



MESSAGE/SERIES:

Series: Jesus in John

Message: "HE MUST INCREASE"

Text: John 3:22-36

DATE: September 20, 2020

SCRIPTURE FOR THIS WEEK:

(These verses will help you understand themes within as you read our core text as scripture proves scripture)

John 3:22-36, John 1:20 (John's testimony about himself), Mark 1:14, Matthew 4:12, John 1:28-34 (Prior visit of Jesus with John), 1 Corinthians 4:7 (everything we have is from God), Daniel 4:17-32 (God gives to who He wishes), Isaiah 62:5 (Israel belonged to Christ), John 17:8 (Jesus passed on the message from God), John 17:24, John 15:9 (Jesus' ministry was driven by love/John's by obedience), John 17:2 (Jesus has authority over His chosen people),

OPENING SCRIPTURE:

[John 3:22-36]

"²² After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he remained there with them and was baptizing. ²³ John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized ²⁴ (for John had not yet been put in prison).

²⁵ Now a discussion arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew over purification. ²⁶ And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, he who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you bore witness—look, he is baptizing, and all are going to him."

²⁷ John answered, “A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, ‘I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him.’ ²⁹ The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete. ³⁰ He must increase, but I must decrease.”

³¹ He who comes from above is above all. He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven is above all. ³² He bears witness to what he has seen and heard, yet no one receives his testimony. ³³ Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true. ³⁴ For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. ³⁵ The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. ³⁶ Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Jn 3:22–36.

BACKGROUND & OTHER STUDY HELPS:

[OVERLAPPING MINISTRIES OF JOHN & JESUS] John the Baptist Baptized making people aware of our need for repentance. John was the voice described in Isaiah 40:3: A voice cries: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.” John made people aware that there must be a turning away from our sins and to the God of the Bible. Jesus was the new Moses who would finish the course into the promised land. The people had previously come to the Jordan and crossed over it into the earthly promised land, but for all who would trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior would enter the Spiritual promised land,

[JOHN THE BAPTIST AND THE MEANING OF HIS BAPTISM MINISTRY] “Like many other ancient peoples, Jewish people *practiced ceremonial washings*. Their only once-for-all ceremonial washing, however, was the immersion that non-Jews had to go through when they converted to Judaism. Non-Jews who were converting to Judaism would immerse themselves in water, probably under the supervision of a religious expert. John’s baptizing activity fits this model.”

Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), Mk 1:4–5.

“Jewish people also practiced “repentance” when they did something wrong, asking God’s forgiveness and determining to change. (The Old Testament prophets often used this Hebrew idea of “turning” from sin; it involves more than just a “change of mind,”

which is the literal sense of the Greek term used here.) But the ultimate example of repenting, or turning from a wrong way of living to a right way of living, was when a non-Jew decided to obey the teachings of Israel's God.

To tell Jewish people that they had to be baptized or repent the same way non-Jews did would have been offensive, because it challenged the prevalent Jewish belief about salvation. Most Jewish people thought that if they were born into a Jewish family and did not reject God's law, they would be saved; John told them instead that they had to come to God the same way that non-Jews did. The point of John's baptism is that everyone has to come to God on the same terms."

Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), Mk 1:4–5.

OUTLINE:

I. (v22-26) DISCIPLES: *Those who follow man*

John the Baptist was baptizing in one place and Jesus in another. There was an overlapping of ministries where John was handing off to Jesus the followers of the Way. There are many arguments about who is baptizing the most between churches and who have the most salvation, but the question is not what we are doing but rather who they are directed to follow.

- A. (v22) After Jesus encounter with Nicodemus Jesus and His disciples went to the Judean countryside to begin baptizing
 - a. *Jesus Disciples were doing the baptizing as well as Jesus*
 - b. *Jesus seems to be waiting for the official handing off to take place before He proceeds (from John to Jesus) (from Forerunner to Messiah)*
- B. (v23) John the Baptist is still baptizing and still has disciples who are following him
 - a. *John seems to be waiting for the official handing off before he transitions out of the picture*
- C. (v23) People were still coming and John was continuing to prepare the way for the Lord Jesus to take center stage (as long as people were coming John would continue to Baptize unto repentance)

