

John the Baptist

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“There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.”

John 1:6

“Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist.”

Luke 7:24-30

Suggested Reading: [Isaiah 40:1-11](#); [Malachi 3:1-6](#); [4:1-6](#); [Luke 1:1-80](#); [3:1-23](#); [5:33-35](#); [7:16-35](#); [9:18-22](#); [11:1](#); [20:1-8](#); [Matthew 3:1-17](#); [4:12-17](#); [11:1-19](#); [14:1-12](#); [16:13-17](#); [17:1-13](#); [21:23-32](#); [John 1:1-42](#); [John 3:22-36](#); [5:31-36](#); [10:39-42](#); [Mark 1:1-14](#); [6:14-29](#); [9:1-13](#); [11:27-33](#); [Acts 1:1-5,21-22](#); [11:15-18](#); [13:23-25](#); [18:24-28](#); [19:1-7](#).

Introduction:

1. We use John to study the early days of the kingdom of Jesus Christ by the two founders of our religion.
2. Compare our two founders, both by miracle births, one the Son of God, to any other founders at all.
3. God created light in darkness; He did it again with Jesus and John (Gen 1:1-3; John 1:1-9; II Cor 4:6).
4. John the Baptist is one of the greatest figures in the Bible and human history. Let us learn him well.
5. His role in the kingdom of God is huge, though very limited and very short, to exalt our glorious Jesus.
6. This man is more important than your ten favorite men from human history, no matter who they are.
7. He is called John, John the Baptist, and even a shorter version, John Baptist (John 1:5; Luke 7:20).
8. We are Baptists, and while John did not practice Christian baptism as we know it, he was a Baptist.
9. When we study Bible history, we want to learn lessons, character traits, and grow in grace and love.
10. When we study Bible history, after facts and details we want the lessons, the gospel of grace, Christ.
11. From the prophecies made about John to the prophecies that he himself gave is precious truth to learn.
12. John is a great study if you want to know of Christ and love Him more through His chosen predecessor.
13. Let this man be an example to us of total dedication to the Person and proclamation of Jesus our Lord.
14. What man took more delight in demoting himself to promote our Lord Jesus than did John the Baptist?

The Prophecies

1. The voice in the wilderness ([Isaiah 40:3-11](#); [Matt 3:1-3](#); [Mark 1:1-3](#); [Lu 3:1-6](#); [Jn 1:23](#)).
 1. John was a voice in the wilderness, where he lived and preached (Luke 1:80; 3:2).
 2. His ministry was to prepare Israel under metaphors of civil engineering (Luke 1:17).
 3. Repentance, reformation, and reconciliation were his methods for Messiah's arrival.
 4. The glory of the LORD God Jehovah was revealed in the Person of Jesus the Christ.
 5. Jews and Gentiles saw the Lord Jesus Christ and then further by apostolic preaching.

