

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ Jesus Testifies of John the Baptist

Last time...John the Baptist's doubt and despair and confusion...and Jesus' blessed assurance:
The prophetic Word of God feeds our faith and that produces hope and peace

This time...Jesus testifies of John the Baptist

We will again be in Luke 7 and Matt 11

Luke 7

v24 speak unto the people concerning John...reed:

The disciples of John have their answer so off they go to report back to John

Lest any in the multitude around Jesus get the wrong idea about John due to his
supposed doubt and confusion, Jesus testifies of John

John had faithfully and boldly testified of Jesus, Jesus now testifies of John

Harkening the crowd back to the time of John's ministry, He asks them who they
travelled out into the desert to see

Was it a man of no backbone or courage, blown around by every shifting wind?

Was it a wishy-washy politician who would say anything to get a vote?

Was it an ear-tickling pleaser of men?

No! They went to see a man of great and unbending courage

(stood up to Religion and Gov't!) and unwavering integrity

They went to see a servant of God, resolved to please God, not man

John was like a mighty oak, not a weak reed of grass.

Warning: pastors who are tossed by winds of false doctrine because they

- are ignorant of (know not or ignore) the Word of God,
are not faithful workman, ashamed,
not able to rightly divide the Word of truth
- desire to be "relevant" and popular, celebrities with big churches,
so they water down the Gospel by removing the Cross and
entertain the people with man-centered ear-tickling messages
- seek the applause of men, are men-pleasers, not God-pleasers
- fear man more than God, bowing to the threats of man

v25 soft raiment:

Did you go out into the desert to see

- a man seeking luxury and power?
- some pretty-boy GQ model because you are crazy 'bout a "sharp-dressed man"?
- some slick hipster preacher?
- a spoiled brat, the poster child for the Rich and Famous?

Those kinds of men are in king's palaces, not in king's dungeons!

Those kind of men rule with the kings of this world, are not persecuted by the kings of this world!

Warning: pastors who crave the high life of power and luxury/riches of this world by fleecing the flock rather than feeding the flock, by corrupting the Word of God in order to sound appealing to the world

Warning: false teachers/televangelists of the Name-it-and-claim-it, Prosperity, Word of Faith errors of worldliness who say things like:

"I don't ever feel guilty because it comes from – it's God's blessings on my life. And for me to apologize for God's – how God has blessed you, it's almost an insult to our God."

v26-27 a prophet...much more than:

Did you go out into the wilderness to see and hear a prophet?

Oh, yes indeed!

But John is much more than a prophet!

He himself is the fulfillment of a prophesy...a prophet prophesied of John!

It was John that was foretold...Mal 3:1

In Mal 3:1 and Luke 7:27, Who is "I"?

God the LORD of hosts

God the Father (remember Matt 3:16-17 and John 1:32-34)

In Mal 3:1, Who is "Me" Whose way will be prepared by My messenger?
the Lord

In Luke 7:27, Whose is "Thy face" and "Thy way" and "Thee"?
The Lord Whom you seek...the Messiah/Savior

What is Jesus saying?!

Who is "My messenger"?

John the Baptist

Who is Jesus?

The Lord of hosts, "Me" (John 10:30)

The Lord Whom ye seek, the Messiah

Jesus, quoting Mal 3:1 here, gives us another perspective of that prophesy –
conversation within the Godhead of which He was Personally a part
Grammar in Mal 3:1...1st and 3rd Persons
Grammar in Luke 7:27...1st and 2nd Persons

Jesus is declaring that He is God the Savior, the Holy One of Israel, and
John the Baptist is His prophesied Forerunner
Those who say Jesus never said “I am God” are Biblically illiterate

Do the people...and we...have

- ears to hear what Jesus is saying?
- wisdom?

Then Jesus says something mind-blowing
(as if what He has already said isn’t mind-blowing enough!)

v28 not a greater prophet...least...is greater:
Very high praise...and a hard saying...by the Lord

John the Baptist is the last and greatest of the OT prophets
(greater than Moses, David, Daniel, Isaiah, Elijah, Jeremiah, etc)
but the least in the Kingdom (believer, disciple of Jesus) is greater than John

Luke 9:46-48 and Matt 18:1-4

The born-again believer, the disciple of Jesus Christ is greater than the greatest
OT prophet because he/she is:

- part of a new people...the Church (both Jew and Gentile),
another mystery in the Word of God
- part of the Body of Christ
- the Bride of Christ...very special relationship of one-ness
- in Christ, Christ in us...position before God
- given a fuller revelation of God’s Plan of Redemption,
given a “clearer picture” of the
 - mysteries of God
 - wisdom of God
 - power of God
 - Gospel of God
- regenerated by the Spirit, given the power to become children of God
- given mind of Christ
- a messenger of God’s love and grace (John 1:17)...
the New Testament in Jesus Christ’s blood

Consider:

Is 6:1-3

in the Throne Room of God
seraphim, creatures included in “principalities and powers”
Only: “Holy, holy, holy”
NO hint of the Church in the scene or proclamation

Rev 4:1-8

Throne room: 24 elders and “principalities and powers”
24 elders...The Church/Bride of Christ
4 beasts: “Holy, holy, holy” as in Is 6

Rev 5:1-10

New song could ONLY be sung by Church (Rev 1:5-6)
New to principalities and powers

Rev 5:11-12

All creatures in the Throne Room sing to the Lamb that
was slain
principalities and powers have a revelation of God’s plan
since Is 6

Eph 3:1-10

that revelation is known to principalities and powers...
by the Church!
The mysteries of God revealed to angels by the Church!

