

**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 3:1-2**

(1) Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching (communicating with authority and conviction) in the wilderness of Judea, saying (repeating over and over again),

(2) (Corrected Translation)

**"Repent - "change your mind", because the kingdom of heaven is on the brink of being instituted."**

**Matthew 3:5-15**

(5) Then **Jerusalem** was going out to him, and **all Judea** and **all the district around the Jordan**;

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

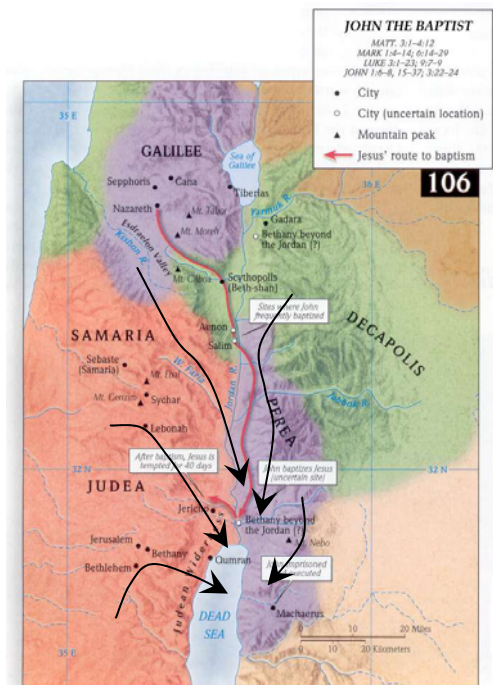
**John's Baptism (review) -**

1. The ritual was immersion in the Jordan River.
2. Characterized as a baptism of repentance because it was accompanied by the confession of sins.
3. Testimony of the need for Messiah to forgive sins.
4. Baptism symbolized two things:
  - a. The individual's allegiance to Messiah who had the power to forgive sin.
  - b. The individual's identification with the kingdom that Messiah would rule.
5. Therefore, when Messiah came to the nation, those who had been identified with Him and the kingdom through John's baptism of repentance would receive pardon from the penalty of sins and enter the kingdom.

**When the promised Messiah arrives, two categories of people exist:**

**Cat 1** – Those identified with Messiah and His kingdom through John's baptism (pardoned from the penalty – the judgment when Messiah comes).

**Cat 2** – Those who have rejected John's message, Messiah, and His promised kingdom (no pardon from the judgment when Messiah comes). Note Malachi 3:1-7 to review.



**Remember that judgment was associated with Messiah's arrival.  
That was the Hebrew frame of reference.**

(13) Then Jesus **arrived** (PARAGINOMAI – “arrives”) **from Galilee** at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him.

↓  
**Speaks to the vividness of His arrival.**

- John’s been preparing the nation for the arrival of Messiah.
- John attempts to prevent His baptism because the promised Messiah is the One who is supposed to do the baptizing when He arrives. See vs. 11 -

(11) "As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me (Jesus Christ) is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the **Holy Spirit and fire** (baptism with the Holy Spirit – **blessing** - and with fire – **judgment** - is associated with Messiah’s arrival).

*What does John do? He submits to the authority of the Lord and baptizes this promised seed of David.  
And he does so because the Lord tells him to.*

### **Three reasons why Jesus was baptized –**

1. The baptism signified Messiah’s identification with the kingdom that He came to rule.
2. It also signified Messiah’s identification with the subjects of the kingdom.
  - a. Subjects were identified because they had undergone John’s baptism of repentance.
  - b. John’s baptism of the Lord Jesus Christ must be distinguished from his baptism of repentance for the subjects of the kingdom.
  - c. The baptism identifies Messiah with the **kingdom** that He will rule and with the **subjects** that He will rule over.
3. The baptism confirms Jesus was the promised Messiah and further identifies Him as the promised King.
  - John has done his job. All the subjects are on the shores of the Jordan River watching John and the Lord. John, in essence, is communicating to these subjects, “Here is your King!”
  - John is also communicating to the Lord, with everyone on the shores, that *these are Your subjects*.

### **Mark 1:9-12**

(9) In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

(10 & 11) – Confirmation that Jesus was the promised Messiah and king.

(12) Immediately the Spirit impelled Him to go out into the wilderness.