6. It was God that sent John and told him what to declare to Israel (Jn 1:6; Luke 3:2).
 7. This event was a transcendent one in its glory and value above any learned in history.
 8. Are you and your church a straight highway for God by repentance and godliness?
 9. For much more about this prophecy of John, see the exposition of Isaiah 40 ... [Isaiah – Chapter 40 \(2 sermons\)](#).
2. The messenger to prepare Messiah's way ([Mal 3:1](#); Matt 11:10; Mk 1:2; Lu 1:76; 7:27).
 1. John was the messenger before the Messenger of the covenant would arrive in Israel.
 2. Notice again the emphasis on preparation, getting the elect ready for the Lord Jesus.
 3. The *Desire of all Nations* indeed visited this second temple of the Jews (Hag 2:6-9).
 4. Jesus was the Messenger, Surety, and Testator of the new covenant (Daniel 9:27).
 5. John came before Him, and John's role included covenant promises (Luke 1:67-79).
 6. The KJV properly identifies prophets, rather than Isaiah, for this quote (Mark 1:2).
 7. Scofield foolishly wrote the second half of this verse applies to His second coming.
 8. Are you and your church prepared for Christ's covenant revelation or to be judged?
 9. For much more about Malachi 3 regarding John the Baptist and Jesus Christ ... [Malachi : The Final Warning \(Chapter 3\)](#).
3. The prophet Elijah ([Mal 4:5-6](#); Matt 11:10-14; 17:10-13; Mk 9:11-13; Lu 1:17; Jn 1:21).
 1. Malachi's Elijah the prophet is surely and only John Baptist (Mat 11:1-15; 17:1-13).
 2. Jesus clearly condemned any other interpretations (Matthew 11:14-15; 17:12-13).
 3. This is the Bible's simplest prophecy and a great acid-test to expose false teachers.
 4. John came with a ministry similar to Elijah; he was not Elijah (Luke 1:17; Jn 1:21).
 5. Foolish Jews only wanted Elijah (Matthew 11:10-12; 14:1-2; 16:13-14; 27:46-49).
 6. The great and dreadful day was 70 A.D., which John foretold to Jews (Matt 3:7-12).
 7. Superstitious Jews, especially Masoretes, repeat 4:4 or 4:5 to avoid the curse of 4:6.
 8. For much more about Malachi 4 and John the Baptist as Elijah the prophet ... [Malachi : The Final Warning \(Chapter 4\)](#).
 9. For more about Jerusalem's destruction fulfilling this and other prophecies ... [Witness of 70 AD \(8 Sermons\)](#).
4. The kingdom ambassador for God and heaven ([Daniel 2:44](#); Luke 3:1-3; Matt 3:1-6).
 1. Daniel foretold Rome and Christ (Dan 2:31-45; 7:1-14; 9:24-27; 11:36-45; 12:1-7).
 2. Daniel foretold God would set up His kingdom under the Roman Empire (Dan 2:44).
 3. John Baptist declared the kingdom of God at hand before Jesus (Matt 3:1-2; 4:17).
 4. His violent interruption of the status quo was to introduce the new king in Israel.
 5. Though Rome killed John's body, he introduced the kingdom that destroyed Rome.
 6. Jesus identified John in transition from Moses to kingdom (Matt 11:12; Luke 16:16).
 7. The kingdom of heaven and kingdom of God are identical (Matthew 19:23-24; etc.).

8. For much more about Daniel's prophecies of the five kingdoms and Christ ... [Five Kingdoms – Daniel 2 & 7](#).
9. For much more about Daniel's prophecies in chapter 2 and in chapter 7 ... [Daniel Chapter 2, Daniel Chapter 7](#).
5. The great prophet in the sight of the Lord as told by the angel Gabriel (Luke 1:11-20).
 1. Luke used an inspired disjunctive for Zacharias's fear of Gabriel (Luke 1:12-13).
 2. Gabriel said barren Elisabeth would bear a son to be named John in answer to prayer.
 3. Many would rejoice at his birth, not only for the miracle, but for the son's great role.
 4. Gabriel further foretold his greatness (title text), Nazarite vows, and the Holy Ghost.
 5. He would turn many, though not most, of Israel back to God before Messiah came.
 6. He would do so with the spirit and power of Elijah to fulfill Malachi's last prophecy.
 7. Zacharias questioned the angelic messenger, so he could not speak for nine months.
 8. Mary asked how she would conceive, but Zacharias how he could know (Luke 1:34).
 9. Do you believe the Bible simply and only because it says so, or do you need more?
6. The son Elisabeth had conceived in her old age though she was barren (Luke 1:36-37).
 1. Gabriel kindly encouraged Mary about her miracle birth by another miracle birth.
 2. Both births were impossible – a virgin mother, a barren mother – but not with God.
 3. Mary's response upon hearing about Elisabeth was a powerful declaration of faith.
 4. She trusted the word of Gabriel, unlike Zacharias, asking only about her virginity.
 5. Mary was a virgin and engaged to Joseph, so her inquiry makes perfectly good sense.
 6. Mary and Elisabeth were cousins, which means Jesus and John were second cousins.
7. The prophet of the Highest to prepare the church for Messiah's arrival (Luke 1:76-79).
 1. Those hearing birth events said, *What manner of child shall this be* (Luke 1:57-66)!
 2. Zacharias, filled with the Holy Ghost after naming his son John, prophesied of him.
 3. He first prophesied about Messiah (Luke 1:67-75) and then of John (Luke 1:76-79).
 4. He declared to his infant son that he would fulfil Malachi's first prophecy (Mal 3:1).
 5. John would be a prophet, which Elijah was, and which Jesus confirmed (Luke 7:28).
 6. To those repenting of sins in baptism, John declared their sins remitted (Luke 3:3).
 7. God's merciful dayspring (sunrise), the Sun of righteousness, would save (Mal 4:2).
 8. God's mercy was in Jesus, the light of the world (Matthew 4:12-16; Luke 2:29-33).
 9. The four-verse prophecy of John and Jesus gloriously declares the light of the gospel.
8. Great confusion existed about John the Baptist then and to this day, which is a shame.
 1. The Jews, literalists like futurists, asked if John were Elijah reincarnated (Jn 1:21).
 2. The apostles did not grasp John Baptist was Elijah the prophet (Matt 11:3,10-12).
 3. Herod the tetrarch heard about Jesus and presumed Him to be John (Matt 14:1-2).
 4. The Jews were confused by Jesus and thought Him John returned (Matt 16:13-14).

