

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.

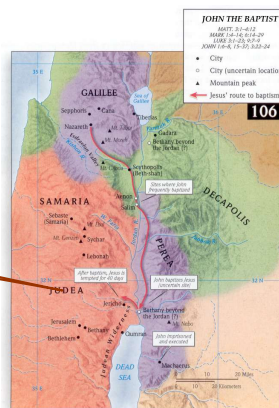
Historical Chronology between Matt 4:11 and 12 (Review)

1. Jesus returns to Judea after the wilderness testing and John [the Herald] identifies Him as the promised Messiah (John 1:29-36).
2. Christ calls disciples and travels to Galilee (John 1:37-49).
(Not the same as His withdrawal to Galilee in Mt 4:12)
 - Andrew and John - - vv. 37-39
 - Peter - - vv. 40-42
 - Philip - - vs. 43
 - Nathanael - - vv. 45-49
3. First miracle was at the wedding in Cana of Galilee (John 2:1-11).
4. Christ travels to Capernaum from the wedding feast with Mary, His half brothers and the disciples (John 2:12).
 - Half brothers:
 - James
 - Joseph
 - Judas
 - Simon
5. Christ travels to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover and drives the money changers and their animals out of the temple (John 2:13-21).
 - Different temple cleansing than mentioned in other gospels
 - Matt 21:12; Mark 11:15; Luke 19:45-48
 - A sign of His Messianic authority
 - Rejected by the religious leaders
6. He meets Nicodemus (a Pharisee) and communicates that spiritual regeneration is a requirement to enter the kingdom (John 3:1-21).

John 3:22-30

(22) After these things (the week in Jerusalem where He cleansed the temple and when He met with Nicodemus) **Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He was spending time with them and baptizing.**

Area of Judea



“Spending time” - διατριβω

- Imperfect active indicative - διατριβω
 - **Indicates Jesus was teaching students through prolonged discourse**
- Imperfect tense: Incomplete Past Motion Picture Action-
 - Therefore, Christ, being the God-Man in hypostatic union, had a never ending supply of things to teach.

- What was Jesus doing with the time He had been given by the Father?
 - He wasn't lounging around wasting time.
 - He was communicating doctrine.
- What were His students doing?
 - Listening
 - Learning

POD: Time spent learning the Word of God is redeemed time.

- It's time that is **never wasted.**
- Organizing your life around the teaching of God's Word honors the Lord. Why?
 - **Because you are giving Him time to teach you.**

What else was going on apart from teaching?

- Baptizing

For what was the baptism?

- It was used to identify people with Messiah and *His* kingdom.

John the Baptist, chosen by God to herald the coming of Messiah, was doing the same thing (v. 23).

(23) John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim , . .

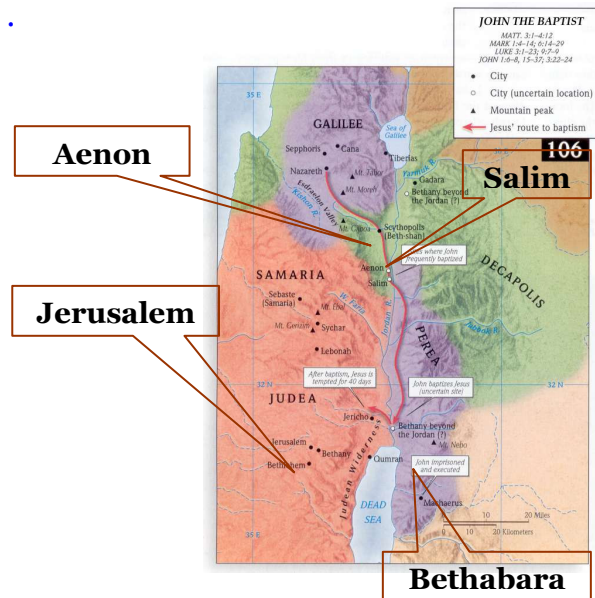
. . . because there was much water there;

“Because” – οτι

HOTI – “Because”

- There were some springs near Aenon.
- Water was needed for baptism.

and people were coming and were being baptized—



***The entire nation is being prepared for the kingdom to be instituted by Messiah.
The message “repent - change your mind” was being communicated, BECAUSE the
Kingdom of Heaven was on the brink of being instituted.***

You have two ministries occurring simultaneously – John's and the Lord's.

