

012 John Knocks Peoples Props

by David Servant

John the Baptist's message to the Pharisees and Sadducees emphasizes the importance of repentance, bearing fruit, and not relying on false beliefs or pedigree for salvation.

Duration: 7:43

Scripture: Matthew 3:7-9, Matthew 3:11, Matthew 7:6, John 8:32, Romans 2:4, Romans 6:1-2, Galatians 6:7, 2 Timothy 4:2

Topics: "True Repentance", "Gospel Preaching"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of preaching the true gospel message without compromise, focusing on repentance, bearing fruit in keeping with repentance, and not relying on false beliefs or lineage for salvation. John the Baptist fearlessly addressed the Pharisees and Sadducees, urging them to repent and warning them of the wrath to come, highlighting the need for genuine transformation and not just outward actions. The message challenges preachers to confront deceptive beliefs and guide their audience to a true understanding of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Transcript

Okay, lovely, let's jump back into Matthew chapter 3 and beginning again in verse number 7, when John the Baptist saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, you brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? May I point out several things. One is that John the Baptist was not afraid in his presentation of the gospel as a man of God, highly esteemed by Jesus, who said of John the Baptist, of those born of women, nobody greater than John the Baptist, okay? John was not afraid, not the least bit afraid or squeamish to talk about the wrath of God. You say, well, I don't talk about that because that's an unpopular subject.

The wrath of God is only an unpopular subject to proud people who refuse to repent. Shake the dust off your feet and go to the next person. Don't cast your pearls before swine.

Here's the trouble. We've been preaching the gospel and sometimes people don't receive the gospel, so we change the message to accommodate them. So instead of preaching repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand and warning people to flee from the wrath to come, we said, well, you're not receiving that, so how about this? God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.

Just accept Jesus as your personal savior. We're not going to mention anything about being Lord or repentance because that's a turn off and oh my goodness, people just don't like that message. You know

how people are.

We need to, no, you don't adjust the message. You do what Christ said. Preach the message that he gave us.

Preach the gospel just like Jesus, just like John the Baptist. If they don't receive you, you've done your job. Shake the dust off your feet and go somewhere else where they might be listening to you.

And then secondly, you can be certain that if the Pharisees had been showing any indication that they were sincere, rather than just going through the motions, doing what all the crowds are doing just to kind of go along with them, John would have never treated them so harshly. He would have never called them a brood of vipers, but he's trying to shake them, wake them up. And also, you know, I think it bears pointing out that John had to be a holy man himself.

Holy people can't be, or rather unholy people, hypocrites, can't be pointing their finger at other people and saying, you brood of vipers. You know, because people just point right back at him and say, who are you to be calling us a brood of vipers, you prosperity preacher, living in self-indulgence, claiming that you're a follower of Christ who commanded us not to lay up our treasures on this earth, but to lay them up. You see, you can't, I think that's probably one reason why the gospel has changed.

Those who are supposedly the ministers of the gospel know they have no right to call people to repentance because the first thing they have to do is call themselves to repentance and they themselves are not willing to repent of their greed and their covetousness. This might be a little bit controversial, but you can't argue, it's got to be right. And so he says to them in verse number eight, therefore bear fruit in keeping with your repentance.

So, you know, some modern theologians are teaching that you can repent and your life not change. You can become a Christian and there'd be no difference. You'd just be a carnal Christian, something they've invented by extracting a phrase out of scripture.

A carnal Christian who is indistinguishable from the world. This is utter nonsense, okay? John said, don't fool yourself. You know, the wrath of God is coming upon you unless you truly repent, unless we see some fruit in keeping with your repentance.

Does that mean that repentant people are instantly perfect people? Oh, no, no, no. They don't know of everything that they need to repent of. The Christian life is an ongoing repentance as we discover and learn more and more of what God's will is.

You know, Jesus said, if you're truly my disciples, you'll abide in my word, you'll know the truth, the truth will set you free. So it's a progressive thing called sanctification, but you've got to start somewhere repenting and John is saying, let's see some fruit if you say your repentance. And then he knocks out another prop among them because just because you're baptized, just because you came out with the crowd, hung out with the other repenters, doesn't mean that you're okay.

And there's another prop in verse number eight, do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, we have Abraham for our father, for I say to you that from these stones, God is able to raise up children to Abraham. And so, you know, people are always looking for their pedigree or their lineage, you know, my grandfather was a preacher, a Southern Baptist preacher, you know, and my daddy was a deacon and trying to ride on the coattails of somebody else into heaven. And the Jews were, you know, this was a

common misconception where we're God's chosen people.

We are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the promises belong to us. He gave us this holy covenant and the holy commandments and so we're special. Everyone else is excluded from salvation.

God alone, you know, God loves us alone, very, very high and elevated view of themselves. And it really was a detriment to salvation. When you think you have a relationship with God because by virtue of something that's illegitimate, you're deceived and you're not going to get a relationship with God because you think you've got it.

This is the greatest, this is, you know, deceived people, they don't know they're deceived or they wouldn't be deceived. So when you think you've got something you haven't got, you're not trying to get it because you think you got it. And so this is a skillful preaching by John the Baptist.

He's looking for the props, the false beliefs, the lies that people have bought into and he's knocking out those things that support them to try to make them unsteady, to try to get them to think, to see themselves as God sees them. Now isn't that a revelation? And so if you're a preacher or if you know a preacher, you know, I wouldn't be listening to any preachers who don't understand these most fundamental facts. Amen.

Look at your audience. What are they trusting in other than the Lord Jesus Christ? What's the basis of the fact that they think they're going to heaven? Because you ask most people, you know, are you going to go to heaven? You think you're a good person? Oh yeah, I'm basically a good person. Yeah.

Yeah, I think I'll go to heaven. And they're completely deceived because they have no concept of how holy God is or what sinners they are. All right.

Well, I'd like to talk about this more and there's much more to say, and I will say a whole lot more when we get together again. Okay. So think about these things until that time and, you know, let's stay together.

We're going to spend weeks and months and probably years together going through the entire New Testament. It's going to be an absolutely glorious journey that only gets better. We've only, only just begun.

Okay. God bless you. I'll see you next time.

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