5. The Jews at the cross were confused by *Eli, Eli* and guessed Elijah (Matt 27:46-49).
6. Gifted persons like Apollos and disciples did not see his limited role (Acts 19:1-6).
7. Deceived futurists with Jewish fables deny Jesus for two witnesses (Rev 11:3-12).
8. Mormons believe Elijah visited Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on April 3, 1836.
9. William Branham (1909-1965), of Oneness Pentecostal heresy, claimed to be him.

The Parents

1. Zacharias and Elisabeth were both of Aaron (Luke 1:5) – a very priestly couple indeed.
2. They both lived holy lives, in general perfectly righteous before God (Luke 1:6); holy living by parents has the most effect on your family tree (Ps 25:12-14; 112:1-2; Pr 20:7).
3. They were now old; Elisabeth had been barren during her childbearing years (Luke 1:7), so John Baptist was the result of a double miracle, barrenness and too old to ovulate.
4. God opened barren wombs with great men – Sarah, Rachel, Manoah's wife, Hannah – which magnifies God's mighty power in doing so and great mercy in whom He blessed.
5. Gabriel kindly comforted Zacharias by five precious facts about John (Luke 1:13-17).
6. Zacharias showed weak faith by questioning the integrity of Gabriel's word (Luke 1:18,20); this is different from Mary asking about conception in light of her virginity.
7. God chastened Zacharias for his weak faith by taking away his ability to speak; we should be careful in questioning God's promised blessings that may exceed experience.
8. Elisabeth had faith and wisely hid herself until she showed for skeptics (Luke 1:24-25).
9. Gabriel used Elisabeth's miraculous conception to assist Mary's faith (Luke 1:36-38).
10. Elisabeth, a godly woman of faith, was filled by the Spirit to prophesy (Luke 1:41-45).
11. She gladly honored her young cousin for carrying the Lord Christ (Luke 1:42-43), which spirit was by the Spirit, and it would be seen repeatedly in John (John 3:30-36).
12. Elisabeth held to Gabriel's words; she rejected Zacharias for his name (Luke 1:59-61).
13. Zacharias came through as well for John and received his speech back (Luke 1:62-65).
14. Like Elisabeth, Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost to prophesy (Luke 1:67-79).
15. What a power couple! Both blameless! Both filled with the Holy Ghost to prophesy!
16. These parents allowed their son to leave home and live in the deserts until the right time.
17. Since they were quite old when John was born, we never read of them again after this.

The Person

1. John had a divine ministry from God without authority or direction of man (John 1:6).
 1. He was a man sent from God, and we glory in that foundation of his great ministry.
 2. Remember prophecies of God directing and sending him (Is 40:3-8; Mal 3:1; 4:5).
 3. From the earliest days, the hand of the Lord was with John the Baptist (Luke 1:66).

