

Second Sunday in Advent – 2025

Saturday, 12/6 at 4:00 & Sunday, 12/7 at 9:00

Pastors are called to equip the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12). *Let's understand and work together!*

Repent!

Turn from Your Sins to God!

This is a MOST SERIOUS matter!

Text: Matthew 3:1-12 NAS 2020

Advent Wednesdays: Service 11, Meal 12 | Meal 6, Service 7

Introduction: Dear friends: Shortly before Jesus began His ministry, the Holy Spirit moved John the Baptizer to preach a ***most serious*** message. It might sound harsh, *but it is meant for our eternal benefit!* So, let us fully hear and fully respond!

1. **Why Should We Repent?** ¹ **Now in those days John the Baptist** [the son of Zechariah] **came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying,** ² **“Repent** [lit., *Be repenting*], **for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”**
 - a. Be Repenting: It's ongoing and all-encompassing!
 - b. The Kingdom: Lenski: It's “...where the King is and rules with his power and his grace...”
 - c. The Proper Response – Lenski: “...all men should long to receive this kingdom. [**How?** By turning] ...**from** sin [and] self-righteousness... **to** the King and his kingdom with its pardon, peace, and joy.”

2. **Who Was John the Baptizer?** ³ For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet when he said, “THE VOICE OF ONE CALLING OUT IN THE WILDERNESS, ‘PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT!’”
- a. 700 Years Before the Time of John: The Holy Spirit moved **Isaiah** to write about John’s ✦ coming and ✦ work – *to prepare the way for the Messiah!*
 - b. Therefore: John is **HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT!** If we are not viewing John that way, *let us repent!*
3. **Why Was John Very Simple?** ⁴ Now John himself had a garment of camel’s hair and a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey.
- a. Think About John’s Simplicity: One set of clothing and no need to go to the grocery store, *which left **much time for God and His word!***
 - b. In Comparison: Most today have SO MANY THINGS that they have ***no time for God and His word***☹. If that is true of us, *let us repent!*
4. **Why Were Many Confessing and Being Baptized?** ⁵ At that time Jerusalem was going out to him, and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan; ⁶ and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins.
- a. Many Went Out to See and Hear John: *It’s estimated 500,000 to 600,000 were living in Judea at that time.*
 - b. The Order: Lenski: John “**preached repentance, and then all who were moved to repentance confessed and were baptized...**” for the forgiveness of sins.¹

¹ See Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3; Acts 2:38.

5. **Why Did John Question the Jewish Leaders?**⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?”⁸ Therefore produce fruit consistent with repentance;⁹ and do not assume that you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father’; for I tell you that God is able, from these stones, to raise up children for Abraham.¹⁰ And the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; therefore, every tree that does not bear good fruit is being cut down and thrown into the fire.
- a. Before Adults Are Baptized: They must be ♦hearing, ♦repenting, and ♦confessing, *but the Pharisees and Sadducees were lacking, so they were refused!*
 - b. When Repentance Is Real: *It will show! As a healthy apple tree bears apples, so a repentant follower of Jesus will show forth the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).*
 - c. BLC: At least 70 of our 212 members – *as far as I know* – seem to be fruitless. Let us pray: Dear LORD, we pray for Your **powerful mercy** and **deep intervention** to ♦open closed minds, ♦enliven dead spirits, ♦enable sincere confession, ♦grant assurance of forgiveness, and ♦produce proper fruit!
6. **How Was John Different than Jesus?**¹¹ “As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
- a. John: The Holy Spirit worked through John’s baptism to gift forgiveness to those who were repenting and

confessing. John also pointed ahead to Jesus' **greatness** and **work**!

- b. Jesus: On the Day of Pentecost, *50 days after He was raised from the dead*, He ♦received the Holy Spirit from His Father and ♦poured the Spirit out on all believers. Prior to Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was **with** the believers but on Pentecost, He came to dwell **inside** the believers ([John 14:17](#); [Acts 2:39](#)).

7. **What Will Jesus Do When He Comes?**¹² **His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.** // Notice Jesus' posture: His winnowing fork is in His hand, so *He is ready to begin His gathering and burning at any moment!*

- a. Wheat: For those who continue in repenting and believing, *Jesus will gladly gather*😊!
- b. Chaff: For all the rest, *Jesus will burn with a fire that cannot be put out*😞!

Let Us Pray: Dear LORD, we know Your word is true, so we know **GREAT gladness** and **GREAT sadness** are coming. **The sadness is of the GREATEST SIGNIFICANCE**, yet so many are unaware. LORD, *please help THE MANY WHO ARE LOST!*