

SESSION THREE: What was John the Baptist's message? *Luke 3 v 1-22*

Full Route

1. "Repentance". Verses 10-14 tell us this means sharing what we have with others instead of keeping hold of it; not taking from others to serve ourselves; being content with what we have. These are all ways in which God asks people to live in his world: repentance is a Bible word meaning to "turn around", from living for ourselves to living for God.
2. "Sins". Yes, people today still need their sins forgiving. A useful definition of sins is that they all stem from an attitude of saying "Shove off God. I'm in charge. No to your reign". People do that today just as much as they did in John's time.
4. John pours water onto people (as he baptises them). Jesus will give the Holy Spirit and fire (in other words, God's presence. The Holy Spirit is God Himself, and fire in the Bible often is a sign of God's presence – have a look, for instance, at Acts 2 v 3-4). John is nowhere near as powerful as Jesus; and he isn't important enough (compared to Jesus) even to tie up his shoelaces for him!
6. Repent ie: turn back to God.
7. Herod's evil behaviour isn't completely clear from the verse. Herod, who was the local tetrarch, or king, had married his brother's wife, Herodias (see Mark 6 v 17-18). And John had told Herod that he shouldn't be living like that; he'd told Herod he needed to repent.
9. That Jesus had the Holy Spirit; and that Jesus was God's Son, who God loved and was delighted by. (This is a glimpse of who God is: he is one God, in three persons. We usually call those three persons, each different but each fully God, the Father (here just called "God"), the Son (Jesus), and the Spirit. The term people often use to describe God is "Trinity": three persons in one God.)
10. We should treat him as God himself (v 22). And we should want to find out how we can avoid being burned up like chaff (v 17), and how we can instead be filled with the Spirit (v 16) and gathered in by him (v 17).