4. When questioned by the Jews as to his authority, he avoided them (John 1:19-28).
 5. God spoke to John directly and immediately without regard to men (John 1:29-36).
 6. John's denial of knowing Christ rejects at least personal conspiracy, for Jesus grew up in Nazareth and John 60 miles away near the Jordan; Jesus was revealed to John.
 7. Divine inspiration, direct or written, is what counts (Job 32:6-14; Ps 119:98-100), not a man's attire, not a man's diet, not a man's manners, but rather a man's message.
 8. God sent wild men as preachers e.g. passionate Elijah, naked Isaiah, graphic Ezekiel, eunuch Daniel, whore-marrying Hosea, cruel Jonah, fishermen apostles, etc.
 9. For more about rude preachers that God called and sent to preach His word ... [Rude Preachers](#).
2. God specially empowered and prepared John by Holy Ghost presence early (Luke 1:15).
 1. Gabriel told Zacharias that John would be filled with the Holy Ghost in the womb.
 2. It was confirmed in fact when John's and Jesus's mothers first met (Luke 1:39-44).
 3. Joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and John had it before birth (Gal 5:22; Rom 15:13).
 4. John showed his passionate spirit by leaping for joy for Jesus before birth (Gal 4:18).
 5. Paul was called to be an apostle early, but we do not read of the Spirit (Gal 1:15-16).
 6. John had an origin and life like Samson, but very much better; both mothers were barren; both were Nazarites; both were wildly different; the Spirit moved both mightily; both were judges in Israel; both were faithful (Heb 11:32); John was best.
 7. John had an origin and life like Samuel also; one ordained David, the other his Son.
 8. God was with him early; the word of God came to him to preach (Luke 1:66; 3:2).
 3. The Bible does not say he was a Nazarite, though no alcohol was a key rule (Luke 1:15).
 1. Nazarites did not eat grape products, cut their hair, or touch dead bodies (Nu 6:1-8).
 2. Uncut hair would be long and consistent with the rest of his appearance and lifestyle.
 3. Jesus made use of this alcohol difference with Him to rebuke Jews (Luke 7:29-35).
 4. Priests could and did drink wine, but not when working before God (Lev 10:8-11).
 5. John eschewed bread and wine for locusts and wild honey as his fare (Matthew 3:4).
 6. Nazarites from the womb are both Samson (Judges 13:5) and Samuel (I Sam 1:11).
 7. John's monastic diet was not spiritually superior to Jesus Christ's full-menu diet.
 4. He lived in the deserts for some unknown time before he began to preach (Luke 1:80).
 1. He grew in wisdom and stature like Jesus (Luke 2:52), for he had to become a man.
 2. He did not begin his preaching ministry until 30 as expected by the Jews (Luke 3:23).
 3. His parents did not fuss or worry about him, for they knew the Lord was with him.
 4. His parents were old when he was born, so they may have died while he was young.
 5. It is time with God that makes men great, not time with men (Acts 7:30; Gal 1:17); one thing makes the man of God perfect – the inspired scripture (II Tim 3:16-17).
 6. In the desert and wilderness, rather than Jerusalem, John began to preach (Matt 3:1), for God's

unvarnished truth does not need fancy venues, and truly elect will travel.

7. This had been prophesied of him, and he fulfilled it perfectly (Isaiah 40:3; Matt 3:3).
5. He had the spirit and power of Elijah the prophet to preach to the nation (Luke 1:17).
 1. This had been prophesied of him by Malachi to close out the O.T. (Malachi 4:5-6).
 2. John had correction or instruction for every person he met (Luke 3:7-14,18-20).
 3. John was not Elijah reincarnated or anything like that, but similar to him (John 1:21).
 4. Elijah and John were bold in spirit and with divine authority, even against rulers; zealous spirits are needed for work, like Jesus and Apollos (John 2:17; Acts 18:25).
 5. The power of Elijah cannot be miracle power, for John did no miracles (John 10:41), though he himself was a miracle birth and Jesus' baptism was a confirming miracle.
 6. John's attire was similar to Elijah's as well – leather girdle (Matt 3:4; II Kings 1:8).
 7. Such attire, rather than finery, was common for God's prophets (Zechariah 13:4).
 8. Our Lord later made use of this attire to exalt John's ministry (Matthew 11:7-15).
 9. In spite of similarities to Elijah, and his own confession, the Jews were confused.
6. Why was John called Baptist? Because he baptized converts the way Baptists baptize.
 1. See first occurrences of *Baptist* in each gospel (Matthew 3:1; Mark 6:14; Luke 7:20).
 2. *Baptizo*, the Greek word for baptize, means to submerge, immerse, dip like Baptists.
 3. Of course, John did not use immersion for us coming later, but the other way around.
 4. Volumes have been written and wars fought, but the Greek Orthodox own the word.
 5. And how do they baptize? They dip, immerse, or submerge candidates three times.
7. Above all, know this about John the Baptist – He selflessly exalted Jesus of Nazareth.
 1. This deference to the Son of God began with their cousin mothers (Luke 1:39-44).
 2. Jesus was younger than he, and they were second cousins, and John's ministry was very popular with huge crowds going to see him, but it mattered not to him.
 3. Before identifying Jesus, John exalted Him higher (Matt 3:11; Mk 1:7; Jn 1:19-31).
 4. Before identifying Jesus, John exalted His baptisms and judgment (Matt 3:11-12).
 5. When Jesus approached the Baptist, he tried to avoid baptizing Him (Matt 3:13-15).
 6. When his disciples were envious of Jesus' popularity, he rebuked them (Jn 3:27-35).
 7. By God sending John, we see the proper exaltation of Jesus and want to emulate it.
 8. What a disgrace when any minister wants attention or adulation instead of the Lord.
 9. John had a totally Christ-centered ministry, and we want our church Christ-centered.
8. John the Baptist, while in prison before execution, sent disciples to Jesus (Matt 11:1-6).
 1. Let us consider three options for what appears to be a question of John's weak faith.
 2. First, it might be perplexed or weak faith, for he was a man like us with imperfect faith; being left in prison while hearing of Jesus' power might have caused doubt.
 3. Second, John did this for his disciples, whom he had had to correct before, but was now intent to

