

The Voice Crying in the Wilderness

(Mark 1:1-3)

When you think about the prophets of God, how often do you think of John the Baptist? John is indeed one of the great prophets of God. He is described as “the voice crying the wilderness.”

Unfortunately, John is often misunderstood by people today. Many know little about his life and work. In this lesson we want to consider important things that God wants us to understand about him.

I. 10 Facts about John:

- A. His work was foretold in the Old Testament (Mark 1:2-3).
 - 1. Isaiah spoke of it (Isaiah 40:3).
 - 2. Malachi also spoke it (Malachi 3:1).
- B. He had an extraordinary birth (Luke 1:5-7).
 - 1. John was born to Zacharias and Elizabeth in their old age.
 - 2. John would be devoted to God and full of Spirit even in the womb (Luke 1:15).
- C. He had a strange appearance (Matthew 3:4).
 - 1. He wore a garment of camel's hair with a leather belt.
 - 2. He also ate locusts with wild honey.
- D. He preached a message of repentance (Matthew 3:1-2; Mark 1:14-15).
 - 1. He told people to turn from sin and give their lives to the Lord.
 - 2. People knew John was a preacher of truth (Luke 7:24-25).
- E. He was the Elijah to come (Matthew 11:12-15).
 - 1. Malachi foretold this (Malachi 4:5-6).
 - 2. He was bold and zealous like Elijah (Luke 1:17).
- F. He was a baptizer (Mark 1:4-5).
 - 1. He immersed people in much water (John 3:23-24).
 - 2. He immersed people for the forgiveness of sins (Mark 1:4).
- G. He was more than a prophet (Luke 7:26).
 - 1. He was also one who prepared the way for the Messiah (Luke 7:27).
 - 2. Since he was the forerunner for the Lord, he was indeed more than a prophet.
- H. He testified of Jesus (John 1:29).
 - 1. He could testify to this because of what he witnessed after he baptized Jesus (John 1:30-34). John heard the voice of God the Father!
 - 2. John knew with certainty who Jesus was.
- I. John was killed because of his preaching (Mark 6:14-29).
 - 1. He preached against the lawful marriage of Herod and Herodias.
 - 2. John was killed because he boldly preached the truth!
- J. John was commended by Jesus (Luke 7:28). Can you imagine Jesus saying the same about you?

II. 3 Lessons We Can Learn from John:

- A. John teaches us about humility (John 3:30; Matthew 3:11).
- B. John teaches us about discouragement (Luke 7:18-23).
- C. John teaches us about greatness in the eyes of God (Luke 7:28).

Conclusion: Just like people needed to follow Jesus in John's day, we need to follow Him today!

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