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

- John and the Lord are carrying on their ministries at the same time and in the same vicinity of each other.
- John is carrying on the ministry that the Lord gave him at the same time the Lord is carrying on the ministry that the Father had for Him.
- Both are baptizing to identify the individual with Messiah, regardless of who does the baptizing.

John's Baptism – *Baptism of the Kingdom (review).*

1. The ritual was immersion in the Jordan River.
2. Characterized as a baptism of repentance (Mt 3:5-6) 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 that Messiah would institute.

Remember the **Pharisees** believed they would enter the Kingdom based on self-righteousness developed from observing the Law and the fact that they were Abraham's physical progeny.

Entrance into the Kingdom is not based on personal merit!

Salvation requires trusting in the work of another – Christ!

The Pharisees became very concerned because their religious system was on the brink of falling apart, so they attempted to create a division between the ministries of John and Jesus.

This is Satan at his best – attempting to divide believers. He is using the religious crowd to do it.

(25) Therefore. . .

- Inferential conjunction **οὐν** (OUN)
 - This provides a deduction based upon the preceding context.
 - What's happening in the preceding context?

In Verse 22

- Jesus was teaching through prolonged discourse & baptizing.

In Verse 23

- John was also baptizing.

The preceding context is that there are two ministries functioning at the same time.

. . . there arose a discussion on the part of John's disciples with a **Jew** about purification.

- The **Jew** is a representative of the Pharisees and he has come to Aenon to stir up controversy between the Lord's ministry and John's ministry.
- They believed their ritual purification was sufficient; therefore, John's baptism was not required.

This was not a normal discussion.

- Aorist middle indicative of **γίνομαι** + nominative of **ζήτησις**
 - GINOMAI plus ZETESIS
 - **ζήτησις**
 - **"a heated debate"** in this context
 - The aorist tense indicates it started abruptly.

- This was a planned attack in order to create discord between two simultaneous ministries.
- How do we know this?

(26) And they came to John. . .

- John's disciples came to him after the heated debate.

. . . 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."

- There is **jealousy** among people within a ministry.
- This always occurs when believers get their eyes on what other ministries are doing.
- They are focused on what is being taught elsewhere instead of what they should be learning WHERE THEY ARE.
- The minute they become jealous, they are out of fellowship.
- They approach John, while out of fellowship, and are concerned about the popularity of Messiah's ministry.
 - This becomes a personal test for John – a huge test!
 - "all are coming to Him"

**Ministry popularity is not an indicator of success.
It's a distraction for the communicator.**

One of the reasons Jesus withdraws into Galilee in the near future is to avoid popularity.

This is a huge test for John . . . but he passes it with flying colors.

(27) John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven.

- His ministry was given to him by the Lord.
- Jesus Christ's ministry was, too.

John did not get involved in what was going on in this other ministry.

- His students shouldn't have either, but they did and wound up in a heated debate!
 - Their actions were a testimony to their immaturity and a demonstration that they were focused on the wrong thing!
 - They were focused on the MAN instead of the MESSAGE.

John stayed out of the debate and that is why he passed the test.

(28) "You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent ahead of Him.'

- John recognizes two things:
 - The Messiah's identity – Jesus Christ.
 - What God sent him to do for Messiah.

How does this apply to us?

- If our eyes are on our Savior – the Lord Jesus Christ – are we then going to get involved in heated debates over other ministries? NO!
- What matters is what God has for you to do today.

- By doing so, John focuses his attention on Who the Lord is and what He's been sent to do for him!

Now his attitude is expressed in light of this wonderful application of doctrine.

(29) "He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice.

- Who's the bridegroom? Jesus Christ
- Who's the friend of the bridegroom? John (the best man)

Is the best man happy for the groom? Yes

- What does the best man do for the groom? He makes sure that all things are taken care of so the groom can concentrate on what he needs to concentrate on - looking forward to receiving his bride.
- Best man is a facilitator. He allows the groom to focus on what he needs to – receiving his bride and taking her to consummate the marriage.

