

Luke's Gospel – An Inclusive Savior

Lesson Four

[Luke 3:1-20].....And Now, Back to John the Baptist

Tetrarchy - 1/4 of a kingdom. The kingdom of Herod the Great was divided into four regions, each ruler called a tetrarch(Herod, Philip, and Lysanias)

- vs.2-3 Desert - metaphorically used to denote Israel's formation as God's covenant people and their return to God
- vs.4-6 John's baptism(and message) carried the requirement of repentance
This repentance would prepare the way (get people ready) for the Christ
- vs.7-9 These verses deal with judgment, but are not intended to show up the wicked, but highlight the good
- “Brood of vipers” refers to everyone, not just Pharisees & Sadducees
Picture of snakes running from fire is likened to the people running from "the coming wrath"
- “We have Abraham as our father” - not a valid claim for exemption nor a excuse for failure
- vs.10-14 “What shall we do then?” – John's message possesses social responsibility:
To those with much: “The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, & the one who has food should do the same”
To the Tax Collectors: "Don't collect any more than you are required to"
To the Soldiers: "Don't extort money & don't accuse people falsely - be content with your pay"
- vs.15-17 Many were waiting for the Christ who (they thought) would deliver them from their external oppression - wondered if John was him
John says "no," but reveals this of the Christ:
- 1.He's not worthy to untie the sandals of the "one more powerful than I"
 - 2.He baptizes with water, the Christ will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire(direct link to Pentecost - Acts 2)
 - 3.The Christ will bring judgment
- NOTE:** Christ's manner of judgment is to "gather the wheat first, then burn up the chaff". The main goal is to save the wheat, not burn the chaff. His primary goal is to SAVE, not condemn!
- vs.19-20 Luke doesn't go into specifics about what Herod had done that John rebuked, but adds one more to Herod's evil list - locking up John the Baptist

[Luke 3:21-22].....He Got Jesus Too

- vs.21-22 Jesus was baptized like everyone else who heard John preach - another point linking Jesus with the least (not that Jesus had sin)
- Luke focuses on the postbaptismal actions: a.heavens open up; b.Holy Spirit descends as a dove; c.God's stamp of approval
- a.Heavens open up - fulfilling prophecy of Isaiah 64:1-4
 - b.Holy Spirit descends as a dove - Luke uses the Holy Spirit to *empower* Jesus to do ministry, not to confirm who he is
 - c.God's voice is only heard by Jesus - this is personal confirmation

Jesus prays - Importance of prayer is consistent with Luke in dealing with life and ministry

[Luke 3:23-38].....Why Is This Here? Three Reasons:

1. Jesus begins his ministry at 30 yrs old. Could be listed because David was 30 yrs old when he began to reign or because this was the age a priest could begin to serve God
2. Genealogy links Jesus to Adam (instead of Abraham) - shows Jesus is related to creation & humanity; God's original purpose is never forsaken
3. Jesus is a true child of Israel (although his lineage is traced through Joseph, Joseph would not have married a non-Jew)

NEXT LESSON – “Along Came the Devil”