

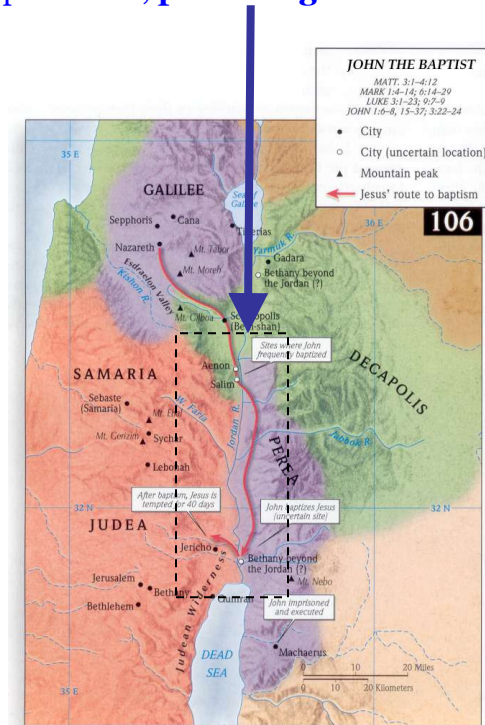
THE LIFE OF CHRIST IN THE GOSPELS
Class #41 – Sunday AM2 JUNE 11, 2006

Ensure fellowship with God through 1 John 1:9

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Matthew 3:1-6

(1) Now in those days John the Baptist came, **preaching in the wilderness** of Judea, saying,



Preaching – “To speak with authority and conviction as a herald”

John's message -

(2) "Repent (change your mind), *because the kingdom of heaven is at hand* (on the brink of being instituted)."

- The kingdom is on the brink of being instituted because Jesus Christ is present.
- He is the promised descendent of David who has come to fulfill the Davidic Covenant in fulfillment of the promise that God made to David.
- Jesus Christ is actually preaching this same message in **Matthew 4:17** “...Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
- Therefore the prerequisite for the kingdom to be instituted by the King is national REPENTENCE.

Note the thread of national repentance that is woven into the Hebrew frame of reference.

2 Chronicles 7:13-14

(13) "If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people (Israel),

- Israel's economy is primarily agricultural.

- No **rain** means the land will not yield anything which results in recession or depression.
- If the land yields its produce but **locust** come and eat what is produced the same economic results occur – recession or depression.
- **Pestilence** is disease affecting the people; once again with severe consequences.
- **No rain – locust – pestilence** all add up to national discipline. God’s divine discipline on a nation.

(14) and My people who are called by My name **humble** themselves and **pray** and **seek** My face and **turn** from their wicked ways...

Humble
Pray
Seek
Turn

Inherent in these is repentance!

A change of mind – I’m no longer going down that road.

- Instead of seeking my own ways, I’ll seek the ways of my God.
- Instead of not praying at all, I’m going to pray to Him.
- Instead of being arrogant, I’m going to humble myself by submitting to what He wants me to do.
- I will submit to God’s authority – do what He tells me to do!

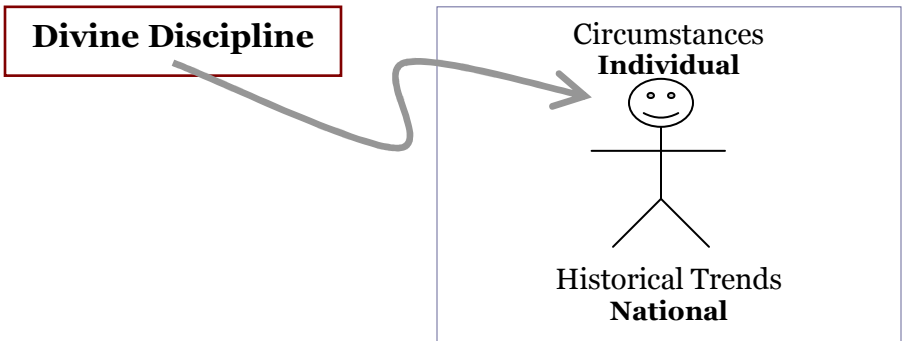
POD – National discipline is designed by God to secure repentance.

Individually divine discipline from God is designed to insure your restoration to fellowship.

And what is required for that? Change your mind about what you are doing!

RESTORATION → ...then I will **hear** from heaven, will **forgive** their sin and will **heal** their land.

POD – National repentance secures national deliverance.



Circumstances and Historical trends are designed to affect change.
-- **A change of mind** --

Discipline is a way to shock the individual or the nation into saying
“Maybe I’m not doing something right here”.

