

Luke 3

1-15-06

“The Road That John Built!”

1. Intro:

- 1.1. **Story:** An ancient poet told the **painters** of Greece in a period of great decadence in art to write under their paintings the names of the animals they had painted. He told them to write "horse," "ox", & "cow" underneath, **implying that** without the name it was impossible for viewers to tell one shape or color from another.
 - 1.1.1. And so, Christianity is vital when it is **seen**, not when it's just **talked about!**
- 1.2. **Outline:** The Road that John Built; Farmer John; John the Counselor; Humble John; Martyr John; John the Baptizer; & Genealogy of Jesus.

2. THE ROAD THAT JOHN BUILT! (1-22)

- 2.1. **THE ROAD THAT JOHN BUILT!** (1-6)
- 2.2. Luke, the **careful historian**, ties the opening events of Jesus' ministry to contemporary history.
- 2.3. (1,2a) Jesus is born, grown, about to come on the scene as an adult, *Why didn't God use any of the **leaders** of the day to announce Him?*
 - 2.3.1. God bypasses the **Political leaders** of the day(1); God bypasses the **Spiritual leaders** of the day(2a) & gave His Word to an unfamiliar Jewish Prophet in the wilderness.¹
 - 2.3.2. **Annas** was high priest from 6-15ad; deposed by Roman authority; his son-in-law **Caiaphas** was placed in the position 18-36ad.
 - 2.3.2.1. The Jews still recognized **Annas** as the rightful High Priest.
- 2.4. (2b) John the Baptist is back on the scene from **ch.1:80**.
 - 2.4.1. And we find him in the **hottest & deepest** chasm in the world!
- 2.5. (3) **John's baptism** looked forward to the coming of the Savior(also 16).
 - 2.5.1. **Christian Baptism looks back** in identification w/Christ's death, burial, & res(Rom.6:1-6).
 - 2.5.2. Acts 19:3,4 “Into what then were you baptized?” So they said, “Into **John's baptism.**” Then Paul said, “John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should **believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.**”
 - 2.5.3. Jews baptized Gentile proselytes, but they didn't baptize **Jews** [www]

¹ Warren Wiersbe; Outlines on the NT.

- 2.5.4. **Repentance** - (Lit. "a change of mind") but "refers more broadly to the human involvement in the experience of conversion."²
 2.5.4.1. It's a change of course, as a ship nearing a rock! Griffith Thomas
- 2.6. (4-6) John was a **prophet** who was the subject of **prophecy**!
- 2.7. When a king traveled the desert, workman preceded him to clear debris & smooth out the roads to make his trip easier.
 2.7.1. Messiah's road was smooth because through John a large # of people were ready to receive Jesus' message (see 1:17).
- 2.8. **FARMER JOHN!** (7-9)
- 2.9. I used to love going to grandma's house as a kid. We'd pass **Farmer John's** in L.A. & see the murals of the pigs on the slaughter house.
 2.9.1. This has nothing to do with farming animals, but it does with farming **crops**. [we'll talk about **bearing fruit**, chopping down fruitless trees w/an **ax**, & **snakes** fleeing from burning fields]
- 2.10. (7) **Brood of Vipers** – Offspring of vipers; baby snakes.
 2.10.1. **i.e.** "If Satan is the papa snake/serpent then they are his offspring".
- 2.11. **What would John use for the religious class of today? (Vipers still?)**
 2.11.1. Maybe, "you **generation of Butterflies!**"
 2.11.2. Maybe, "you **Rookery of Penguins?**" **Why Penguins?** Well, I was picturing them all dressed up; all look exactly alike; all waddling together; all hanging out together, detached from their world, content on their own ice-cube church!
- 2.12. **Who warned you to flee the wrath to come? –**
 2.12.1. There is a **wrath** to come, & the only way to **prepare for judgment** is to **turn** from sin & **trust** the Savior, & be **transformed!**
- 2.13. (8) **As a Farmer, John was a Fruit Inspector!**
 2.13.1. The **Cause** of repentance? (someone warning them)
 The **Nature** of repentance? (real fruit, a changed life)
 The **Outcome** of repentance?(remission of sins; escape wrath)
- 2.14. **Fruits worthy of repentance?** – W/o a change of heart, baptism would have been a farce.
 2.14.1. It was meaningful only as a sign of **genuine** repentance.
 2.14.2. **Repentance, not baptism, is what brings forgiveness!**
 2.14.3. John taught **one's life** proves whether or not he has truly repented! (cf. the book of James!)³
 2.14.3.1. Not only "**Turned around**"(3), but "**Transformed**"!