- **After His baptism Jesus departs into the wilderness to be tested.**
- **He is confronting Satan who will avoid the confrontation for 40 days.**

### **Chronology of events –**

1. Preparation of the nation (Israel) for Messiah’s arrival by John (Mal 3:1; Mt 3:1-12, Lk 3:1-18).
2. The significance of Messiah’s arrival and baptism (Mt 3:13-17; Lk 3:21-22).
  - **Once John baptizes the Lord, technically, his job is over.**
  - **He has built the road for Messiah and Messiah has arrived.**
  - **His mission to herald the coming of Messiah is complete.**
  - **Isa 40:1-5 has been accomplished.**

3. Messiah's testing in the wilderness (Mt 4:1-11).
  4. John continues his ministry while Messiah is tested in the wilderness (Jn 1:19-29).
    - **This is when the priests and the Levites show up to question John.**
    - **The priests and Levites were sent by the Pharisees.**
    - **While this is happening, the Lord is in the wilderness being tested.**
  5. Messiah returns from the wilderness and John publicly identifies Him (Jn 1:29-37).
  6. Jesus travels to Galilee calling disciples while John continues baptizing people (Jn 1:37-49).
  7. Jesus and His disciples travel to Judea while John continues a waning ministry (Jn 3:22-26).
  8. Jesus hears of John's arrest and returns to Galilee (Mt 4:12).
  9. John begins to doubt the plan of God while incarcerated (Lk 7:18-30).
    - Have **you** ever had doubts in God's plan?
    - How about when you pray and your prayers are not answered in the manner you expected them to be answered?
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### **Chronology of events – Scripture**

1. Preparation of the nation (Israel) for Messiah's arrival by John (Mal 3:1; Mt 3:1-12, Lk 3:1-18).
2. The significance of Messiah's arrival and baptism (Mt 3:13-17; Lk 3:21-22).
3. Messiah's testing in the wilderness (Mt 4:1-11).
4. John continues his ministry while Messiah is tested in the wilderness (**Jn 1:19-29**).

#### **John 1:19-29**

(19) This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

(20) And he confessed and did not deny, but confessed, "**I am not the Christ.**"

(21) They asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No."

(22) Then they said to him, "Who are you, so that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"

(23) He said, "I am A VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE STRAIGHT THE WAY OF THE LORD,' as Isaiah the prophet said." (Isa 40:1-5)

(24) Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.

(25) They asked him, and said to him, "**Why then are you baptizing**, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

- John was very popular – thousands of people were flocking to him and the religious crowd is curious to know what is occurring.
- The priests and the Levites know that when the Messiah arrives, He will baptize as well.

(26) John answered them saying, "I baptize in water, but among you stands One whom you do not know.

(27) "It is He who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie."

(28) These things took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

(29) The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

5. Messiah returns from the wilderness and John publicly identifies Him (**Jn 1:29-37**).

**John 1:29-37**

(29) The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

(30) "This is He on behalf of whom I said, 'after me comes a Man who has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'

(31) "I did not recognize Him, but so that He might be manifested to Israel, I came baptizing in water."

(32) John testified saying, "I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him.

- Seen by John during the baptism of Christ over a month prior.
- John sees Christ returning from being tested and he says, "Behold, the Lamb of God..." [This is the one I've been telling you about].
- Baptism is the confirmation that this is the Messiah.

(33) "I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.'

- John was waiting for that event to occur.
- Once it occurred, John had his confirmation and now he can publicly declare that this is the Messiah.

(34) "I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God."

- A testimony to His divine origin.

(35) Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples,

(36) and he looked at Jesus as He walked, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"

- Subjects are still being identified with Messiah and His kingdom.
- Messiah has already been identified with His subjects and His kingdom.
- A separation is occurring –
  - those identified with the kingdom will enter the kingdom with Messiah when He institutes it and receive the [Baptism of the] Spirit.
  - those not identified with the kingdom will not enter the kingdom - Their baptism is with fire (judgment).

(37) The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

6. Jesus travels to Galilee calling disciples while John continues baptizing people (**Jn 1:37-49**).

**John 1:37-49**

(37) The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Andrew and John

**Mark 1:15**

(15) And saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

- The kingdom of God was at hand because the King was present.

That is the message they were to believe.

(38) And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are You staying?"

(39) He said to them, "Come, and you will see." So they came and saw where He was staying; and they stayed with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

(40) One of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

(41) He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which translated means Christ).

(42) He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

(43) The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "Follow Me." Philip listened to the command of the Lord and obeyed – he followed Him.

(44) Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter.

Philip is so excited about what is being communicated by the Lord that he tells others!

What should we do when we receive benefit from the teaching of the word of God? TELL PEOPLE!

God provides the hearers through people that He is working in both to will and to do for His good pleasure (Phil 2:13).

(45) Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote--Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

(46) Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip \*said to him, "Come and see."

(47) Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!"

(48) Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."

(49) Nathanael answered Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel."