wean them from himself to the Christ before dying (John 3:26-36).

4. Third, he was expecting an earthly kingdom like the apostles and wondered why he, a chief minister, had not been delivered from Rome's power (Acts 1:6; Luke 19:11), which solution might be further helped by Jesus' statement about offence in Him.
 5. The first option does John no harm, and it fits with John hearing of Christ's works, for if Jesus could raise the dead, then He could also easily free John (Luke 7:15-18).
 6. Paul, the greatest apostle, said ministers were weak earthen vessels (II Cor 4:7-10); add to that Elijah's spirit, who was subject to our passions (Jas 5:17; I Kgs 19:1-4).
 7. Did Asaph, who knew God's promises, ask, *Will the Lord cast off forever* (Ps 77:7)?
 8. Why did Jesus reply to John, *Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me*?
 9. Most Jews were offended in Jesus, for they measured Him by their fantasy of a political deliverer rather than one that fulfilled messianic prophecies like anointed preaching to the poor and healing all afflictions (Is 61:1; 53:4; Matt 4:13-17; 8:17).
 10. John may have known He would liberate captives and open prisons (Isaiah 61:1).
 11. Are you offended by Jesus Christ in any way, at any time, before any kind of person?
 12. It is easy, especially in South Carolina, to mention God; but speak instead of Christ; if you are ashamed of Jesus, you have a terrible spiritual problem and terrible future.
9. Let's be little John Baptists, not for ministry, but for dedication to God's will and Christ.

The Prophet

1. John the Baptist was a prophet, for he gave marvelous warnings to the people of Israel.
 1. He first preached *the kingdom of heaven was at hand* from Daniel (Daniel 2:44).
 2. He likely preached what our Lord did, *the time is fulfilled* (Mark 1:15; Dan 9:24-25).
2. Why cannot men see 70 A.D., for John plainly declared it coming soon (Matt 3:7-12)?
 1. Malachi connected John to the great and terrible day of the LORD (Malachi 4:5-6).
 2. He rightly called the Jewish leadership of his time a generation (key word) of vipers.
 3. He knew God's wrath was coming against them like Paul wrote (I Thess 2:14-16).
 4. John said God's axe was already now engaged in cutting down the Jewish apostates.
 5. He said the oven was being fanned into great heat to burn up the Jews (Mal 4:1-3).
 6. This is so similar to the last chapter of Malachi that missing it is willing ignorance.
 7. The historical event of Romans destroying Jerusalem fulfill John's words perfectly.
 8. Much more about the destruction of Jerusalem from many prophecies ... ([Witness of 70 AD \(8 Sermons\)](#)).
 9. Much more about this use of the word generation for the men then living ... ([This Generation](#)).
3. Though Jesus was not yet engaged in any ministry, John foretold His ministry in detail.
 1. He minimized himself extremely to lift up the Son of God supremely as his superior.
 2. He plainly minimized his water baptism compared to two future baptisms by Jesus.

