

**New Year's 2021**  
**Luke 3**

What would you tell your January self in Dec 2021? (Julie from the future Video)

**4 Statements to Shape Perspective**

**Prepare the way for the Lord (v.3-6)**

- John steps up – sometimes the world is stable, sometimes in chaos, sometimes masquerading as stable but actually in chaos
  - Do you believe that God is at work in the world? In your world? Is this year all difficulty and obstacle, or is there opportunity? Which do you see? Remember – Jesus has lived through this year (and every “bad year” beforehand)
  - Is your yes on the table? Are you ready to step up? What would that look like?
- John is an instrument
  - In the same way, we are – at times – the instrument God uses to make a way for Jesus to arrive and intervene in someone’s life
  - Who’s Your One? (Lee Story)

**Saying the hard thing is not unloving (v.7-9)**

- John’s words are inflammatory (on purpose, the language matches the danger)
- John refuses to address the superficial
  - There is wrath that is coming and judgment that is sure
  - Ethnicity / nationality are not a solid place to stand
  - “Not doing bad” is not the standard – bearing good fruit is (it’s how you know)

**Transformation matters in real life (v.10-14)**

- John’s message demanded a response – an action
  - Too often we settle for a greater amount of information, but they knew they had to do something
- John applied what was most important – love neighbor as self
  - These are not esoteric questions – the people who pray don’t really worry about how it works
  - These are not new laws – in every way and in every moment, do this
  - Practical application in general, for tax collectors (who love money) and soldiers (who love power)
    - Are there things that you need to start? Stop?
    - God is not afraid of the nitty gritty of your life – it’s precisely where He wants to work (anger, desire, marriage, language, etc.) – if the nitty gritty details of your life aren’t Christian or being transformed to look like Christ, what evidence is there that you’re a Christian at all?

**What you point to (and how) matters (v.15-20)**

- John knew who he was and who Jesus was
  - The mighty one, the worthy one, the contentious and consequential one
  - He never took credit for what God was doing – or even thought to take credit at all
- John paid the price for his obedience to Christ
  - Will we? Will the church? Will YOU?