7. Jesus and His disciples travel to Judea while John continues a waning ministry (**Jn 3:22-26**).

### **John 3:22-26**

(22) After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He was spending time with them and baptizing.

Jesus and John have simultaneous functioning ministries– Jesus and John are both preparing the nation for the kingdom to be instituted.

John though is expecting this kingdom to be instituted with judgment to those who reject the message and blessing to those who accept the message – the Jewish frame of reference.

(23) John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and people were coming and were being baptized--

(24) for John had not yet been thrown into prison.

(25) Therefore there arose a discussion on the part of John's disciples with a Jew about purification.

(26) And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified, behold, He is baptizing and all are coming to Him."

Remember that John's ministry is waning – in light of that; John's disciples would like to return to the glory days when thousands of people were flocking to hear John. They miss the old **glory days!** A power lust problem.

- **Glory days** – Days when people are showing up in large numbers to hear the message.
- In this case, as with any other ministry, there comes a day of transfer. In this case, John's ministry is transferring to the Lord - but there are still people who hang onto the way things used to be.
- God always has a messenger – it's our job to identify that messenger.
- Be careful not to "*hold onto the way things used to be*".
- Notice John's answer to this - -

### **John 3:27-30**

(27) John answered and said, "[A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven. A ministry and people to whom I have a responsibility!](#)

(28) "[You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent ahead of Him.'](#) John reminds them that he is not the Christ but the forerunner to Christ.

(29) "[He who has the bride is the bridegroom \(Jesus Christ\); but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made full.](#) John is delighted to be a friend of the bridegroom.

(30) "**He must increase, but I must decrease.** John's job is done – he recognizes the transfer of ministry.

8. Jesus hears of John's arrest and returns to Galilee (Mt 4:12).

9. John begins to doubt the plan of God while incarcerated (**Lk 7:18-30**).

- How many times do things not work out the way that you think they should?
  - What do you do?
    - Do you say, "Lord You are not answering my prayers the way ***I anticipated*** you to answer them."
    - "Lord I prayed for ***this*** and the direct opposite happened"!
- Doubting the plan of God is a life long hazard - - no one is immune from it.
- The answer is to keep going back to the Word – you must trust in it.
  - **POD:** "[Walk by faith](#)" regardless of how things work out.
- The problem we face is not God, His word, or His faithfulness - - it is our malleability.

### **Luke 7:18-30**

(18) The disciples of John reported to him about all these things.

(19) Summoning two of his disciples, John sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are You the Expected One, or do we look for someone else?"

#### **John is doubting! Why?**

He has been arrested

He has not been baptized by the Holy Spirit as he expected

He has not seen any vengeance executed by the Lord via Baptism of Fire

(20) When the men came to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, to ask, 'Are You the Expected One, or do we look for someone else?'"

(21) At that very time He cured many people of diseases and afflictions and evil spirits; and He gave sight to many who were blind.

### Isaiah 35:1-8

(1) The wilderness and the desert will be glad, and the Arabah will rejoice and blossom; Like the crocus

(2) It will blossom profusely and rejoice with rejoicing and shout of joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They will see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. **This was to happen when the promised Messiah arrived.**

(3) Encourage the exhausted, and strengthen the feeble.

(4) Say to those with anxious heart, "Take courage, fear not. **Behold, your God will come with vengeance** (reference the baptism of fire); the recompense of God will come, but He will save you (from the judgment)."

(5) Then the eyes of the blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf will be unstopped.

(6) Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute will shout for joy. For waters will break forth in the wilderness and streams in the Arabah.

(7) The scorched land will become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, its resting place, Grass becomes reeds and rushes.

(8) A highway will be there, a roadway, and it will be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean will not travel on it, but it will be for him who walks that way, and fools will not wander on it. Who was the highway built for and who built that highway? From Isaiah 40 – John the messenger – speaking with authority and conviction as a herald. Heralding the coming of Messiah.

(22) And He answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.

(23) "Blessed is he who does not take offense at Me." **Christ just quoted Isa 3:5**

Jesus is telling John "I am the expected One" and "don't take offense at Me if things don't work out the way you anticipated them to work out".

### Vs. 24-30 Jesus confirms to everybody that John was the one Isaiah spoke of.

(24) When the messengers of John had left, He began to speak to the crowds about John, "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

(25) "But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Those who are splendidly clothed and live in luxury are found in royal palaces!

(26) "But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and one who is more than a prophet.

(27) "This is the one about whom it is written, 'BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU.'

(28) "I say to you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

(29) When all the people and the tax collectors heard this, **they acknowledged God's justice, having been baptized with the baptism of John.**

God's plan is amazingly interesting as it unfolds.

