

The Gospel According to Luke

WHAT SHALL WE DO?

PART 5

John's Boldness

READ LUKE 3:10-20

INTRODUCTION

In the beginning of chapter three, we see John the Baptist starting up his ministry of making the way straight for the Lord. (Isaiah 40:3) John always spoke boldly to the groups he talked to and this interaction was no different. He starts off in verse 7 by calling the religious zealots a brood of vipers. This was not soft language but rather, an effort to call out those who would ride on the coat-tails of something that God was doing and trying to turn it into something that they could profit off of. John was not interested in this kind of "faith" or following. He was wanting to be bold about what God had called him to do.

It is encouraging in the next verses to see different people come to John to ask him what they should do to bear good fruit. (vs 9) The people that John interacts with are people just like us, seeking answers to important questions. What we must realize in life is that we are not the center of the universe. We are created for purpose and, just like those speaking to John, we desire to find that purpose and are willing to pursue it. There are misgivings about what our purpose is in life and John gives answers specifically relating to the people who are asking them.

The guidance that John gives here is bold in its bluntness. There is a simplistic tone to what he has to say, but it would be easy to feel like what he was saying was flippant. This is not the case but, rather, it is simplistic in its nature because we must do well in our treatment of those around us. He also speaks to the personal discipline of not being selfish. Also, he speaks to humans' tendency to complain about the work that we are called to do. It is fair to say that while not all of us are tax collectors or soldiers, we all can learn that not complaining about the call in our lives and not taking more than we ought are good rules of thumb. This goes for treating others well also

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read Isaiah 40:1-5. What encouragement would this section of Scripture given to the Jewish people? Do you think it had an impact on how they viewed John? Why or why not?
2. Why do you think John used such harsh, blunt language with the people? How do you react to more blunt language? Do you think it is necessary? Why or why not?
3. What does it mean to bear good fruit? What is good fruit? How do we go about bearing good fruit? What are some things you have done to bear good fruit?
4. What is our main purpose in life? How does our calling, and being faithful to that calling relate to the ultimate purpose of the Christian?
5. What are the practical steps we are to take communally, personally and corporately to ensure that we are serving the Lord and others? How does that fit in with the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

WRAP UP

John was very bold in his speech to the people because what he was saying was very important. Jesus was bold in His speech as well. There is a direct correlation between the boldness and the importance of the message. John's calling was to prepare the way of the Lord and that was an extremely important task. Soon, the Messiah was going to be on the scene and the people would know what redemption truly means.