

Week 5 Sun Oct 4, 2026: John 3:22-36end, John the Baptist Exalts Christ

John 3:22-36 John the Baptist Exalts Christ (John's Testimony)

Jhn 3:22 After these things (**Nicodemus in Jerusalem**) Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea (**rural area**), and there He(**Jesus**) remained with them (**His disciples**) and baptized.

The Apostle John the writer clarifies his statement

Jhn 4:2 (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples) (Jesus did not personally perform baptisms Himself; rather, His disciples carried out the water baptisms under His authority and supervision).

Quote from David Guzik on Blue Letter Bible

b. **He remained with them and baptized**: Jesus, together with His disciples, did a work of baptizing apparently similar to the work of John the Baptist. This was Jesus' humble way of recognizing the goodness and importance of John's work.

i. Of the baptizing work of Jesus, Morris observed: "More probably it represents a continuation of the 'baptism of repentance' that was characteristic of John the Baptist." We know that when Jesus began to preach, He began with John's same message: repent (Matthew 3:2 and 4:17). It made sense for Jesus to also practice the symbol of repentance that John used with such great effect.

ii. "The baptism now carried on by the disciples [of Jesus] appears to have stood very much in the same position as that of John." (Alford)

Jesus and His disciples were confirming the work of John the Baptist.

Jhn 3:23 Now John also was baptizing in Aenon (**meaning springs**) near Salim (**and a second place at Bethabara or Bethany (1:28)**), because there was much water there (**plenty of water at that time**). And they (**the people**) came and were (**being**) baptized.

What did John's baptism mean?

Repentance: People acknowledged and turned from their sins and turned toward God.

Preparation: John was preparing people for Jesus, the Messiah.

Water baptism: John baptized people in water as an outward expression of their repentance.

It pointed forward to Jesus: John's baptism was not the complete Christian baptism that came after Jesus' death and resurrection.

John message received widespread fame in Israel and was generally accepted by the common people and outcasts but generally not accepted by the leaders and religious Jews (cf. Luke 7:29-30).

Jhn 3:24 For John had not yet been thrown into prison.

This verse indicates that there was an interval between Jesus' baptism and John's imprisonment during which they both ministered. So Matthew and Mark, does not show the gap in time and gives you the impression that the imprisonment of John came right after the baptism of Jesus. So John fills in the gap between Jesus' baptism, temptation and the Baptist's imprisonment.

Mat 4:12 Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee.

John's preaching against Herod Antipas led to his imprisonment at Machaerus.

Mat 14:3 For Herod had laid hold of John and bound him, and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife.

Mat 14:4 Because John had said to him(**Herod**), "It is not lawful for you to have her. (**Herod took Herodias, who had been his brother Philip's wife, as his own wife, Herodias then became hostile toward John and wanted him killed**)."

John the last of the prophets yet the greatest, but also the last of God's word through the prophets. God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds (**Heb 1:1-2**)

Jhn 3:25 Then there arose a dispute (**debate**) between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purification (**referring to baptism**).

Jewish tradition required immersion baptism to convert to Judaism, and John the Baptist had most likely taken over the ritual, giving it new meaning in his own ministry. Tradition specified that there had to be enough water to completely cover a person, and that it had to be collected naturally.

Jhn 3:26 And they(**John's disciples**) came to John and said to him, "Rabbi (**Teacher**), He(**Jesus**) who was with you beyond the Jordan (**beyond Jordan River crossing**), to whom you have testified--behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him (**Jesus**)!"

The passage reflects how John's disciples perceived the movement, not understanding God's purpose.

Application: Be careful about exaggerating a situation. Statements such as "everyone, or "all are" can magnify a perceived problem and produce an emotional or extreme response. Don't allow exaggerated reports, create unnecessary competition or fear.

John the Baptist had previously testified

Jhn 1:7 This man(**John**) came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe (**Christ, the Light**).

Jhn 1:15 John bore witness of Him(**Jesus**) and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before (**existed before**) me.' "

Jhn 1:27 It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose.

Jhn 1:32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the (Holy) Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him.