We are not to reason why things appear to not work out the way we thought that they would. We are to continue to apply Bible doctrine & keep on fulfilling the responsibilities of our believer-priesthood regardless.

### Things in life can be very disappointing

You may lose a loved one

You may be devastated by an illness

Your prayers may not be answered in the manner you expected

You must learn to accept God's answers and keep moving forward in the spiritual advance.

### Once again, when we look at this from John's perspective – we can understand why he began to doubt.

Two categories of people exist – one for blessing one for cursing

The kingdom that was promised and all that accompanied Messiah's arrival was not happening as John anticipated

Now he is in jail after he had magnificently prepared the way of the Lord

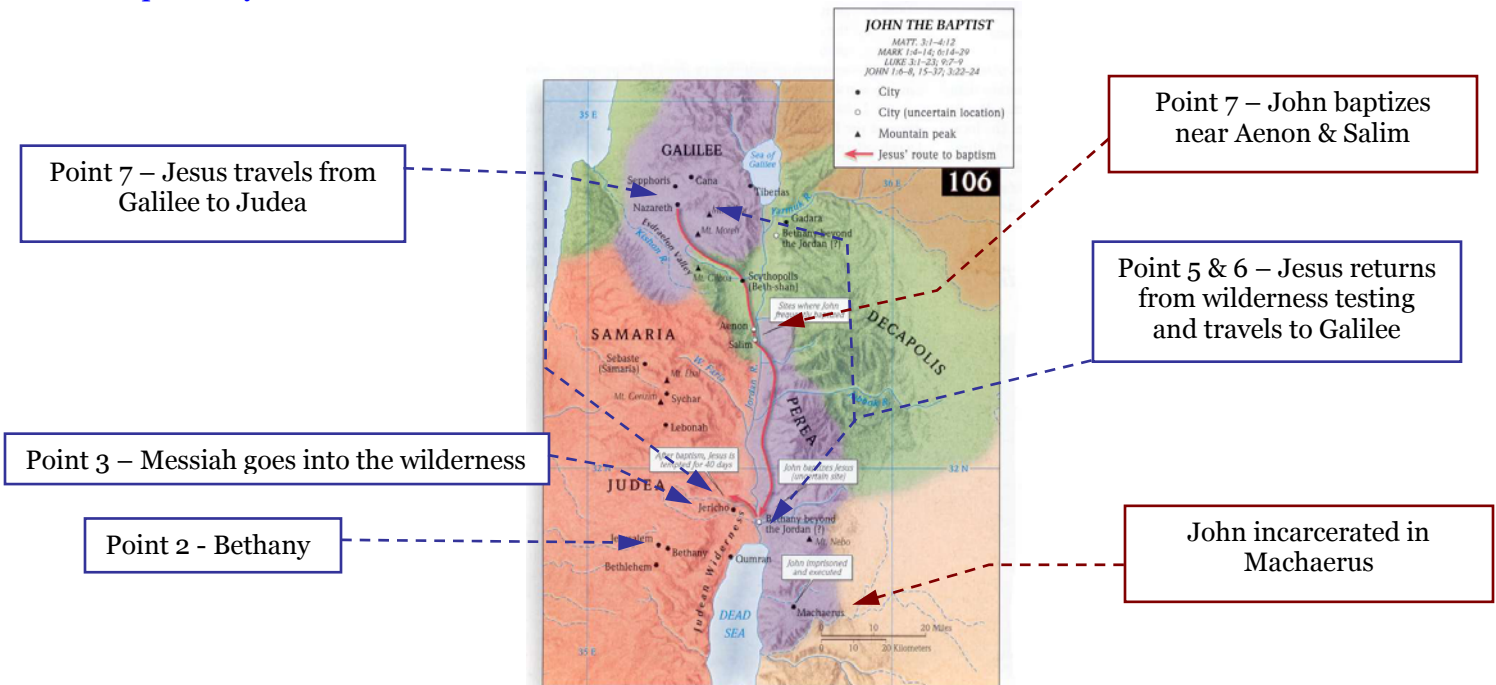
Jesus and His disciples are still baptizing people

He is preaching the message – the time is now fulfilled the kingdom of God is on the brink of being instituted – repent and believe the message

Those who believe will be baptized by the disciples and identified with the kingdom – the problem is a national repentance has to occur for everything to be instituted

Notice (vs. 30) those in leadership positions rejected the message – Messiah is rejected! Postponed until after the Tribulation.

(30) But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God's purpose for themselves, not having been baptized by John.



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