

**duplicating
discipleship**

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the seriousness of
john the baptist

Lesson 11: The Seriousness of John the Baptist

A Serious Man, for a Serious Job

Live for the line not the dot. Life on earth is a dot. It begins. It ends. It is brief. Life in heaven is an unending line extending from that dot. We all live in the dot. If we are wise we will live for the line.

Randy Alcorn

- Background of John's ministry - Read Matthew 3:1-10
- One of John's chief appeals was that he was "unique."
- Were John the Baptist living today, would you have gone out to hear him?
- How did John the Baptist appear onto the world scene? Matthew 3:1
- What was the message that John proclaimed to the world? Matthew 3:2
- John the Baptist is considered to be the last of the OT prophets. Compare his message of repentance leading to the kingdom with the words of the Deuteronomic Covenant in Deuteronomy 30:1-5
- What does it mean to repent? Revelation 9:20-21, Revelation 16:9-11
 - o Why or why not is the message John preached still relevant today?
 - o Who is responsible to proclaim this message today?

- Is this the same message as the gospel for eternal life? (cf. John 3:16, Acts 19:1-5, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, Ephesians 2:8-9, John 5:24)

- How is John identified to the world? Matthew 3:3a

- Besides his physical appearance, what do you notice as unusual about John? Mathew 3:1, 5

- Why would people go out to the desert to see such an unusual person? Matthew 3:6

- Why or why not do you think you would have “liked” John?

- Why or why not would you go to a church if he was the pastor?

- Why or why not would you like to have him come home with you for Sunday dinner?

- If you could take off a few “rough edges” from John, where would you start?

- What characteristics of John do you wish were part of the average preacher today?

Outcome - Impact to the society - Read Matthew 3:5-7

- Who went to see John the Baptist in the desert? Matthew 3:5

- As people heard John's message, how did they respond **and was their response adequate?** Matthew 3:6

- Why did the Pharisees go to see John? Matthew 3:7

Actions – John and the people around him. Read Matthew 3:7-10

- Why did John speak in such a harsh tone to the Pharisees? (Cf Matthew 23)

- Is speaking harshly such a good idea in this age of political correctness and time of not being offensive? Matthew 3:7

- What was the test that John lay before the people to whom he delivered this message? Matthew 3:8

- What is the impending danger that John describes in Matthew 3:10?

- What different methods and different languages does God use to deliver his message to different people?
 - The word "fruit" is mentioned in Matthew 3:8 and Matthew 3:10. What do you think this term means? Especially to you? How do you make "fruit" appear in your life?

- In Matthew 3:10 and Matthew 3:12 John speaks of an impending danger. Does this danger exist today?

- **Application – Discipleship time**

This text shows the commitment, the character, and the unwavering faith of John the Baptist. As you look at your own life, what areas do you think still require spiritual development in your life?

- Living out the message of repentance - Mathew 3:2, 7, and 11. How do we personally finally deal with those areas of our life where we have refused to change?
- Many of us have brought old habits, words, attitudes, biases, etc. into our Christ relationship and ignored that it is time to repent of those things – can you choose at least one from which you will repent of?
- John proclaimed the message of Christ unashamedly even in the midst of strong opposition. Would you be able to share God’s Word with those around you and feel comfortable doing it?
- What spiritual “fruits” are missing in your life? Read Galatians 5:22-23 and make note of the fruits that are missing, or that require development in your life.
- Use these necessary tools to nourish your spiritual life so that these fruits continue to develop.
 - Fellowship with other believers
 - Reading your Bible
 - Prayer
 - Meditating on God’s word

Modern Day Example of Seriousness: Bill Hull

Bill Hull has a sense of humor and laughs at life. But there is no doubt he takes life very seriously. I've heard him say on several occasions, "This is serious here guys!" Life is too short to waste it on non-essential or frivolous matters. He seems to be always asking, "What are we really doing here?" Bill takes worship seriously, the word and his obedience to the Word. I do appreciate Bill's attention to the weightier matter of this life.

