

Luke 3

John the Baptist
Prepares
the Way

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Sunday,
January 25

Luke 3 begins with John and Jesus now grown.

...the word of _____ came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of _____ for the forgiveness of sins. As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the _____,
make his paths straight.

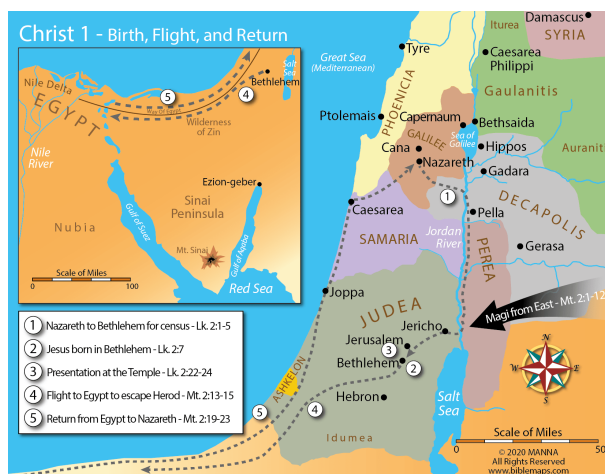
Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall become straight,
and the rough places shall become level ways,
and all flesh shall see the _____ of God."

As John called the crowds to "bear fruits in keeping with repentance" (3:7-14), some wondered whether he might be the Christ.

John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but he who is _____ than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy _____ and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." (3:16-17)

Luke 3:19-20 even clues us in to the fact that Herod the tetrarch eventually locked John in prison, but not before John had baptized Jesus. On that incredible occasion, the heavens were opened, the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in bodily form, like a dove, and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved _____; with you I am well pleased" (3:21-22). That leads Luke to provide a record of names in Jesus' genealogy, stretching all the way back to "Adam, the son of _____" (3:23-38).

How does Luke 3 help us grow in certainty about Jesus? Let's talk about it...



For Class & Family Discussion:

- “The word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness” (3:2). What does Luke want us to understand about what we are going to hear from John?
- In light of all the wonderful things we’ve heard in Luke 1 and 2, why would John bring up “the wrath to come” (3:7)?
- “Bear fruits in keeping with repentance” (3:8a) was John’s charge. What does this mean? What does that look like, practically speaking?
- John spoke startling words in 3:8-9. What do they mean? What did his audience need to understand and how did they need to respond?
- What can we learn from the questions of the crowds and John’s responses in 3:10-14?
- John’s answer in 3:15-17 certainly seems to be very important. In light of the rest of the New Testament, what is John foretelling?
- While Luke only briefly mentions Herod and Herodias, other accounts give us more detail (Matt 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-20). What do we need to know about Herod?
- What do we learn in 3:21-22? How does it continue to set the stage for what is to come?
- Why do you think Luke immediately launches into a genealogical record in 3:23-38? What is he communicating and why is it an important part of his orderly account?
- Remember the goal of Luke’s Gospel—“that you may have certainty” (1:4). How does Luke 3 help us grow in certainty about Jesus?