² Shepherds Notes; pg.14

³ Knowledge Bible Commentary.

- 2.15. **We have Abraham as our father** – John’s message was that God was not concerned w/**the root**(or their “*roots*” in Abraham), but w/**moral fruit** in each person’s life.
- 2.15.1. See, as far as the **root** goes, the **ax** is about to be put to that, & then **relationship w/God** will be of faith entirely...a faith that produces **fruit of righteousness**.⁴
- 2.15.2. God takes the Ax to your **denominational affiliation** & asks, “is this what you’re trusting in?”
- 2.15.3. God takes the Ax to the **church you grew up in** & asks, “is this what you’re trusting in?”
- 2.16. **(9) John gets to the Root of things! (Sin)**
- 2.16.1. He seems to bury the hatchet...*right in their conscience!*
- 2.16.2. He calls them to **repentance** in trade for **remission/forgiveness!**
- 2.17. There is a big **contrast** between the people of **vs.7-9** & those of **vs.10-14**.
- 2.17.1. The **former group** relied on their ancestry & didn’t repent.
- 2.17.2. The **latter group** earnestly heeded John’s call for repentance.
- 2.18. **JOHN THE COUNSELOR!** (10-14)
- 2.19. He takes the time to **counsel them** & prepare them for baptism & their new life of faith.
- 2.20. **The people** – **Be Generous!** And share what you have.
- 2.21. **The Tax Collectors** – **Be Honest!**
- 2.21.1. Notorious for their dishonesty in collecting more than required & pocketing it for themselves.
2.21.1.1. **Zaccheus example!** (19:8)
- 2.22. **The Soldiers** - **Be Just!** Be content. (**225 Denari a year**)
- 2.22.1. Known & hated for always trying to get more \$ by extorting bribes & blaming others for it.
- 2.22.2. **Intimidate** = (LKGNT) “to shake violently, to shake down”.
- 2.22.3. Possible they were **Jewish soldiers** belonging to the temple guard **or** the court of Herod?_{www}
- 2.22.4. But we do know **Roman soldiers** believed also [*i.e. the Centurion*].
- 2.23. Griffith Thomas likened each of these back to the prophecy.
- 2.23.1. **Valley...filled** – repentant souls receiving pardon.
- 2.23.2. **Mountain & Hill...brought low** – Pharisees & Sadducees rebuked for highhandedness & pride.
- 2.23.3. **Crooked...made straight** – publicans convicted of dishonesty.
- 2.23.4. **Rough ways...smooth** – soldiers often rude & violent.

⁴ Bible Readers Companion.

- 2.24. **Note:** John didn't condemn the Tax collectors & soldiers professions.
- 2.24.1. He just said do your jobs honestly & don't hurt people!
- 2.24.2. They could remain in their vocation & serve God!⁵
- 2.24.3. **Not...** "you have to be just like me!"
- 2.24.3.1. **Not...** Now get out there & live in the desert!
- 2.24.3.2. **Not...** Go find you some locust & become insect-atarians!
- 2.24.3.3. **Not...** Now go dress like me, itchy camel hair IS the fashion!
- 2.24.4. **Nope!** Not **live** like me; Not **eat** like me, Not **dress** like me!
- 2.24.4.1. We are to serve Christ right where we live, just how we eat, & whatever clothes are our favorite (*modesty obviously*).
- 2.24.5. In spite of John's asceticism, he was still mindful of the **life & times around him!**
- 2.25. So here were 3 examples of changes in these lives when there was true repentance.
- 2.25.1. Look at your own life before & after Christ.
- 2.25.2. **Q:** Do you remember what God changed in you 1st?
- 2.25.3. **Q:** Do you remember what you sought to change 1st?
- 2.25.4. **Q:** Are you still changing? Still bearing fruit unto Him?
- 2.25.5. **Q:** What difference has **Jesus' life** made to your life?
- 2.26. **JOHN MUST DECREASE!** (15-18)
- 2.27. He didn't come to talk about himself but to bear witness to the Son of God.
- 2.28. (15) **Q:** Has anyone ever confused you with Jesus???
- 2.28.1. Me neither...What a compliment!
- 2.28.2. Honor those who point you to Jesus, not to themselves!
- 2.29. (16) **Baptize with Holy Spirit**(at Pentecost) -
- 2.30. **Baptize with Fire**(Judgment) – (see 9,17)
- 2.30.1. John pictures Jesus w/a **winnowing fan** in his hand, separating the wheat from the chaff.
- 2.30.1.1. Ps.1:4 "The ungodly **are** not so, But **are** like the **chaff** which the wind drives away."
- 2.31. In that day 1 of the duties as a slave was to **remove his master's shoes**.
- 2.31.1. Thus, John saw himself as a slave(or even less) in comparison to the Messiah.
- 2.32. He says he's **coming!!!** – And then he comes in vs.21.