1 Peter 1:9-12

Church has a greater revelation than OT prophets and
principalities and powers
OT prophets and angels are searching what has been
revealed to us!

Luke 7:28

v29-30 heard...rejected:

There were two responses to John the Baptist and his “Messianic prep” ministry:

1. Heard/regarded and justified/believed/agreed/obeyed by faith
2. Heard but regarded not and rejected/disbelieved/disobeyed

Matt 21:12-13, 23-27

There are two responses to the ministry of Jesus Christ:

1. For: Those who are justified are humble, acknowledged sinners who trust the counsel of God...believe/trust in Jesus
2. Against: Those who are against God are self-righteous, proud, unacknowledged sinners who rejected the counsel of God

v31-34 men of this generation...they:

Having testified of His Father's messenger and His Forerunner, Jesus rebukes the Pharisees and lawyers of v30 who rejected John the Baptist

- men of this generation (v31)
generation: "nation" or "age" (depends on the context)
- they (v32)
- ye (v32, 33, 34)

The self-righteous rejecters of the counsel of God are like children playing charades

One group plays as if they are at a wedding...
but the other group does not play along
So the group plays as if they are at a funeral...
but the other group still does not play along

One group plays, the other does not respond

John the Baptist came somber and serious, apart from the society...
as if to a funeral
And he was rejected by the self-righteous, slandered as being
demon-possessed

Jesus came rejoicing, in the midst of society...
as if to a wedding
And He was also rejected by the Self-righteous, falsely accused,
blasphemed, and slandered

The Pharisees etc did not "play with"/receive either John or Jesus...
were not pleased with either

Note: Son of Man – Jesus' Identity and mission, the Gospel
God loved man
Man sinned against God
Man had to pay
Man could not pay
So God became a Man to pay for man because God so loved man

Also notice: Jesus defended John but never defends Himself

v35 wisdom is justified of all her children:

Wisdom: God's Word, Jesus

Prov 1-4

1 Cor 2:7

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory

Justified: regarded, believed, obeyed, in one accord with God

Children: fruit

John 1:12

James 1:5-8

James 3:17-18

God will be vindicated by men possessing His wisdom from above

Matt 11

v7-11 Parallel passage of Luke 7:24-28

Then...something recorded in Matt, written to the Jews...
not recorded in Luke, written to the Gentiles

v12-14 kingdom of heaven suffereth violence:

The OT prophets calling God's people to repentance suffered violence at the hands of God's people led by self-righteous religious leaders

John the Baptist is suffering violence at the hands of the Gov't in Herod's prison
John will suffer death also...beheading

Jesus will suffer violence at the hands of both Religion and Gov't

The kingdom of God, the ministries of John and Jesus, suffered violence at the hands of God's people

The Jewish expectation for the Messiah was

- to violently put down Rome (enemies of God) and exalt Israel again
- a conquering King, not a suffering Servant

The Jews were "simmering" to forcefully throw off the yoke of Rome and re-establish the kingdom

John the Baptist is the last OT prophet, according to the testimony of Jesus
Jesus is saying (again, John 5:39) that the Law and the prophets speak of Him

The Pharisees rejected Jesus as Messiah for many reasons, including Elijah had
not come back as Scripture promised (Mal 4:5-6)

If you will receive/believe Jesus (John 1:12), John the Baptist is the fulfillment of
Mal 3:1

The ministry of Elijah

How could they reconcile Mal 4:5-6 and John 1:19-21 in light of what
Jesus says in Matt 11:14?

A contradiction?

The ministry of the Messiah

How could they reconcile Ps 22, Dan 9:26, and Is 53 with Ps 2, etc?

Suffering Servant vs Conquering King – contradictions?

Like the “tension” that exists in Calvinism vs Arminianism

(Sovereignty of God vs free will of man)

Tension only if one of those is true and the other is false

No tension if/since both are true

No tension between Mal 3:1 and Mal 4:5-6 because one is fulfilled in John and
the other is fulfilled in Elijah...at the 2 different comings of the Messiah

No tension between King and Servant since both are true...
a mystery being revealed

So, the Jews with a different expectation of the Messiah than the mission given to
Jesus...were out of step with God

The defeat of sin and death must proceed the judgment of God's enemies and the
exaltation of Israel

The real enemy is spiritual and the spiritual battle belongs to the Lord

The Jews expected a very different Elijah and a very different Messiah...

- unable to see the real enemy as did God
- unable to see and think as God sees and thinks

So they did not believe, they complained and they plotted against

The Servant of God their Savior

v15 He that has ears to hear, let him hear:

What is needed to hear?

Faith, believing the Word of God (Luke 7:29 vs Luke 7:30)
Rom 10:17

Ezk 3 and John 6

Eat = believe

Jesus says this 16 times in Gospels and in Revelation...must be important!

v16-19 Parallel of Luke 7:31-35

Application

1. Ears to hear

Do we believe the counsel of God or not?

If we do not rightly divide the Word of Truth, we will have a
misunderstanding of

- the Person and work of Jesus Christ
- our place in God's Plan of Redemption

The place of reconciliation with God is "in Christ"

2 Cor 5:17, 19

Do we "eat" the Bread of Life?

James 1:22

The kingdom of God suffers violence to this day at the hands of those who do
not believe

Are we in step or out of step with the plan of God for our lives?

2. Jesus testifies of every person, not just John the Baptist

Matt 10:32-33

What will be His testimony of me and you?

3. Luke 7:28 with Luke 12:48

Let's gather in small groups to pray...in agreement with, in one accord with our Father...
to let the Holy Spirit write these words on our hearts and to transform our lives

Closing Song