.** Jesus' first five disciples were John, Andrew, Simon Peter, Philip and Nathanael. (Note: It does not appear from Scripture that John, Andrew, and Simon Peter left everything and followed Jesus at this time. It is not until after the events of Luke 4: 14- 44, that Jesus called Andrew, Simon, James, and John in Luke 5.)
- 3.** Both Andrew and Philip went immediately to someone else to tell them about Jesus.
- 4.** When Jesus told him where he was and what he was doing before Philip called him, he began to believe that Jesus was the Son of God, the King of Israel.
- 5.** Jesus, His disciples, and Mary, Jesus' mother, were guests at the wedding feast at Cana.
- 6.** When Mary learned that they had run out of wine, she told Jesus. She believed He could do something about it. Then she told the servants to do whatever He told them to do.
- 7.** Jesus told the servants to fill six large stone water jars with water. The New International Version says that each jar held between 20 and 30 gallons. Jesus then told the servants to get some out of the jars and take it to the master of the banquet.
- 8.** We know Jesus turned water into wine because the master of the banquet wondered why the bridegroom had saved the best wine for last. The master of the banquet said this wine was the best.
- 9.** Jesus did this miracle to reveal His glory to His disciples. This led to them putting their trust in Him.

Day 1

8. Repentance:

Turn away from your sins- Eze. 18: 30
God's kindness leads to repentance- Rom. 2: 4
Turn to God- Acts 3: 19
Godly sorrow brings repentance- II Cor. 7: 10
Rejoicing in heaven- Luke 15: 7

Day 2

9. The sacrificial lamb:

The Passover lamb- Ex. 12: 1-13
Sin offering- Lev. 4: 32- 5: 5
Prophecy of Jesus dying like a lamb- Isa. 53: 7

Day 3

10. Humility:

God guides the humble- Psa. 25: 9
Consider others better- Phil. 2: 3
God gives grace- I Pet. 5: 5-6

Day 4

11. Other notable fasts in the Bible:

Moses fasted forty days and nights two times- Deut. 9: 9, 18
Samuel and all Israel fasted one day- I Sam. 7: 6
David fasted one week- II Sam. 12: 15- 18
Elijah ate angel's food and then fasted 40 days- I Ki. 19: 8
Nehemiah fasted for Jerusalem- Neh. 1: 4
Daniel fasted at least two times- Dan. 9:3 and 10:3
The city of Nineveh- Jonah 3: 5, 8-10
The believers at Antioch- Acts 13: 2- 3