- D. (v24) John would soon be put into prison and later beheaded (Matthew 14:1-12, Luke 3:18-20)
- E. (v25) John's disciples and a Jew got into a heated discussion or debate over purification or ceremonial cleansing (see note on John's baptism)
 - a. *It seems later verses would indicate that John's disciples started the debate*
 - b. *It was centered on the differences between John's baptism and Jesus'*
 - c. *It also seems that John the Baptizers disciples took issue with the fact that Jesus baptism was contrasted and seen as greater than John's*
- F. (v26) There is a recognition of Jesus' ministry
 - a. *Growing in numbers*
 - b. *Surpassing John's*
 - c. *Replacing John's*

II. (v27-36) DISCIPLES: Those who direct to Jesus

- A. (v27) John's answer to his followers was important
 - a. *John makes it clear that The church/ the elect did not belong to John (God had not given it to him but to Jesus)*
 - b. *John acknowledges that God must give and all we can do is receive the roles He desires to give to us*
 - c. *John acknowledges that all things belong to the Father*
- B. (v28) John reiterates what he had already stated in Jesus' presence, "I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before Him" (John 1:28-34)
 - a. *John makes it clear that The church/ the elect did not belong to John (God had not given it to him but to Jesus)*
 - b. *John acknowledges that God must give and all we can do is receive the roles He desires to give to us*
 - c. *John acknowledges that all things belong to the Father*
- C. (v29) "The one who has the bride is the bridegroom."
- D. (v29) "The friend of the bridegroom who stands and hears Him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice..."
- E. (v29) "...Therefore this joy of mine is now complete."--

- a. *Instead of getting upset that people were following Jesus John knew that this was God's plan*
 - b. *Our goal in ministry is to see those who have watched and followed us to now follow Jesus as their savior.*
- F. (v30-31) John says now that Jesus is on the scene, Jesus' influence must increase and John's influence must decrease
- G. (v32-34) John speaks to the differences between himself and Jesus
- a. *John knows that Jesus bears witness to heavenly things from the Father and people will not receive His witness*
 - b. *John testifies that all who accepts Jesus' testimony accepts (certifies): "that God is true" as Jesus' words are the Fathers' words*
 - c. *John knew that Jesus had been given God's Spirit to know God's words (we are like Jesus in this way as the Spirit works in a like way although we are sinful and unable to have the clarity Jesus had)*
- H. (v35) John makes clear that Jesus has been given all things and this authority and possession is because God loves the Son with an eternal and perfect love
- I. (v36) Whoever believes in Jesus (present tense) has (present tense)
- J. (v36) By contrast whoever does not follow Jesus, in obedience to His word (repentance) shall not see life (mental and spiritual life that is only in Christ)
- K. (v36) God's wrath remains on those who do not submit and follow Jesus
- a. *God's wrath is satisfied for all who will believe*
 - i. from foundations of the earth (God's secret will)
 - ii. from the cross (God's will in time)
 - iii. From the moment one believes in Jesus (in our lives/conversion)
 - b. *God's wrath will be poured out on all who do not believe in an eternal hell*
 - i. Eternal separation from God
 - ii. Eternal torment
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Meditation Moment:

1. John was a servant of God to prepare the way for people to know their need for a savior. Does God use us as forerunners in this capacity or is this solely the work of the Holy Spirit today?
 2. How many times do we get upset and see other Bible believing and teaching ministries as competition instead of cheering on the work that Jesus is doing in that congregation?
 3. Do we like John recognizing that we must decrease as Jesus increases in our personal lives and in the people we disciple?
 4. Do we stand in joy at what Jesus is doing or get upset that we are not more recognized in the things we do?
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-----**Message from Pastor Michael**-----
Church,

I see this transition of John to Jesus as more than just a timeline in scripture... I see it as a recurring theme in our present age. We must constantly fan the flame of the Holy Spirit through prayer and support to the mission of Jesus. Sometimes we must realize that others can carry the mission further down the road as God's tool for that leg of the mission. We all belong to Jesus if we know Him as Lord and Savior. The choice is yours (1) fan the flame of the Spirit and give Him all praise or (2) watch the joy of living this life with Him be sucked out of your life as you fight for your piece of the pie. John got it and we see Jesus doing greater things where His people are humbled. He deserves all glory and we are all His church together (the truly converted).

Love in Christ,

Pastor Michael

