

Lutheran Service Book 344

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

Sunday, December 15 at 8:00 & 10:45

Third Sunday in Advent – 2013

Wednesday Services at 11 & 7; Meals at 12 & 6

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Eph. 1:2 NAS) The weekly themes in Advent are following this pattern:

- Week 1: Jesus’ second coming; remain ready!
- Week 2: John the Baptist; repent!
- Week 3: Transition from John to Jesus; believe!
- Week 4: The birth of our Savior; rejoice!

So today, *on this third Sunday in Advent*, we focus on the words of this hymn: **On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry**. As we consider those words, notice their Biblical connections AND *the transition from John to Jesus*. Then, *by God’s grace*, let us be sorry for our sins and believe in Jesus as our Savior!

1. **Stanza 1:** Mt. 3:1-6; Is. 40:3; Ps. 34:18; Is. 52:7; Jn. 1:19-23
 - a. **On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s cry** – John was at his workplace, on the bank of the Jordan River; *that is where he called people to repent* – to see the differences between *God’s Holy Word* and *their unholy lives*; then to **+**be sorry and **+**trust in the coming Savior!
 - b. **Announces that the Lord is nigh** – That means He is imminent, close, approaching! *NOT a time to continue in sin, but a time to repent!*

- i. When a robber trips an alarm – *it’s time to run!*
 - ii. When a losing football team is given the two-minute warning – *it’s time to score!*
 - iii. When a person hears God’s call to repent – *it’s time to do just that!*
- c. **Awake and hearken** [*listen, give respectful attention*], [Why?] **for he brings, Glad tidings** [*good news*] **of the King of kings!** – We have all done wrong AND *we cannot make it right*; therefore, Jesus, *the King of kings*, has come to remove our wrongs and make us right in God’s sight!
2. **Stanza 2:** Jn. 1:23; 1 Jn. 1:9; Gal. 2:20
 - a. **Then cleansed be ev’ry life from sin; Make straight the way for God within** – A straight way is always in **full harmony with God’s Word**; *it’s never a combination of God’s way AND our way!* Consider these words of truth, blessing, and condemnation: “The LORD is near to all who call upon Him, To all who call upon Him in **truth**.¹⁹ He will **fulfill** the desire of those who fear Him; He will also **hear** their cry and will **save** them.²⁰ The LORD **keeps** all who love Him; But all the wicked, He will **destroy**.” (Ps. 145:18 NAS)
 - b. **And let us all our hearts prepare, For Christ to come and enter there.** // Our preparation is NOT to make ourselves acceptable to God; we cannot do that; *we are powerless, helpless!* These words contain the remedy we need: “...the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’” (Lk. 18:13 ESV)

3. **Stanza 3:** Ps. 48:3; Is. 40:7-10; Gen. 15:1; Zeph. 3:17
- We hail [welcome] Thee as our Savior, Lord, Our refuge and our great reward** – So WHEN, **by God's grace**, ♦we recognize our sins, ♦we are sorry for our sins, and ♦we know Jesus as our Savior; THEN we also desire to →welcome Him, →obey Him, and →rejoice in Him!
 - Without Thy grace we waste away, Like flow'rs that wither and decay.** // A flower, *so beautiful yet so temporary!* As a flower cannot stop itself from withering away, *so neither can we!* BUT we have God's grace; the favorable way in which He looks upon us – not because of what we have done, *but because of what He has done!* “**God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**” (Rom 5:8 NAS)
4. **Stanza 4:** Num. 6:24-26; Ps. 67:1; 2 Cor. 4:6; Mt. 17:2
- Lay on the sick Thy healing hand, And make the fallen strong to stand** – In today's gospel reading we heard Jesus make this declaration of what the Father had already done through Him (John 10:32): “**The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.**” (Mat 11:5-6 NIV)
 - Show us the glory of Thy face, Till beauty springs in ev'ry place.** // That is what Peter, James, and John saw when Jesus was transfigured before them – “**His face shone like the sun...**” (Mt. 17:2 NAS) Then, *when Jesus' returns*, we will also see His glory (Mk. 8:38)!

5. **Stanza 5:** Ps. 146:7
- All praise, eternal Son, to Thee, Whose advent [coming] sets Thy people free** – The Bible says that “**...Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.**” (Heb 9:28 ESV) So **now**, *through the Christ*, we are forgiven; **then**, *when He comes again*, we will be completely whole!
 - Whom with the Father we adore, And Holy Spirit evermore** – Those words describe the lives of those who trust in Jesus; so **we adore**—*thus praise the Holy Trinity*, **we love**—*thus obey God's Word*, and **we trust**—*thus are at peace (Is. 26:3)!*

Conclusion: For the conclusion, go to:

www.blc7500.com or

www.BethlehemLutheranChurchParma.com

Then click on “Sermons”

Then click on “Topics”

Then click on “Hymn”

Then go to this sermon: “We Have the Privilege of Being Modern-Day John the Baptists!”

Then read the conclusion for some good life application ideas.

And all God's people said: **Amen!**

For Much More: www.blc7500.com OR www.BethlehemLutheranChurchParma.com
Live God's Word; then share it with family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers!
 Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Rd., Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230