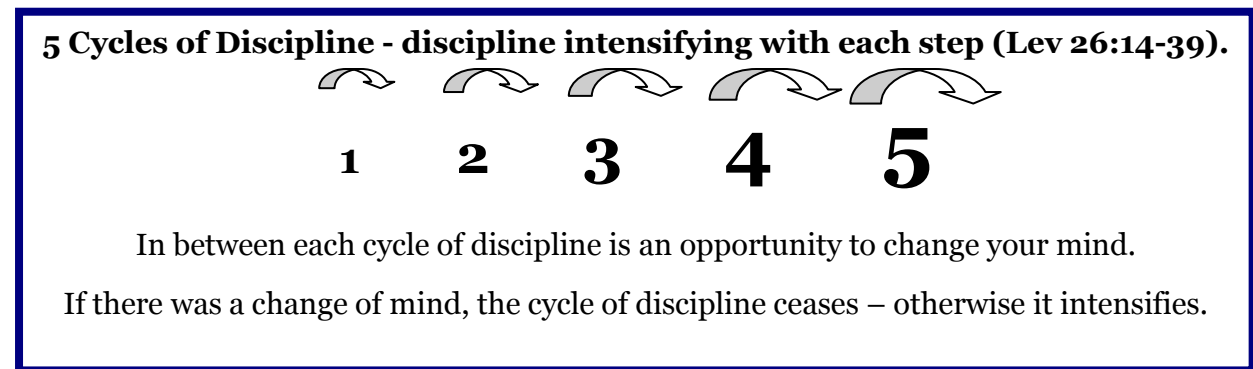
National discipline is designed by God to secure a change of mind.
National change of mind secures national restoration.

Nehemiah 1:8-9

(8) "Remember the word which You commanded Your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful I will scatter you among the peoples;

- Scattering the nation = national discipline.
- Reason for the discipline = unfaithfulness.
- Reason for OUR discipline = unfaithfulness (not doing what God wants us to do).

(9) but if you return to Me (**repentance**) and keep My commandments and do them (note a change of mind has occurred), though those of you who have been scattered were in the most remote part of the heavens, I will gather them from there and will bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.'



Zechariah 1:3

(3) "Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Return to Me," declares the LORD of hosts, "that I may return to you," says the LORD of hosts.

When a person is out of fellowship, who's responsibility is it to return? Is it God's – NO!
It's the person out of fellowship. That's why you take the step of rebound.

Malachi 3:7

(7) "From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from **My statutes** (Divine protocol) and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you," says the LORD of hosts. "But you say, '**How shall we return?**'"

When you get locked into reversionism, you forget the protocol necessary to return to God.

John's message tells the nation how to return to the Lord.

John's message (Matt 3) -

(2) "Repent (change your mind), for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (on the brink of being instituted)."

- And why is it near? Because your King has arrived, and John is proclaiming that He has arrived.
- The King is being presented to the nation and the kingdom is being offered to the people.
- And what is the prerequisite for the kingdom to be instituted by the King – the promised Messiah, the descendent of David and Abraham. **National repentance.**

(3) For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet when he said, "THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT!'" Quote from Isaiah 40:3

Isaiah 40:3-5

(3) A voice is calling, "Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness..."

- Where is John preaching? In the wilderness!
- What are people going to have to do if they want to hear this message? They must travel to where the messenger is located!

...make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.

- What is a road built for? Someone to travel on.
- Just who will travel on this road? Jesus Christ – the Messiah is going to use the road to travel on.

(4) "Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; and let the rough ground become a plain, and the rugged terrain a broad valley;

- In order to build a road you have to change the topography of the land.
- Valleys need to be filled – mountains must be cut down – the land must be leveled.

(5) Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

- John is the voice of the one crying in the wilderness that Isaiah prophesied.
- John tells the Scribes and the Pharisees and all the people that he is the one Isaiah referred to.
- Once the road is built by John - Messiah will come walking down that road – everyone is standing on the sides of the road, waiting for Messiah to arrive!
- Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed to all those anxiously waiting on the sides of the road that John built.

John's road is a message – and you know you are standing on the side of the road if you believed the message.

John is building a road in preparation for the Lord. What equipment is he using?
God's message- The word of God.

POD – The preaching (*the speaking of God's word with authority and conviction as a herald*) of God's word is the key ingredient to national restoration.

The preaching of God's word is the key ingredient to the national restoration of ANY country, including the stability and freedom of that country.