Jhn 1:33 "I did not know Him, but He(**God**) who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes (**Jesus Christ**) with the Holy Spirit.'

Jhn 1:34 "And I(**John**) have seen and testified that this is the Son of God (**title/designation of Jesus which points to His divine identity**)."

Jhn 3:27 John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing (**can claim anything**) unless it has been given to him from heaven (**the truth is sourced in God**).

Quote from Chuck Smith 3,000 series

Paul the apostle asked the question, "What do you have but what you have received? And if you have received it, then why do you boast of it as though you hadn't received it (1Cor 4:7). If there is any good work that is coming forth from your life, it's because God is doing it. And if God is doing it, then how can you boast as though God wasn't doing it. As though you're something special. So no man can operate in the realm of the Spirit unless God is doing it. "Except it be given to him from heaven."

John was saying that was not the role that he received from Heaven. He showed humble faithfulness to the superiority of Jesus and His ministry.

John also shows us that we can be very popular and outwardly successful, and still have genuine humility, giving God all the credit (the path of God's grace).

Application: Whatever ministry, gifts, opportunities, influence, or fruit God gives us ultimately, comes from God. This protects us from pride when things go well and jealousy when someone else is succeeding.

Correlation passages:

1Cor 3:6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.

1Cor 3:7 So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.

1Cor 15:10 (**Paul said**) But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

1Cor 15:11 Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach (**the same message**) and so you believed.

Jhn 3:28 "You yourselves bear me witness (**and can testify**), that I said, 'I am not the Christ (**Messiah**),' but, 'I have been sent before (**or ahead of**) Him. (**John was the appointed forerunner and messenger to announce and proclaim Messiah's coming Mal 3:1, Mat 11:10, Luke 1:17&76, 7:27, John 1:9-27, Isa 40:3**).'

Cross-references:

Mal 3:1a "Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord...

Mat 11:10 For this is he(**speaking of John**) of whom it is written: 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.'

Application: A pastor, teacher, evangelist, or Christian can be a useful servant of God, but no human servant should take the place that belongs to Christ, Jesus.

Jhn 3:29 "He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who (**gladly**) stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled (**complete**).

John the Baptist's reference to Jesus as the bridegroom (Mat 9:15 and parallels Eph. 5:25–27; Rev 19:7–8) identifies Jesus as Israel's long-awaited King and Messiah.

In the OT, Israel is frequently depicted as God's "bride" (Isa. 62:4–5; Jer. 2:2; Hos. 2:16–20). John the Baptist's role is that of the bridegroom's friend, who selflessly rejoices with the groom (John 1:6–9, 15, 19–36). (Quote: ESV study notes on BLB)

John was content to be a voice (Jn 1:23) and a friend of the Bridegroom. John's joy wasn't in keeping people attached or dependent on him; his joy was seeing them go to Jesus Christ.

Jhn 3:30 "He must increase (**continue to become greater and greater, more important and more popular**), but I must decrease (**continue to become less important and less popular**).

John understood his role from God and that was to point people to Christ, not to take Christ's place or receive His glory.

Luk 9:23 Then He(**Jesus**) said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

Application: Another person's success in serving Christ is not necessarily our loss. If Christ is being honored, we should rejoice and praise God, rather than compete and have jealousy.

Prophetic Messianic reference:

Isa 9:7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Paul found some of John the Baptist disciples many years later in Ephesus

Act 19:1 And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples

Act 19:2 he(Paul) said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."

Act 19:3 And he(Paul) said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism."

Act 19:4 Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance (turning away from sin and turning toward God), saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."

Act 19:5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (and they received the Holy Spirit).

Act 19:6 And (then after that) when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues (a different or unknown language) and prophesied.

Acts 18:24–28, where Apollos also knew about John's baptism but needed further instruction about “the way of God” more accurately.

Jhn 3:31 "He who comes from above is above all (refers to Jesus Christ and heavenly origin); he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth (refers to John the Baptist, earthly messenger which speaks the truth about Christ)). He who comes from heaven is above all.

Correlation passages:

Jhn 3:13 "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.

Jhn 8:23 And He(Jesus) said to them (Jews), "You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.

