The Baptizer Refuses to Compete
John 3:22-30
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John the Baptizer serves as an ideal example of one who understood <u>His</u> <u>unique</u> <u>place</u> in the Lord's plans.

I. The Apostle informs us that, early on, Jesus also had a <u>baptismal</u> <u>ministry</u>. (v. 22)

II. John the Baptizer did not <u>immediately</u> <u>end</u> his own ministry after Jesus appeared. (v. 23)

III. John, writing his Gospel <u>three</u> <u>decades</u> after Matthew and Mark, apparently is confident that his readers are <u>familiar</u> with the Baptizer's <u>fate</u>. (v. 24)

But when John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of his marriage to Herodias, his brother's wife, and all the other evil things he had done, Herod added this to them all: He locked John up in prison. (Luke 3:19-20)

For Herod himself had given orders to have John arrested, and he had him bound and put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whom he had married. For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." So Herodias nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him. But she was not able to, because Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzle[] ; yet he liked to listen to him.
Finally the opportune time came. On his birthday Herod gave a banquet for his high officials and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. When the daughter of Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests.
The king said to the girl, "Ask me for anything you want, and I'll give it to you." And he promised her with an oath, "Whatever you ask I will give you, up to half my kingdom."
She went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask for?"
"The head of John the Baptist," she answered.
At once the girl hurried in to the king with the request: "I want you to give me right now the head of John the Baptist on a platter."
The king was greatly distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he did not want to refuse her. So he immediately sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head. The man went, beheaded John in the prison, and brought back his head on a platter. He presented it to

the girl, and she gave it to her mother. On hearing of this, John's disciples came and took his body and laid it in a tomb. (Mark 6:17-29)

There were others who were tortured, refusing to be released so that they might gain an even better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated— the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, living in caves and in holes in the ground. These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised… (Hebrews 11:35b-39)

IV. John does not elaborate on the <u>reason</u> for the controversy over ceremonial washing. (v. 25)

V. The Baptizer's disciples were disappointed that Jesus was <u>becoming</u> <u>more</u> <u>popular</u> than John. (v. 25-26)

VI. The Baptizer fully realized that His ministry had been <u>given</u> to <u>him</u> by <u>God</u>. (v. 27-28)

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. (John 1:6-8)

"…And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:17)

VII. John drew on imagery from <u>weddings</u> to <u>explain</u> His <u>role</u>. (v. 29-30)

"How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them. But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast" (Mark 2:19–20).

I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him. (2 Corinthians 11:2b)

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. (Ephesians 5:25-27).

Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting:

"Hallelujah!
For our Lord God Almighty reigns.
Let us rejoice and be glad
and give him glory!
For the wedding of the Lamb has come,
and his bride has made herself ready.
Fine linen, bright and clean,
was given her to wear."

(Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people.)
Then the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!" And he added, "These are the true words of God."
(Revelation 19:6–9)

VIII. The Baptizer was a role model in <u>minimizing</u> <u>himself</u> and <u>pointing</u> others toward <u>Jesus</u>. (v. 30)

Of the Sinner: 3:7 – "You must be born from above."
Of the Savior: 3:14 – "The Son of Man must be lifted up."
Of the Servant: 3:30 – "*He must become greater; I must become less."*

"The more one is occupied with Christ, the less they will be occupied with themself."
– Arthur Pink