



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Luke Sermon Series

Supports Session 6: Prepared

Sermon Title: "The Voice of One"

Passage: Luke 3:3-9

Connection to Luke 3

This section begins with an introduction to the readers of John the Baptizer and his proclamation of repentance and preparation for the coming of the Messiah. John came after over 400 years of silence, making his voice the deliverer of a special message at a special time.

Introduction/Opening

Silence can be loud and disorienting. Silence makes us wonder what we are missing or can force us to action. From the time of Malachi to Matthew in the Bible we find only silence. After centuries of prophetic proclamation—silence. After years of the Word of the Lord coming to Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and others—silence. This period lasted approximately 400 years from around 430/420 BC to the appearance of John the Baptizer around AD 29. John was that voice that blasted through the silence and made the way ready for the coming of the Messiah.

This message that pierced the silence was pointed and gave a clear direction for action.

Outline

1. The manner of John's message
 - a. John called those who came to hear him a "brood of vipers."
 - b. This refers to small snakes that could be hard to see and could be mistaken for a branch or stick on the ground. They could suddenly strike and injure or perhaps kill without warning.
 - c. The point is that in these crowds coming to hear him and be baptized by him were many insincere people.

2. The nature of John's message
 - a. "Who warned you to flee the coming wrath?" This question is addressed to those who came who were insincere. Do you think that by coming here and being baptized by me you will escape wrath? Who told you that? It was definitely not me.
 - b. If one were to ask this question today, it might be phrased, "Do you think that by joining this fellowship, you will escape the wrath to come?"
 - c. Wrath is a sometimes ignored and often misunderstood attribute of God. Wrath has several characteristics. Wrath is a settled indignation against sin and sinners (Eph. 2:3). Wrath in its fullness will be displayed in the future (2 Thess. 1:8). The display of wrath is connected to the Second Coming (Zeph. 1:15).

- d. Wrath is inescapable without genuine salvation. Wrath is avoided by true repentance unto life.¹ William Hendriksen, whose summary is noted above, also said: “A merely outward confession of sin will never do.”²
2. The clarity of John’s message
 - a. Produce fruit consistent with repentance.
 - b. People in John’s day were no different than people in this day. The people of John’s day were clinging to ancestral heritage as a guarantee of getting into the kingdom. John told them to not start thinking that because Abraham is the forefather, kingdom entrance is secured. John uses a picturesque figure of speech: God can raise up children for Abraham from lifeless rocks.
 - c. God has no grandchildren, only children.
 - d. John adds that the ax is already at the root of the trees. There will be a final judgment one day, but that judgment is now in motion because the messianic banquet has begun and without repentance, the barren fig tree will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

Conclusion

John rebuked Herod because of Herodias who was his brother Philip’s wife. So Herod locked John in prison. John’s work was done. He had prepared the way and now the Lord Jesus was going to walk from His baptism to the temptation to His ministry to the cross to the resurrection to the ascension. That was the way. What can one person do to point people to Jesus? Following John’s example of calling people to repent and believe the gospel is a good starting point.

Neil Gant is a native of Memphis and now lives in East Tennessee serving as Pastor of the Oakwood Baptist Church in Knoxville since March of 2019. He has served in pastoral ministry for over thirty-nine years. He has been married to the former Lea Gillespie for over thirty-nine years and they have one adult daughter named Anna. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Blue Mountain College and both his Master of Divinity and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary.

All Scripture quotations are taken from the Christian Standard Bible®, Copyright © 2020 by Holman Bible Publishers.

1. William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke* in *New Testament Commentary*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1978), 205.

2. *Ibid.*