

John Prepares the Way and Baptizes Jesus

1. What do we know about John the Baptist from 3:4 and other Scriptures like Luke ch. 1?
2. How did the ministry of John prepare the way for the Lord Jesus? (1-3) How does repentance from sin prepare the way for the Lord to bring people to salvation?
3. What does John mean when he says the kingdom of heaven is “at hand” or “near”? (2) What would the Jewish people have remembered from the OT when John mentioned the kingdom of heaven? (see Daniel 2:44; 7:13-14; Isaiah 9:6-7; 2 Samuel 7:12-13)
4. How was John’s baptism different from the baptism of a Christian believer today? (6,11; compare Acts 2:38,41; 19:1-6)
5. What warnings does John give to the religious leaders who came to him (7-12)? Why do you think he spoke to them so sternly?
6. What do John’s statements about the coming Messiah tell us about how John viewed himself in relation to Jesus? (11) What can we learn from this about ourselves? How do these statements possibly relate to John’s hesitancy to baptize Jesus? (14)
7. How does winnowing grain illustrate the two possible future states for humankind? (12) What qualifies someone to be gathered into His barn? What sends them to be burned up?
8. What do you think Jesus meant by His explanation of why John should baptize Him? (15) Since Jesus did not need to repent, how did His baptism “fulfill all righteousness”?
9. What two things were seen and heard when the heavens were opened after Jesus’ baptism? (16-17) Which persons of the Godhead (Trinity) do you see in this scene?
10. Application: How have you helped someone else prepare the way for the Lord like John did?