3. Baptism of the Holy Ghost is Pentecost as promised (John 7:37-39; Acts 2:33-36).
4. Baptism of fire is 70 A.D. (Mal 4:1-3; Matt 22:7; Luke 12:49; Heb 10:27; 12:29).
5. Malachi was plain about Jews being burned at His first coming (Mal 3:1-3; 4:1-3).
6. Much more about the baptism of the Holy Ghost that John foretold of Jesus ... (Holy Ghost Baptism).
7. Much more about the baptism of fire that John the Baptist also prophesied ... (Fire Baptism).
4. John gives no evidence of knowing about the second coming, and he did not preach it.

The Preacher

1. This preacher had nothing that modern preachers think they need before taking a pulpit.
 1. Regarding furniture, he had no building or office or platform or pulpit for his help.
 2. Regarding music, he had no praise band or song leader to get the crowd in the mood.
 3. Regarding income, he took no offering, and he was content with his ascetic lifestyle.
 4. Regarding programs, he had nothing to appeal to families for entertaining children.
 5. Regarding comfort, he had nothing to offer, and the destination was not convenient.
 6. Regarding advertising, he had none past the sober word of repentance for baptism.
 7. Regarding marketing, he had neither miracles, resume, nor endorsement for esteem.
 8. Regarding appeal, he had no athletes, actors, politicians, businessmen for crowds.
 9. Regarding appearance, he did not wear Armani suits or have his hair styled weekly.
 10. Regarding hospitality, he ate terrible things for meals and lived like a desert hermit.
2. What did he preach based on the limited information that is found in the Bible record?
 1. Repentance – dramatic change in conduct by justifying God as right (Luke 7:29).
 2. Good works – without which, as defined by God, there is no sincerity or godliness.
 3. God's wrath – in light of Bible prophecies of it and never apologized but exalted it.
 4. Abraham as worthless – as a claim to eternal life without a changed life with fruit.
 5. Jesus Christ – exalted as high as possible while denigrating himself in comparison.
 6. Great works of Christ – gift of the Holy Ghost and total destruction of Jewish state.
 7. Future judgment – though limited primarily to destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.
 8. Jesus as Judge – who already had a fan in His hand to burn up all adversaries.
 9. Blasted religious rulers – called them names and exposed them by their lack of fruit.
 10. No respect of persons – identifying needed repentance in every group of society.
 11. No straight answers – to those that did not deserve them for ignorance and scorn.
 12. He preached more than we have record of, but we know the framework (Luke 3:18).
3. What did he not preach that jokers today preach to prove that they are nothing like him?
 1. He did not tell childhood stories or human interest stories for touching illustrations.

2. He did not waste one minute on current political intrigue in Rome or in Jerusalem.
 3. He did not preach against Herod to the common people but rebuked Herod himself.
 4. He did not waste one minute to help people have a better life without Christ first.
 5. He, like Elihu, did not care what any man or all men thought but God and Jesus only.
 6. He did not preach himself or his programs or his audience but only to lift up Christ.
 7. He did not comfort his audience that they were all right and God loved them dearly.
 8. He did not preach getting involved in church activities to feel good about yourself.
 9. He did not preach about heaven; there is no heaven without repentance he did preach.
 10. He did not preach the love of God, wear John 3:16 T-shirts, or call all God's children.
4. John's ministry turned religious Israelites to the way of God more perfectly (Luke 1:16).
 1. John Baptist was not sent to the Egyptians on the south or the Syrians on the north.
 2. T. evangelism turned men from idolatry and sorcery (I Thess 1:9; Acts 19:18-19).
 3. Aquila and Priscilla converted Apollos to more perfect knowledge (Acts 18:24-28).
 4. Every time we hear preaching we should eagerly want to be turned (Acts 10:33).

The Purpose

1. John's chief ministry was to prepare the church and nation of Israel for their Messiah.
2. This had been identified by O.T. prophecies and by Gabriel's prophecy to Zacharias.
3. He preached repentance, for it is humble contrition and justifying God that honors Him.
 1. All kinds of people and publicans justified God by John's baptism (Luke 7:29-35).
 2. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected God's preached counsel against themselves.
 3. He required restoration of relationships, especially between fathers and their sons.
 4. He had duties and standards for every segment of society from God (Luke 3:10-14).
 5. He could discern the evil spirit of the Pharisees and mock them for their rebellion.
4. If you want to be ready for God and have Him visit you, then you must come fully clean.