⁵ Ibid.

- 2.33. **MARTYR JOHN!** (19,20)
- 2.34. Matthew & Mark give the full account of his arrest & martyrdom.
- 2.35. John wouldn't compromise his message & spare his life; he was a **faithful witness w/fearless honesty!**
- 2.35.1. When John directed his preaching at Herod, the result was imprisonment, & finally death.
- 2.36. Interesting when he asks his disciples go see if He's the One?
- 2.36.1. The answer comes back, "it's Him!"...the One who can do anything! But He's not going to let you out! (Lk.7:18-23)
- 2.37. **JOHN THE BAPTIZER!** (21,22)
- 2.38. John baptized Jesus in order to **present Him** to the people, not because he was a repentant sinner.
- 2.38.1. And he does it "when all the people were being baptized", again to **identify w/those** who he had come to serve & save.
- 2.38.2. He stands in the water & identifies Himself **w/the people & w/the stand of righteousness** that his act signifies!
- 2.39. Alfred Plummer said about John, "*The whole man was a sermon!*"

3. **THE ROAD THAT GOD BUILT! (23-38)**

- 3.1. **JESUS' FAMILY TREE!** (23-38)
- 3.2. About 30 – rounded off # here.
- 3.2.1. A person's age frequently was given in multiples of 5 (LKGNT).
- 3.2.2. Interesting that in Numb 4:47 OT priests must reach 30 before they could serve!
- 3.3. 77 ancestors.
- 3.4. **Matthew's** genealogy – is that of Joseph's, tracing His legal right to the throne.
- 3.5. **Luke's** genealogy - is that of Mary's, tracing Jesus' natural/physical rights to the throne.
- 3.5.1. **Matthew**(writing to the Jews) traces only back to **Abraham**.
- 3.5.2. **Luke**(writing to the Gentiles) takes us all the way back to **Adam**.
- 3.5.2.1. Jesus tie, not only to Israel but to ALL humanity!

- 3.6. **End:** Not all the power of **Rome**, nor today's **modern technologies**, have been able to satisfy the basic need all people share...to find life's meaning.
- 3.6.1. **Not** even Rome's beloved **Pax Romana** (the long period of peace and stability that existed under the Roman Empire, especially in the 2nd century ad) **Nor**, the **World Wide Web**, has been able to break the **bondage of sin** that constantly expresses itself in both **individual & social life**.
- 3.6.2. But **This Baby** grown to be **a Man** is about to say, "**I have come that you may have life, & have it to the full!**" (Jn.10:10)
- 3.6.3. In **Jesus**, God acted decisively to bring new life to **individuals & transformation to human cultures**.
- 3.6.4. **Q: What do you associate with a full life?**
- 3.6.4.1. To every person who lives by **habit**, w/o **direction**, w/o **meaning**, or w/o **real Hope** – Jesus' life offers fresh newness, a life **turned around, & transformed** by the power of God!
- 3.6.5. One of the **greatest sins** is the sin of "*running your own life*".
- 3.6.5.1. It is the opposite of **Trusting/Allowing God to run your life**.
- 3.6.5.2. **Submit your life totally into His care this morning!**
- 3.6.5.3. Give God rule of your life, **present & future!**
- 3.7. **Christianity is vital when it is seen, not when it's just talked about!**