Prerequisite: The people must listen to the message and accept it!

(4) Now John himself had a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey.

- John had a right to the priesthood – his father, Zacharias, was a priest. Both his father and his mother were descendents of Aaron.
- John had more of a right to the priesthood than all of the Levites.
- Is he taking advantage of his right to the priesthood – eating the meat sacrificed to idols? Getting fat? Enjoying a luxurious lifestyle? Wearing robes and all the royal trappings of a priest of that time? No!
- John lived a meager lifestyle. He was an aesthetic.

- John's life was a testimony to the fact that the details of life are merely details and you do not need those details to execute the will of God for your life. All you need is clothes on your back and food in your belly because the word of God is free! www.archangelbibleministries.org

John's clothing was a camel's hair garment with a leather belt – actually a sackcloth woven of camel's hair.

Traditionally the prophets would wear sackcloth during periods of national REPENTENCE.

During periods where a nation would turn back to the Lord sackcloth was customarily worn as a sign of their spiritual condition and the spiritual condition of the nation. John is wearing camel's hair – an outward sign of the nations need to change her mind!

John's message – REPENT – and he is wearing clothing appropriate for his message!

POD - The communicator of the word of God needs to wear clothing appropriate for communicating the word of God.

- John's diet was whatever the land yielded.
- Locust may not seem very palatable yet they are full of nutrients.
- John was tough as nails.
- John stood out in the wilderness and communicated the word of God with authority and conviction – he pulled absolutely no punches with his message.

What should happen when God's message is proclaimed with authority and conviction by a herald or one gifted to communicate God's message?

People should come to hear the message.

(5) Then Jerusalem was **going** out to him...

“Going” - ἐκπορεύομαι

EKPOREUOMAI

- Imperfect tense - motion picture action – *“Pouring out”* or *“Going out”* of Jerusalem

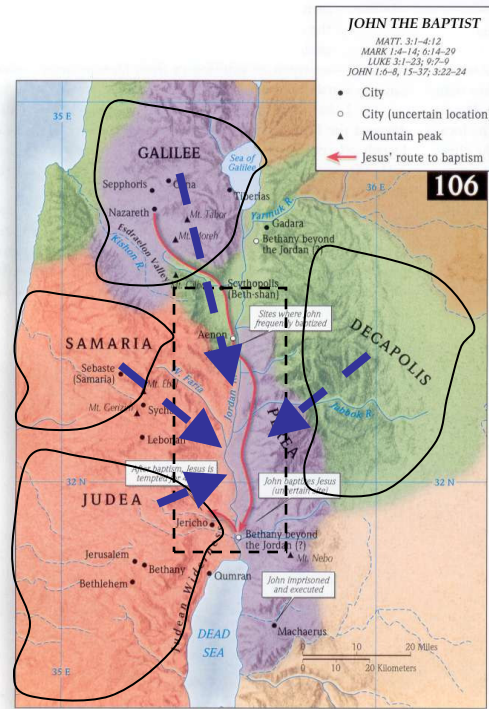
...and all **Judea** and **all the district around the Jordan**;

- John uses no gimmicks in his message.
- John is communicating the word of God in the manner that God gifted him to!
- The Spirit of God is upon him – he is pulling no punches with the message he is delivering.
- John is by no means refined – he is gruff and tough in the message he communicates.

John's message resounds in the heart of those who know that something is missing from their lives.

The spiritual climate at this time in Israel is anemic – people are searching for something and John's message is providing them with the hope they are looking for.

These people know they need to change!



- If you show up to hear the Word and the pastor is Spirit filled, Spirit taught, and Spirit led with the tools required to exegete the word of God in the original languages and exposit it - God is going to speak to you through that exposition of the Word!
- There is an intrinsic witness in your soul that what you are hearing is truth – you know it.
- It may be a testimony to the fact that you are missing something.
- Your volitional test is whether or not to locate yourself around the message.

Interpretive translation of vs. 5 “These people are pouring out of Jerusalem, they are pouring out of Judea and they are pouring out of all the district around the Jordan.”

Positive volition results in traveling to hear God’s message.

Positive volition always results in action!

POD – Positive volition results in the desire to be located wherever God has placed the messenger.

A testimony to the word of God being an individual’s number one priority.

(6) and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins.

What is inherent in repentance? Confession!

Are you going to confess your sins if you have not changed your mind about it? NO.

Confession of sin is inherent in repentance.

All Scriptures quoted are from New American Standard unless otherwise noted.