The Period

1. John's ministry was very short – to prepare Israel for Jesus – and then it was all over.
 1. John's baptism did not apply after Pentecost, when it took on the Trinitarian formula.
 2. Paul rebaptized disciples at Ephesus that only knew John's baptism after Pentecost.
 3. In the same way, Aquila and Priscilla had to teach mighty Apollos (Acts 18:24-28).
2. John introduced the N.T. kingdom of God and began the end of Moses' form of religion.
 1. Paul called this period of transition the time of reformation (Luke 16:16; Heb 9:10).
 2. This event is huge as a study of the covenants will reveal from the old to the new.

3. God appointed John to initiate this great change in the religion and worship of God.
3. For much more about Paul's rebaptism of the John Baptist disciples at Ephesus ... [Rebaptism: A Detailed Study](#).

The Preeminence

1. Prophetically, he was God's voice to Israel before Messiah (Is 40:3-8; Mal 3:1; 4:5-6).
 1. These three prophecies were fulfilled (Mark 1:1-3; Mat 11:14; 17:12-13; Luke 1:17).
 2. Elijah had been a great prophet to Israel, and our John came in his name and spirit.
 3. As the messenger of the Messenger of the covenant, John had a great role to fulfill.
2. Jesus identified him as the greatest man born of women (Matthew 11:11; Luke 7:28).
 1. Of course, Jesus excluded Himself, and this point should not have to ever be made.
 2. In Matthew's account he is vaguely the greatest; in Luke's he is the greatest prophet.
 3. With Luke's assistance, we understand knowledge and that of preachers of the N.T.
 4. John was very limited in scope and duration to prepare people and point out Christ.
 5. Ministers since the apostles know much more than John, even the least of them.
3. John prophesied two major events – the Spirit at Pentecost and the burning of Jerusalem.
 1. While exalting Jesus as far superior to himself, he foretold two of His coming works.
 2. Baptism of the Holy Ghost was the huge Pentecost gift (Jn 7:37-39; Acts 2:33-38).
 3. Baptism of fire was God and Christ's vengeance on the Jewish nation (Matt 22:7).
 4. For much more about the baptism of the Holy Ghost John assigned to Jesus ... [Holy Ghost Baptism](#).
 5. For much more about the baptism of fire that John Baptist assigned to Jesus ... [Fire Baptism](#).
4. He was chosen as the personal ambassador to introduce Jesus to the waiting believers.
 1. Consider the prophecies and how great a role John had (Is 40:3-8; Mal 3:1; 4:5-6).
 2. He embraced the role and how personally God had directed him (John 1:29-36).
 3. He declared Jesus the bridegroom, but he was the bridegroom's friend (John 3:29).
5. Herodias would have killed him, but she was hindered by people (Mark 6:19; Mat 14:5).
 1. Her first obstacle was her unlawful husband, Herod Antipater, who favored John.
 2. Her second obstacle was John's popular support, for many thought him a prophet.
 3. Think about Jezebel with Ahab or Cleopatra with Julius Caesar and Marc Antony.
6. The elders did not dare criticize him, for the people held him a prophet (Matt 21:23-27).
 1. Bible statements indicate great popularity (Matthew 3:5; Mark 1:5; Luke 3:7; 16:16).
 2. Jesus, being the brilliant and perfect Son of God, asked them a question they feared.
 3. They showed their reprobation by not answering Him, so He did not answer them.
7. John was popular until repentance got old and Jesus was a disappointment (Jn 5:31-35).
 1. John Baptist was one of three key witnesses of Jesus identity as the Messiah of God.

2. Three witnesses – John (Jn 5:31-35), His miracles (Jn 5:36), scripture (Jn 5:37-39).
3. The Jews and their leaders were able to abide rough John until he showed them Jesus.
4. They wanted a Messiah so different than what God sent that they rejected both men.
8. Herod Antipater, or Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, also called king, was friendly to John.
 1. Herod feared John, knew he was a just and holy man, observed him, heard him gladly, and made many changes (Mark 6:20). This is a remarkable influence.
 2. Herod related to John like this even while Herodias seethed and planned his death.
 3. He was like the stony and thorny ground hearers that respond with joy but no fruit.
 4. It warns loudly against mental assent and even outward action without inward grace.
 5. Therefore John's preaching was to him a savor of death unto death (II Cor 2:14-16).
 6. How do we know Herod was not saved? He killed John, assisted killing Jesus, and there is not a scrap of evidence of real repentance and a work of grace in his life.

