

What Should We Do? (Luke 3:1-22)

Like the opening act to a band you always wanted to see, John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus. To the surprise of the crowds, John's message of their need for total life-change struck a deep chord in their hearts and brought out an appropriate question, "*What should we do?*". What *should* we do before coming face to face with Jesus?

1. The Voice (Luke 3:1-9)

"Your life must change!"

John proclaimed a "baptism of repentance" = a baptism of total life change "for the forgiveness of sins" = deliverance from the thing every human is bound to. Luke quotes **Isaiah 40:3-6**

John was calling the nation to RETURN to God.

V9! Brings home the truth of the matter with imagery that sticks! "*There's still time!*"

2. The Crowds (Luke 3:10-14)

"What should we do?!"

The crowds, the tax collectors and the soldiers all ask "What should we do?"

He calls them to live / act in a way consistent with what they claim to believe.

Repentance isn't only about becoming a follower of Jesus (though that *is* required!) – it's a lifestyle of owning up to what we've done wrong AND then doing what we know God has asked us to do.

Colossians 3:5-14

In order to turn and face something new you *have* to turn your back on what you were previously facing.

Acts 2:33-41 after Peter proclaimed Jesus the crowds asked the same question.

3. The Christ (Luke 3:15-22)

"He will bring change from the inside out."

Jesus' baptism would be one of "spirit" = wind *and* "fire" = both symbols for the powerful presence of God. A baptism of judgment *and* purification.

VV21-22 The heavens are opened, the Holy Spirit is present, a voice is heard from heaven!

Like an exclamation point at the end of a sentence, Jesus IS the Son of God *empowered* for the mission he came to accomplish.

Jesus was baptized not because he needed to repent or needed forgiveness but because *we* do.

Jesus *identified with Israel's sin (and ours!)*. His life, lived for us, was one of obedience in every way.

What should we do? Look to the one who *did*.

What should we do? Look to the one who *does*.

What should we do? Look to the one who *will*.

QUESTIONS

1. When there is a crisis like a flood or fire, authorities give warning to the people. Immediate danger needs urgent action. What was the emergency John was declaring in Luke 3:3-9?
2. In what ways is John living out (fulfilling) the quote he uses from Isaiah 40:3-6?
3. John's baptism was "a baptism of repentance" – what does that mean? What does it require?
4. How is John using the image of a tree in Luke 3:7-9 to confront the crowds about their own lives? What does all this produce in the crowds?
5. Describe the three types of people present. What do they ALL ask? What was John's response and why? What do you think John would say to you?
6. Does John's message expose indifference (an "I don't really care" attitude), unbelief or misplaced trust in your *own* life? What should you do about it?
7. Take time to pray, ask the Holy Spirit to produce in you fruit (a life consistent with what Jesus taught). Ask him to "root out" anything that doesn't bring Jesus honor.
8. What happened at Jesus' baptism? How do these things bring affirmation to who Jesus is and what he came to do? What did he come to do?