Who has all the attention at the wedding reception?

The bride and the bridegroom

- John is communicating to these students that he is rejoicing over the fact that Jesus has the attention.
- He is rejoicing that people are responding to Messiah's ministry.

So this joy of mine has been made full.

- John is greatly rejoicing because Jesus' ministry is increasing.

Then, he displays this wonderful magnanimous humility -

(30) "He must increase, but I must decrease.

John is sensitive to the fact that the Lord's ministry for him is coming to an end.

- John can recognize that because he has genuine humility.
- John is completely malleable to the Lord's will for his life.

What's the application in this for us today?

1st POD - Ministries of the same ilk, functioning in geographical proximity, are ripe for discord, sown through arrogance, pride, and inordinate competition.

2nd POD - Satan and his TASK ORGANIZATION will seize the opportunity to sow discord among believers who are focused on people, pastors, churches, and ministries.

3rd POD - To combat this, believers must focus on the Lord and fulfill their priesthood responsibilities as opposed to becoming entangled in doctrinal debates.

It really doesn't matter what some other pastor is teaching or what another church is doing. Why?

- It's not your business.
- We are to attend to the ministry that the Lord has provided.
- If one is popular and another is pining away does it matter? **NO!**
- If one has a building and another does not - is that any of your concern? **NO!**

What really matters is if you are benefiting from the spiritual food that is being served.

What was the Lord's solution to all this?

John 4:1-3

(1) Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John

(2) (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were),

(3) He left Judea and went away again into Galilee.

*The Lord knew what the Pharisees were going to do and He did not want discord between the two ministries.
The Lord gave some breathing room and defused the situation!*

Under the principle: “A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven (John 3:27).”

4th POD - Since the ministry is given from heaven, the ministry originates and belongs to the Lord.

- From where does the gift of pastor-teacher come? Heaven
- Gifts – all gifts - belong to the Lord!

5th POD – Therefore, the church does not belong to the pastor and the pastor does not belong to the congregation.

- The church belongs to the Lord.
- The ministry belongs to the Lord.
- To Whom does the pastor belong?
 - The Lord!
 - The pastor is on loan from the Lord.
- To whom does the congregation belong?
 - The Lord!
 - The congregation is also on loan from the Lord.
 - That should always be the pastor’s perspective.

**We have to take care of one another - how well we do that is a testimony
to our love for the Lord.**

John 3:30 “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

6th POD - The Lord has designed all ministries to come to an end.

- Whether they do end or not is another issue.
- Each ministry serves a purpose!
 - John’s ministry – herald the coming of Messiah
 - Now that Messiah is here, John’s ministry will come to an end.
 - All ministries must be malleable to that fact.
- There is always a message for the hour.
- The ministry is designed, by the Lord, to end when the communicator ceases to communicate.

7th POD - Genuine humility [and malleability] is required in the communicator to discern when the Lord has appointed for him to decrease and finally to cease [to step down].

- John’s ministry is designed to decrease as the Savior’s increases.
- There’s a transition of ministries here. Some of John’s disciples have not recognized this – why?
- They are focused on John as opposed to the Lord.
- Even after John is arrested they are still his students, not recognizing the fact that a transition had occurred.

**When you focus on the man, you are not hearing what is being said because you are
focused on the man and not the message!**

8th POD - People focused on the man will fail to transition in accordance with the will of God.

- They hold themselves back from the spiritual advance.

There are 8 historical events in chronology that fill that gap between Matt 4:11 & 12

5. The Lord travels to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover and cleanses the temple (John 2:13-21).

6. During His week in Jerusalem, He meets Nicodemus and communicates that spiritual regeneration is the prerequisite for entering the Kingdom of God (John 3:1-21).

- Two ministries are simultaneously functioning at this time in the same geographical area This provides too much friction.
- The Lord defuses the situation and goes up to Galilee.

7. John is arrested

- He's removed and some of his students still fail to transition – a travesty in the spiritual life.

8. The Lord returns to Galilee through Samaria (Matt. 4:1 - 4:12)

- On the way, He meets the woman at the well.

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