



CAPITOL COMMISSION®

True Repentance

JUNE 3-4, 2026

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Luke 3:10-20 *So the people asked him, saying, "What shall we do then?" 11) He answered and said to them, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise." 12) Then the tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" 13) And he said to them, "Collect no more than what is appointed for you." 14) Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages." 15) Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not, 16) John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17) His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire." 18) And with many other exhortations he preached to the people. 19) But Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, 20) Also added this, above all, that he shut John up in prison. (NKJV)*

THEREFORE, KING AGRIPPA, I WAS NOT DISOBEDIENT TO THE HEAVENLY VISION, BUT DECLARED FIRST TO THOSE IN DAMASCUS AND IN JERUSALEM, AND THROUGHOUT ALL THE REGION OF JUDEA, AND THEN TO THE GENTILES, THAT THEY SHOULD REPENT, TURN TO GOD, AND DO WORKS BEFITTING REPENTANCE.

ACTS 26:19-20

Why were the people asking for specifics? Is the answer simple generosity? Were even the most hated among the Jews showing up for John's baptism? Did John tell them to quit their despised job? Does the word for "soldiers" even include magistrates? What is a common theme in all of John's answers? Is John's influence so significant that they think he is the Messiah? How does he correct them? Does John even boldly rebuke the king? What was Herod's greatest sin?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- JUNE 10-11: LUKE 3:21-22 *THE BAPTISM OF THE BELOVED SON*
- JUNE 17-18: LUKE 3:23-38 *THE LINEAGE OF THE MESSIAH*

For the first time since their captivity in Babylon, the Roman Empire, the fourth beast of Daniel's prophecy, dominated the Jews in the most absolute tyranny. Yet, as Alfred Edersheim makes clear, they still offered daily sacrifices and prayers in the Temple for the Emperor and the Roman people, praying also in their Synagogues as learned from Jeremiah and Daniel. The forty-three year Tetrarchy of Herod Antipas in Galilee and Perea, was where John the Baptist and later Jesus spent most of their time in ministry. Herod Antipas was far worse in tyranny over Israel than his father, Herod the Great. The one thing he does good, beginning in 22AD, he built the beautiful city of Tiberias on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, yet the city lacked any Jews and was considered desecrated because it was built over their burial grounds. Yet, in spite of all their suffering, most were unrepentant.

AND JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID TO THEM, "DO YOU SUPPOSE THAT THESE GALILEANS WERE WORSE SINNERS THAN ALL THE OTHER GALILEANS, BECAUSE THEY SUFFERED SUCH THINGS? I TELL YOU, NO; BUT UNLESS YOU REPENT YOU WILL ALL LIKEWISE PERISH."

LUKE 13:2-3, 5

BIBLE STUDIES

WEDNESDAY @ 8:30 AM – FREDERICKSBURG – PARADISE DINER – 260 WARRENTON RD & NOON – FAIRFAX – DENNY'S, 10473 FAIRFAX BLVD.

THURSDAY @ 8:00 AM – RICHMOND – SHONEY'S, HULL & COURTHOUSE & NOON – LYNCHBURG – PANERA BREAD, 3901 OLD FOREST RD.

Virginia

True Repentance

I. REPENTANCE APPLIED

LUKE 3:10-14

The crowds were constantly asking John what to do to show that their repentance was genuine. Considering the Jewish mindset, John provides a positive way to prove their change of heart, by personal care and giving. *“He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise.”* The tunic was an undergarment worn under one’s robe for warmth and washing. To not even have a tunic meant shameful exposure and destitution. They were to personally care for the essentially destitute in gratitude for what God had given them. Literally, *“even the tax collectors came to be baptized,”* desiring to know what they were to do. These were the hated extortionists who constantly stole from their own people under the guise of Roman taxation. John did not tell them to quit their job, but to be honest and *“collect no more than what is appointed for you.”* The final group is much more extensive, including not just soldiers, but all involved in a military campaign, even up to civil magistrates such as Herod. It also included the Jewish Temple Police. Basically those in military or political authority ask what they should do. The first proof of their repentance, *“Do not intimidate anyone”* literally means “to shake down,” naturally instilling fear as an abuse of authority, often to extort money or goods. John also told them not to *“accuse falsely”* which pointed to a variety of deceitful tactics to gain power, promotions, get wealth, blackmail, etc. The final proof was positive and pointed to the root problem, *“be content with your wages.”* Contentment automatically removes the desire to prey upon others in abuse of their own authority.

BUT GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT IS GREAT GAIN.

I TIMOTHY 6:6

II. REPENTANCE ANTICIPATED

LUKE 3:15-18

Because of John the Baptist’s incredible popularity, the people begin to expect that he is the Messiah. But John

quickly and constantly corrects their assumptions. He knows that he is merely human with only water baptism to symbolize their repentance, but the coming Messiah is infinitely stronger, of whom John did not consider himself worthy to loosen His sandal. He is God and thus *“will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”* He will not just call for repentance, He will bring true repentance through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. The invisible presence of the Holy Spirit is physically made visible with fire on the day of Pentecost, the launch of the early Church, when all heard the Gospel of repentance in their own language. That day 3000 were added to the Church. This Messiah is pictured by John as a farmer who divides the wheat from the chaff. He grows true repenters and gathers His *“wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire,”* eternal fire.

“REPENT AND LET EVERY ONE OF YOU BE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS; AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.”

ACTS 2:38

III. REPENTANCE ABANDONED

LUKE 3:19-20

Among his soldiers probably came Herod, who *“when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly”* (Mark 6:20). Likely he wants to look good in the midst of his scandal, so he may have given to some of the poor, or tried to perform some external acts to appear as if he is repentant like the others and may have even asked John to be baptized. But instead he was surprised at *“being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done.”* John was not about to endorse open sin, which was no doubt a scandal for all Israel, as if he were doing nothing wrong. John, bold for true repentance, told him, *“It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife”* (Mark 6:18). When Herodias found out, she demanded his death! Herod compromised with John in prison but then was seduced to murder him.

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Do you self-righteously look down on others without being repentant yourself?
- 2) Has Christ given you the Holy Spirit so that your life proves that you have repented by what you do?
- 3) Are you trying to use religion and good things to cover up a lack of true repentance from your besetting sin?