

Spring 2019!

Life Group Quarter

Week 4

Message Date 4/28/19

MY STORY

- 1) What is your favorite kind of potato dish and why?
- 2) What was your takeaway from last week's study?

QUICK REVIEW

- 3) Upon reviewing your notes from Sunday's teaching, what caught your attention?

The Goal

This week Pastor Craig is beginning a series out of the book of Matthew called "Jesus". We will be following along with these messages for the remainder of this quarter. This study will be starting in Chapter 3 with the story of John the Baptist and Jesus' inauguration into His earthly ministry. The goal this week is to understand repentance at a deeper level.

DIGGING DEEPER

Matthew 3:1-16 (NLT)

In those days John the Baptist came to the Judean wilderness and began preaching. His message was, ²"Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near." ³The prophet Isaiah was speaking about John when he said, "He is a voice shouting in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord's coming! Clear the road for him!' "

⁴John's clothes were woven from coarse camel hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁵People from Jerusalem and from all of Judea and all over the Jordan Valley went out to see and hear John. ⁶And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River.

⁷But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming to watch him baptize, he denounced them. "You brood of snakes!" he exclaimed. "Who warned you to flee the coming wrath?" ⁸Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God. ⁹Don't just say to each other, 'We're safe, for we are descendants of Abraham.' That means nothing, for I tell you, God can create children of Abraham from these very stones. ¹⁰Even now the ax of God's judgment is poised, ready to sever the roots of the trees. Yes, every tree that does not produce good fruit will be chopped down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹"I baptize with water those who repent of their sins and turn to God. But someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I'm not worthy even to be his

slave and carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹² He is ready to separate the chaff from the wheat with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, gathering the wheat into his barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire.”

¹³ Then Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. ¹⁴ But John tried to talk him out of it. “I am the one who needs to be baptized by you,” he said, “so why are you coming to me?”

¹⁵ But Jesus said, “It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires.” So John agreed to baptize him.

¹⁶ After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, “This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy.” ⁱ

4) What are the two parts of John’s message?

Repent of your sins and turn to God.

5) What does it mean to repent?

From: [*A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*](#)

To change one’s mind and purpose. *This change is always for the better, and denotes a change of moral thought and reflection; not merely to repent of, nor to forsake sin, but to change one’s mind and apprehensions regarding it; hence, to repent in a moral and religious sense, with the feeling of remorse and sorrow. to have a genuine change of heart and life from worse to better.* ⁱⁱ

6) How is repentance more than just feeling sorry for one’s actions?

7) Who did John call snakes and why? What did he tell them to do?

“Who warned you to flee the coming wrath? ⁸ Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God. ⁹ Don’t just say to each other, ‘We’re safe, for we are descendants of Abraham.’”

8) Why would the Pharisees and Sadducees think that they didn’t need to repent?

Because they were children of Abraham.

9) What is John’s warning to the Pharisees and Sadducees?

“Even now the ax of God’s judgment is poised, ready to sever the roots of the trees. Yes, every tree that does not produce good fruit will be chopped down and thrown into the fire.”

This week in Sunday’s message Pastor Craig told us that John was the bridge between the Old Covenant and the New. He instituted baptism, which was readily understood as a form of cleansing.

A fun note about the similarities between John and Elijah comes from 2 Kings 1:8 (ESV): ⁸They answered him, “He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist.” And he said, “It is Elijah the Tishbite.” ⁱⁱⁱ

10) What did John and Elijah have in common?

Clothing choices.

11) Why would John’s choice of clothing have been significant to the people of his day?

To the people of Jesus’ day they were expecting Elijah to return before the Messiah. In fact, during the Passover celebration, it is traditional to leave an empty seat and place setting for

Elijah. Therefore, to have John show up dressed and living in the wilderness like Elijah was a big deal.

TAKING IT HOME

12) Are there things in your life that you need to repent of and then move toward Jesus? If so, are you willing to share with the group?

13) What can you do differently this week to truly repent?

14) This Sunday Pastor Craig shared the analogy about unrepentant sin being like murky water. Can you relate to this, and if so, how?

15) In verses 13-17 what was John's response to Jesus about being baptized?

"I am the one who needs to be baptized by you . . ."

16) What is Jesus' response to John, and why is it important?

17) What does Jesus say the purpose of baptism is?

"It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires."

18) According to this passage, is baptism required for salvation?

No! It is a step of obedience. God asks us to do it as an outward symbol of what God is doing in the heart of the person who is already saved.

19) Share with the group in two minutes or less about your baptism. (If you have not been baptized yet, share why if you feel comfortable doing so.)

CHAIR TIME TOOLS

Read Matthew Chapter 3:1-16 and think about the following questions:

20) Is there anything in my life that I need to repent from?

21) Is there anything that you need to shift in your heart to truly have repentance?

22) If you haven't been baptized yet, prayerfully ask God the reasons why. If you have further questions about why we should be baptized, please email Pastor Justin at justino@baysidech.com

ⁱ Tyndale House Publishers, [*Holy Bible: New Living Translation*](#) (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2013), Mt 3:1–17.

ⁱⁱ Ethelbert W. Bullinger, [*A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*](#) (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1908), 638.

ⁱⁱⁱ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 2 Ki 1:7–8.