

Luke tells Jesus' story from Luke's unique perspective of a Gentile, a physician, and the first historian of the early church. **So he takes us to the beginning the root as a doctor should...what is the root...he starts the narrative of the birth of John the Baptist and Jesus.. now he will take us to the birth of John and Jesus ministry. God prepares all the people he will use in their generation through the various events, circumstances, traumas, education, personality, experiences and relationships to prepare them for His mission to their generation. No one grows up in a bubble and all of a sudden they are ready and prepared for service to God and the Generation they are in....It is accomplished in the messiness of life...**

God created time and he works in it and through it and with it...

In other words life and experience are key players in the development of people...For John and Jesus and you and I....everyone in here is in that process...the important question is are you working with the Lord or against him as he works in you and through you.. You see God is committed to the process of growing us up...

The problem is...I just want to be grown up...without the process of growing up...Oh but it is in the process that we learn...

- **In the spiritual realm...there is no such thing as an overnight success....It a many, many, many, night success we...so we will examine this today We ended chapter two with Jesus growing into a man... Luke states in one sentence what took in reality 30 years...**

Luke 2:52 Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and all the people.

And Luke 3 tell us Jesus started His ministry at about 30

Luke 3: 23 Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his public ministry.

- **Which also means John the Baptist started around thirty also...and ther are reasons for this... At this time, *one had to be approximately 30 years of age to become a Rabbi.* This recorded in the Code of Jewish Law (O.C. 581:1), which was being written at that time, along with the**

codification of the Talmud. one could not lead a Rabbinical school, nor lead services on one of the High Holy days unless they were 30.

- The Mishna is the written form of what Orthodox Jews consider oral explanations of the Jewish Law that God gave to Moses. *At this time, one had to be approximately 30 years of age to become a Rabbi.* This recorded in the Code of Jewish Law (O.C. 581:1), Also explains that at 30 one is worthy of leadership.... The Mishna explains that at 30 one has experienced enough life to be humble and broken hearted.
- Furthermore, in Jewish though, God had commanded people to "be fruitful and multiply" (Talmudic ideas of this here and here), not *forbidden* to become a Rabbi and not married with children, it was *strongly encouraged*. The idea being by 30 you at least had the *opportunity* to, "be fruitful and multiply").
- Jesus – who was considered a Jewish Rabbi - would not have been accepted *at all* unless he was at that age.

There are two messianic figures that both began their ministries at age 30. David when he began to reign-2 Samuel 5:4 and Joseph when he entered into the service of the Pharoah to save the world -Genesis 41:46

Know this...God is not haphazard about when his servants are to be utilized... Your age and experience counts and is part of your training to be employed by God...

And they also grew up in a particular time and culture.. God's Israelite people endured occupation by numerous occupying governments the people suffered, persecution, dispersion...much trouble...

- The Roman Empire with their Ceasars ruled the world from 168 B.C. to the fall of the Western Roman Empire, AD 476. The Land of Israel was under this political nod military occupation for almost 200 years at the time of Jesus. Caesar Augustus is the emperor mentioned in Luke when Jesus was born. Augustus died in 14 ad and was succeeded by his

son Tiberius. This emperor is also named in some gospels. Tiberius died in 37 AD.

Luke 3:1 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene—² during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³ He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

- his ministry started here ...preaching recognize you are a sinner
prepare yourself for Salvation/healing

John and Jesus grew up not only under an oppressive government but also an oppressive faith.

How was their faith become oppressive? Well With little political influence the Jew leaders turned their attention to their faith and their power to exercise it over the people.... Holding to its traditions while adding more and more addendums...add ons

- Every devout Israelite devoted their life to observe the their religious traditions and practices faithfully. It was their identity and duty.
- These practices concerned every detail of public and private life and worship.
- The whole existence of a Jew often became a mechanical attempt to please God . often missing the spirit of compassion behind the law..

And God was silent for 400 years to all this corruption.. ... no prophets, no miracles, no prophecies... nada...except his last words to the people recorded in the O.T. book of Malachi...

Malachi 4: ⁴ “Remember to obey the Law of Moses, my servant—all the decrees and regulations that I gave him on Mount Sinai for all Israel.

- when God is silent always go back to the last word of the Lord you heard

- Remember to keep my law...
- This verse speaks to the Israelites... to remember to obey the law of Moses...the commandments as they wait for the Lord to come....for the Lord is coming to judge this...
- And this will be the clue of the coming of the Messiah
- And this will be the clue of the coming of the Messiah

Mal 4:5 “Look, I am sending you the prophet Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the LORD arrives. ⁶ His preaching will turn the hearts of fathers to their children, and the hearts of children to their fathers. Otherwise I will come and strike the land with a curse.”

