



Week of December 16, 2018

Luke 3:7-18

⁷ John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

⁸ Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

⁹ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?"

¹¹ In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise."

¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?"

¹³ He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you."

¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah,

¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.



Group Leader

Remember: you don't need to use all of the questions. Go with what works. Give people a chance to think before answering, but if a question falls flat, move on. Let the discussion go where it needs to go, as long as it remains centered around the lesson. Give the participants page 1. Use this page for yourself.

Gathering questions:

- A. What is the best lesson you learned from your parents? The worst thing?
- B. How has our culture changed for the better in the last 25 years? Worse?

Bible Study Questions:

1. In verse 8, what is the meaning of John's reference to claiming Abraham as their ancestor? To what extent do you take your faith for granted?
2. In verse 9, what do you think the "trees" represent, and when would they be cut down?
3. In verse 16, what do you think it means to be baptized with the Holy Spirit and fire?
4. In verse 18, why is John's message "good news"?
5. In verse 11, when John says: "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise" – there are no exceptions, no rationalizations allowed for. How do you respond to this?
6. In verse 7, "brood" means "offspring." What are you a "brood" of? In other words, what are the primary influences from your upbringing that are reflected in your life today? Which ones do you think God does not approve of and would want you to repent of?
7. John is asking everyone to do better than the societal norms. What societal norms in our present society are you guilty of obeying? (In other words, which societal norms do you abide by, but are actually sin?)

Closing prayer: In verse 17, some scholars believe that the "wheat" and the "chaff" are parts of ourselves. What "chaff" in your personality will you pray for God to cleanse from you?