Jhn 8:24 "Therefore I said to you that you will die (unforgiven and condemned) in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He (I Am or I am He, Ex 3:14, Is 43:10 Messiah, Christ, Anointed One, Savior), you will die in your sins."

Jhn 3:32 "And what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives (or accepts) His testimony (as true).

Prophetic Messianic reference:

Isa 53:1 Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

Isa 53:3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

Isa 53:4 Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.

Isa 53:5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

Jhn 3:33 "He who has received His testimony has certified (**means to seal, A seal indicated ownership to all and expressed a person's personal guarantee**) that God is true (**truthful and cannot lie**).

1John 5:10 He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself (**the believer possesses an internal testimony from God concerning His Son**) he who does not believe God (**rejects Gods true**) has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.

Jhn 3:34 "For He(**Jesus**) whom God has sent, speaks the words of God (**proclaims his Father's message**), for God does not give the (**Holy**) Spirit by measure (**that is, not in a limited way but the fullness of the Spirit, cf. Jn. 1:32, 33; Isa. 11:2; 42:1; 61:1**)

Notice: John 3:34 refers to all three Persons of the Godhead-Trinity: God the Father who sends Jesus His Son, who speaks the words of God, and God gives the Son the Holy Spirit without measure).

Deu 18:18 'I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I commend Him.

Jhn 1:16 And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace (**spiritual blessing upon spiritual blessing; gift heaped upon gift**).

Jhn 1:17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

All born again believers have the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:9, Eph 1:13–14), but Jesus had the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Jhn 3:35 "The Father loves the Son, and has given (**and entrusted**) all things into His hand (**His authority**).

The Father within the Trinity, Godhead gives authority over the whole created universe to the Son (John 1:3; 3:16; 17; 5:22; 6:38; 14:16; 28; Heb. 1:2–3; 1 Pet. 3:22).

Prophetic Messianic reference:

Psa 2:7 "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have (uniquely) begotten You.

Psa 2:8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession.

Correlation passages:

Jhn 13:3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God,

Heb 2:7 You (God) have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands.

Heb 2:8 You (God) have put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.

Dan 7:14 Then to Him(the Messiah, Christ, Jesus) was given dominion (supreme authority) and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

Jhn 3:36 "He who believes (trust) in the Son (Jesus Christ) has (present tense) everlasting life; and he who does not believe (or refusing to believe) the Son shall not see life (eternal life with God), but the wrath of God abides (remains) on him (that person who rejects the Son)."

Cross-reference and correlation passages:

Jhn 6:47 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.

Rom 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

Rom 1:19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.

Rom 1:20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

Rom 1:21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful (anyone who attributes the existence of the world to chance or to a different creator is already guilty of deliberately rejecting God), but became futile in their thoughts (godless reasoning, worthless thinking and senseless speculations), and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Rom 1:25 who exchanged (or trade) the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

Jhn 3:16 "For God (the Father) so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Jhn 3:17 "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Jhn 3:18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

End

Extra Scriptures:

Charts:

John's Baptism

Does not regenerate a person
Baptism of repentance
Prepared people for the Messiah
John administered it
Looked forward to Christ (Messiah)
Water baptism outward expression

Christian Baptism

Baptism is distinct from the new birth (John 3, Acts 10, Tit 3:5, 1Cor 1:17)
Baptism associated with repentance, faith and belief in Jesus (Acts 2:38)
Points to Jesus' death and resurrection (Rom 6:3–4)
Jesus disciples commanded and administer after resurrection (Mat 28:19)
Looks back to Christ's finished work (Col 2:12)
Water baptism, identification with the Godhead, Trinity (Mat 28:19)

Seven Signs in the Gospel of John

- **John 2:1-11** **Jesus turns water into wine.**
- **John 4:46-54** **Healing of the nobleman's son.**
- **John 5:1-15** **Healing at the pool of Bethesda.**
- **John 6:1-14** **Feeding the 5,000 men plus families.**
- **John 6:15-21** **Jesus walks on water.**
- **John 9:1-12** **Healing of the man born blind.**
- **John 11:1-44** **Lazarus raised from the dead.**