- **Who is Elijah...** Elijah was a prophet sent by God to the Northern Kingdom of Israel at a time when Israel had largely forsaken God and turned to the worship of idols, under the influence of Israel's king at that time, Ahab ([1 Kings 16:30](#)) who committed more evil than any of the kings of Israel before him), in concert with his pagan wife Jezebel.
- Idol worship during his reign was so prevalent that there were only 7,000 people in the entire kingdom of Israel who had not bowed down in worship to Ba'al (the false god whom Jezebel served)([1 Kings 19:18](#)).
- Elijah's prophetic mission was to bring Israel back to the worship of God. He repeatedly exhorted the people to repent of their sin and return to God, and warned them of the judgment from God that awaited them if they did not.

So God promised someone would do the same thing before the Messiah comes... an in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar

- Both John's and shortly after Jesus ministry starts the 400 years of silence ends...with John calling out in the wilderness, prepare the way for the Lord.. Elijah has come

NLT Luke 3:4 As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: “A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. ⁵ Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. ⁶ And all people will see God’s salvation.’” 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? 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.

- **Large crowds came to witness John as he baptized. Some were baptized; others were not.**
- **Admit you are a sinner in need of a savior...only one group feels they are above that...the Religious leaders.....Matthew clarifies who these people were**

NIV Matt 3:7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?”

- **The Pharisees and Sadducees, and teachers of the Law were... The religious leaders of John and Jesus time...and they did much to hurt the cause of God...by separating themselves from the ones they were called to invite and wounding the very ones they were called to heal...thereby misrepresenting the heart of God...**
- **Together the Pharisees and Teachers of the Law followed the law extremely carefully and were guardians of the religious establishment of Jesus’ time, they lived according to the strictest code of the Jewish religious system**
- **Together they comprised the wealthier ruling class. Over the centuries, these well-meaning groups had become corrupt, legalistic, and hypocritical and would eventually be responsible for crucifying the Son of God. They refused John’s baptism, as they did not consider themselves sinners like others...**

- In this context John called them a “brood of vipers” a “family of snakes.” The viper was seen to be an evil creature. Its venom was deadly, and it was also devious—the viper that bit Paul was hiding in the firewood (Acts 28:3).
- The Hebrew Scriptures, which the Pharisees knew well, associate the serpent with Satan in Genesis 3 And implies that they bore satanic qualities. It’s quite a bold denunciation—
- Jesus repeated to the Pharisees the term .

Matt 23: 33 Snakes! Sons of vipers! How will you escape the judgment of hell?

- **John and Jesus was not so much against what they did as much as what they withheld from doing... it is important to examine not only what we say...or what we do...but also what we withhold from saying and doing... not cussing but speak blessing.... They should have expressed their Authority in Compassion...**

MT 23: 23 “What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore the more important aspects of the law—justice, mercy, and faith. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things. 24 Blind guides! You strain your water so you won’t accidentally swallow a gnat, but you swallow a camel!

- **They give a tenth down to their spices but withhold justice, mercy and faith...They strain out the smallest unclean thing...yet swallow the largest unclean thing...They were wicked...fake**
- *So later Jesus would say to them about John*

Back to Luke...this is what will happen to them

Luke 3:9 The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

- **John stated in verse 9 that those who didn't bear good spiritual fruit would be thrown in the fire—not a good result!**

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.” 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.”

¹⁵ The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. 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^[c] the Holy Spirit and fire.

- **The context shows that the baptism with the Holy Spirit is a good result, but the baptism with fire is a punishment.**
- **John warned the hypocritical Pharisees and Sadducees of their fate if they refused to repent and the fate of those who did repent**
- **John used an agricultural analogy in to make his point!**

¹⁷ He is ready to separate the chaff from the wheat with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, gathering the wheat into his barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire.” ¹⁸ John used many such warnings as he announced the Good News to the people.

- **Jesus will not only “gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” Farmers, then as now, often burned the stubble/chaff of their fields to get the land ready for the next planting season.**
- **The fires would also chase any rodents out of the fields and as it approached near vipers' dens, the snakes would try to slither away**

from the flames, most often they could not escape being consumed by the flames.

- The religious leaders would have known the analogy of John and Jesus' words. They would have known that John and Jesus were saying they were under Judgment

But for those who repent of their sins and trusting in Jesus...he will baptize with the Holy Spirit! And who are those who will be these people?

They will be the ones whom the religious thought would never make it...The ones called by John as dead stones

Luke 3:8.....For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.

And the ones Jesus told the religious leaders who they were

NIV Matt 21:31 Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you." ³² For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.

"God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Romans 5:5).

Amen... we are just the people God has gifted to believe! are you a person gifted to believe?

end

