



## Message of John the Baptist

*Living in the Image of God*  
Module 03 Session 01

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## Living in the Image of God

- God creates every person to represent him in interactions with others
- Be for others what God would be for them if he lived with us in human form
- He provides resources for people to perform the responsibilities and blesses those that do
- Program seeks to understand the meaning, resources, and human responsibilities and benefits of *Living in the Image of God*

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## What We Will Learn

- John the Baptist message
- New life through Christ
- Individual commitment to new way of living
- Christ offers baptism of the Holy Spirit
- Forgives your sins
- Will lead you through the new way of living
- Life commitment to *Living in the Image of God*
- Luke 3:3–18

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## John the Baptist Message

- Message of repentance
- Turn away from the old way of living
- Embrace the new way of living
- Receive baptism of repentance for forgiveness of sins
- Wash away the old way of living
- And commit to the new way of living
- In preparation to receive the Messiah

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## Old Way of Living

- He called them the “Brood of vipers!”
- Decried the predatory human interactions and relationships
- Devoted to serving self
- And exploiting others for self-enrichment
- Not minding any cost to others
- The old way of living invites wrath from God
- Repent to escape the wrath

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## New Way of Living

- Commitment to compassion
- Fairness in public service
- Fairness in commercial interactions
- Recognize the needs of others and do what you can to alleviate the need
- Commit to fair value for goods
- And fair fee for service
- Luke 3:10–14

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### Luke 3 (NIV)

- Explained compassion using examples from his community

10 “What should we do then?” the crowd asked.

11 John answered, “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.”

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### Luke 3 (NIV)

- Explained fairness in public service using examples from his community

12 Even tax collectors came to be baptized. “Teacher,” they asked, “what should we do?”

13 “Don’t collect any more than you are required to,” he told them.

14 Then some soldiers asked him, “And what should we do?” He replied, “Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely—be content with your pay.”

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### Prepare for New Way of Living

- Individual commitment
- And individual responsibility
- Not by inheritance
- All that commit will receive the Messiah
- He will baptize them with the Holy Spirit
- Forgive them their sins
- And lead them through the new way of living
- Those that don’t commit he will condemn to eternal misery
- Luke 3:8, 16, and 17

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### Luke 3 (NIV)

8 Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.

- Receiving the Messiah will be by individual commitment
- And individual responsibility
- Not by inheritance

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### Luke 3 (NIV)

16 John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

17 His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

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### What We Learned

- Message of John the Baptist
- Repent from old way of living
- Commit to new life in Christ
- Requires individual responsibility and commitment to *Living in the Image of God*
- All that commit receive Holy Spirit in Christ
- He will forgive them their sins
- Lead them through *Living in the Image of God*

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# Message of John the Baptist

## Living in the Image of God M03S01

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John the Baptist preached a message of new life in Christ exemplified by compassion, fairness in public service, and fairness in commercial interactions. The new life begins with repentance from the old way of living characterized by predatory human interactions and relationships. The old way focused on serving self and exploiting others for self-enrichment, not minding any cost to them. His message raised awareness for a lifetime commitment to *Living in the Image of God* and the promise of Christ ministry, for which he was the Forerunner.

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Our program on *Living in the Image of God* continues this year (2022) with studies focused on understanding Christ teaching on *Living in the Image of God* based on the gospel according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. In today's session, we discuss the message of John the Baptist.

The bible provides a brief account of John the Baptist work as the Forerunner for Christ, describing his message of repentance for forgiveness of sins as he baptized people that came to him in the country around the river Jordan. He urged them to prepare for the Messiah by repenting from their current life of predatory human interactions and relationships and committing to a new life in Christ. He described the new life using examples from their community.

His message reflects the essence of his role as the Forerunner for Christ by drawing attention to *Living in the Image of God*. Christ would subsequently explain the new life in detail through formal teaching, parables, and real-life illustrations during his ministry. Therefore, our study of *Living in the Image of God* from the gospel begins with a discussion of John the Baptist message.

## John the Baptist Message

John the Baptist preached the message of repentance for forgiveness of sins and invited people to be baptized. He told them to turn away from the old way of living and embrace the new way of living. He offered baptism of repentance for forgiveness of sins, to symbolize cleansing from the old way and committing to the new way of living: "He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" [Luke 3:3]. Baptism and commitment to the new life were necessary to prepare to receive the Messiah.

## Old Way of Living

He described the old way of living by referring to the people as "brood of vipers," an imagery that represents predatory human interactions and relationships [Luke 3:7]: "John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?'" By this reference, he decried the old way of living devoted to serving self and exploiting others for self-enrichment, not minding any cost to them. He warned that the old way of living invites wrath from God and told them to repent to escape the wrath.

## **New Way of Living**

He described a new way of living based on *Living in the Image of God*, which he exemplified using experience from their community life. His examples illustrate compassion, fairness in public service, and fairness in commercial interactions. Through the examples, he urged everyone to recognize the needs of others and do what you can to alleviate the need. Also, he preached for commitment to fair value for goods and fair fee for service.

To illustrate compassion, he said: “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same” [Luke 3:11]. To illustrate fairness in public service, he told soldiers, “Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely—be content with your pay” [Luke 3:14]. For fairness in commercial interactions, he said to the tax collectors: “Don’t collect any more than you are required to,” [Luke 3:13]. The tax collectors were agents of the government and could collect more than the mandatory amount and pocket the extra as profit. Therefore, he was telling them to be fair by collecting only the amount of profit that the system allowed for them.

## **Not By Inheritance**

The new way of living requires individual commitment and responsibility: it is not earned by inheritance [Luke 3:8]: “...And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.”

All those that commit to the new way of living will receive the Messiah. He will baptize them with the Holy Spirit, forgive them their sins, and lead them through the new life. Those that don’t commit he will condemn to eternal misery [Luke 3:16–17]: “I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” The wheat represents those that commit to the new life while the chaff represents those that don’t commit.

## **Summary of What We Learned**

John the Baptist preached a message of new life in Christ exemplified by compassion, fairness in public service, and fairness in commercial interactions.

The new life begins with repentance from the old way of living characterized by predatory human interactions and relationships. The old way focused on serving self and exploiting others for self-enrichment, not minding any cost to them.

His message raised awareness for a lifetime commitment to *Living in the Image of God* and the promise of Christ ministry, for which he was the Forerunner.