

Lesson 3

Luke 3

Prelude to the Public Ministry of Jesus

Note: *The Jordan River handout will be useful throughout our study of Luke. For this week's lesson, you will need the handout "John the Baptist in all Four Gospels."*

1. Why do you think it was important to Luke to use three verses to clearly establish the year when John the Baptist began baptizing? (Luke 3:1-3)
2. In all four gospel accounts, John the Baptist quotes a passage from Isaiah 40:3-5 to explain his mission.
 - a. How would you describe the Baptist's mission? (Luke 3:3-6)
 - b. How did it differ from the mission of Jesus? (Luke 3:16)
3. By John's lifestyle, what might indicate that he was a prophet? (Luke 3:2-3; See Handout on John the Baptist)
4. Consider the powerful image of a nest of many vipers. Vipers bite others, leaving a lethal poison in their bodies.
 - a. Who does Luke say belong to this "brood of vipers"? (Luke 3:7-9)
 - b. Who does Matthew say belong to this "brood of vipers"? (Matt 3:7)

Note: *It is important to remember that the Baptist's call to "repentance" is not a call for people to do penance for their sins. The word "repentance" refers to a change of mind and heart, to adopt a new mindset and a new way of living. The Baptist is calling his audience to a conversion, to experience a new way of looking at reality, God's way.*

5. Three different groups of people asked the Baptist how they should behave differently to show their repentance or new mindset.
 - a. What were the crowds told to do? (Luke 3:10-11)
 - b. What were the tax collectors told to do? (Luke 3:12-13)
 - c. What were the (Roman) soldiers told to do? (Luke 3:14)
6. How does this new understanding of repentance help make sense of Jesus undergoing John's baptism? In what sense can we say that Jesus is adopting a new mindset?
7. People were beginning to think that the Baptist was the Messiah. (Luke 3:15) How did the Baptist show in different ways that he was not the Messiah? (Luke 3:16-17)
8. In Matthew's gospel, Jesus pays testimony to John. What does Jesus say about John? (Matthew 11:7-13)
9. The First Luminous Mystery of the Rosary focuses on the Baptism of Jesus. What happened at the baptism of Jesus that is a sign of His divinity? (Luke 3:21-22)
10. What do we learn about Jesus from the first and last line of Luke's genealogy? (Luke 3:23 & 38)

If You Would Like a Challenge?

11. Jesus experienced a transformation of his "career" at age 30 when he was baptized. What transformations have you experienced in your life, and have they changed your purpose?