

Gains and Losses In Following Jesus

This week – John The Baptist announces the coming of The Lord Jesus Christ.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness, “Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.”
Mark 1v3.

Bible Readings for this week:

(Choose a regular time each day to read the Bible and pray whether it be when you first wake up or just before you go to sleep)

Day	Bible Reading	Tick When Read
Sunday	Mark 1 v1-15 (Repent and believe the Gospel)	
Monday	Luke 3 v10-22 (‘Thou art My Beloved Son’)	
Tuesday	John 3 v22-36 (Christ must increase, I must decrease)	
Wednesday	Isaiah 40 v1-17 (John The Baptist promised v3)	
Thursday	Isaiah 40 v18-31 (The Lord God – All Powerful)	
Friday	Luke 1 v5-25 (A son promised to Zacharias & Elizabeth)	
Saturday	Luke 1 v57-80 (The Prophet of The Highest v76)	

Important Thought for us Today: The Biblical Teaching on Baptism.

Conversion is the inward work of God The Holy Spirit, which gives a new heart and faith in Jesus Christ. Baptism is the outward act that declares that this inward spiritual experience has happened in a person’s heart. Only those who have a clear testimony of faith in Jesus Christ and are living in obedience to Him, should obey His command to be baptised (therefore excluding babies and the very young, who cannot yet repent and believe.)

Being totally immersed into water gives the graphic picture of the Saviour dying and rising again to save. Baptism, in and of itself, has no saving power.

Baptism publicly proclaims to all who see the person’s obedience, forgiveness of sin, their new life, and personal identification with Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and Lord. It both helps assure them of their faith in Christ as their Saviour and places the glory of the Gospel and evangelism at the forefront of the church’s work.

Baptism also helps makes clear who should be accepted into Church Membership.

Hymn 379 - expressing confession of sin and repentance towards God:

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| 1. Lord, I confess to Thee
Sadly my sin;
All I have done and said,
All I have been.
Purge Thou my sin away,
Wash Thou my soul this day,
Lord, make me clean. | 2. Faithful and kind art Thou.
Forgiving all;
Low at Thy pierced feet,
Saviour, I fall.
O, let the cleansing blood,
Blood of the Lamb of God,
Wash o’er my soul! | 3. All is then peace and light
This soul within:
Thus shall I walk with Thee,
Saviour unseen;
Leaning on Thee, my God,
Guided along the road,
Nothing between. |
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EDT Bible/College Class Take Home Sheet

This sheet is given to remind you of the lesson and to encourage you to read your Bible.

John The Baptist Points The Way To The Saviour.

▪ **Careful Preparation for a Very Important Visitor.**

- **An Important visitor coming?** Every effort is put into the preparation to make sure all is clean and tidy and all who need to know are ready to welcome them.
- **When a Ruler travelled years ago** servants went ahead preparing the welcome, making sure the road was smooth and straight – no potholes or sharp corners.
- **John the Baptist was the one who prepared the way for the world’s greatest visitor, the promised Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ?** He was promised and sent by God (Isaiah 40, Luke 1) to prepare people for the start of His ministry. **‘Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight’.** Mark 1v3.

▪ **Many Heard John’s Message and Prepared for The Saviour.**

- **They: -**
 - **Repented.** Acknowledging their sin of pride, dishonesty, selfishness, hypocrisy.
 - **Were Baptised.** Publicly showing their repentance towards God.
 - **Looked for The Saviour.** The One Who would die on Calvary to save them.

▪ **The Lord Jesus Humbly Allowed Himself to be Baptised by John.**

- **Showing His: -**
 - **Obedience.** Jesus was willing to obey every law and commandment of God.
 - **Kindness.** He, Who knew no sin and did not need to repent, was baptised along with others who, being guilty sinners, needed **His** forgiveness.
 - **Divinity.** John did not realise Who Jesus was until He, the promised Messiah, came up out of the water and he heard the Voice from Heaven saying, **“Thou art My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased”.** (Mark 1v11, John 1v29-34)
 - **Readiness to Die at Calvary.** The Lord’s love for lost sinners was so great that He became obedient, even to the death of the Cross. **Philippians 2v8.**

Jesus Christ was nailed to the cross between two thieves, jeered at by the crowds, and bearing the shame of all His People’s sins, the King of Glory suffered in agony – all because He loved us so.

▪ **Are we prepared to meet the Lord Jesus Christ?**

The Lord will return again soon to judge each one of us. If we are judged on our own merit, we will be found full of sin and sent away from God’s presence for eternity. We must recognise our sinfulness with shame and sorrow. We must look to the Saviour Who gave Himself on Calvary that we may be washed clean of sin’s guilt and be pardoned. At peace and reconciled to God.

“But (The Lord) made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.” Philippians 2v8-10