The Persecution

1. Jewish leaders, because they were reprobate scorners, mocked John as having a devil.
 1. When they checked on him, he blasted their religion and warned of being burned up.
 2. When they tried a gentler approach, he did not help them but to deny he was Christ.
 3. What did fools, scorners, or reprobates do to John? They mocked and called names.
 4. Though John was entirely different from Jesus, they said he had a devil (Luke 7:33).
 5. It is hard to believe, if not for Bible confirmation, at violence for ... *You are wrong*.
 6. But this kind of animosity and hatred against good men began with Cain and Abel.
2. Herodias hated John, not for anything he ever did wrong, but for his rebuke of a scorners.
 1. This adulteress had an affair with Herod Antipas while husband Philip was in Rome.
 2. The adulteress pair had then married, but John rebuked Herod, apparently in person.
 3. This evil woman, like Jezebel before, held a quarrel and conspired to kill the Baptist.
 4. She could not accomplish her evil desire for Herod respected and listened to John.
 5. When Herod offered her daughter anything she wished, Herodias had her opening.
 6. Herod was not man enough to say no to the woman, and he ordered John beheaded.
 7. Herod's conscience smote him for the deed; he feared Jesus was John come back.
 8. Similarity of Elijah and John Baptist; Herod answers to Ahab, Herodias to Jezebel.

What Can We Learn or Adopt?

1. God appoints and sends some strange and wild men to preach the gospel of His Son.
2. What kind of preaching does God love? Blasting sinners and threatening coming wrath!
3. The origin and nature of true Christian baptism came from God and not from Rome.

4. The mode of baptism, immersion or submersion, gave rise to John being called Baptist.
5. Let the Greek Orthodox settle the meaning of *baptizo* by their demand for immersion.
6. Even the best of men can be weak at times and have wavering faith like Elijah and John.
7. Godly preachers like John do not fear anyone, even rulers with power of life and death.
8. The great key to ministry and the children of God is the exaltation of Jesus every way.
9. What kind of parents are blessed with a godly seed? Perfect parents living blamelessly.
10. Men standing for God and righteousness will be hated by religious and wicked persons.
11. Fools and reprobates turn to scorers when corrected and then conspire to kill the godly.
12. Repentance requires fruit/works for it to be considered valid by a true gospel minister.
13. John and Jesus took opposite approaches to ministry and were both hated by the Jews.
14. John never baptized in Jesus' name or prayed in Jesus' name so long before Pentecost.
15. Rebaptism is a Bible event, no matter how much some are sentimental of previous ones.
16. Rude preachers and instant preaching are Bible descriptions and both are seen in John.
17. Miracles are not necessary to have a powerful ministry, as John Baptist did no miracles.
18. Relationships are key to meet God as John taught – the more excellent way of charity.
19. John's ministry prepared men for the first coming, so let us do it for the second coming.
20. Being alone with God is great ministerial training e.g. John, Moses, David, Daniel, Paul.
21. We have our own calling to be burning and shining lights ... of the world (Matt 5:16).
22. Mental assent is no evidence of God's grace, for Herod heard gladly and made changes.
23. We should not be offended about Jesus, no matter what others think of Him (Luke 7:23).
24. Let us justify God like some by repenting of our errors to obey His counsel (Luke 7:29).
25. Every person has personal temptations, and each must trust the mirror of God's word.
26. What will you do to wax strong in spirit, leap for joy, and be full of the Holy Ghost?

For Further Study:

1. [Rude Preachers](#).
2. [Instant Preaching](#).
3. [Righteous Relationships \(chart\)](#).
4. [Righteous Relationships \(outline\)](#) ... [Righteous Relationships \(2 sermons\)](#).
5. [Prophets of God](#).
6. [Baptism – the Proper Mode](#).
7. [Baptism – the Proper Administrator](#).
8. Exposition of [John 1](#).
9. Exposition of [John 3](#).
10. Exposition of [John 5](#).

11. Why We Are Baptists ... [Why We Are Baptists \(4 Sermons\)](#).
12. Many Baptism Articles ... [Baptism](#).
13. [Rebaptism – A Detailed Study](#).
14. [Rebaptism & Reordination](#).
15. Three Witnesses for Baptists ... [3 Witnesses For Baptists – Newell](#).