

**RCMI L-Path Teaching**  
**June 4, 2023**

**TITLE: BREAKING THE STATUS QUO**

TEXT: Matthew 3:1-6

Big Idea: John the Baptist generated conflict wherever he went because his message upset the status quo. He was an ordinary man but he made an extraordinary move to advance the Kingdom of God.

Introduction:

- In every one of the gospel accounts of the life of Jesus Christ, John the Baptist always precedes Jesus. This is because John the Baptist plays a crucial role in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

**I. THE MAN: John The Baptist [vv. 1,4]**

**A. Profile of the man.**

- After Malachi, the last Old Testament writer, there are 400 years of silence, when God did not speak through a prophet...until that silence was broken as there was a need for a messenger to proclaim the King was coming.
- God chose a relatively obscure man who was living in the wilderness, but whose heart was true towards God.
- God doesn't need the most powerful people in the world, He called average people, John the Baptist, lowly fishermen, a sinful tax collector, a murderous Pharisee, and so forth... Today, he is calling ordinary people as well.

**B. Purpose of the man.**

- John's days were destined by the Lord. He was born with a specific purpose and timing in history.
- God knew exactly when John needed to be born, though it didn't make sense to his parents at the time, He knew that John needed to be the forerunner of Christ at this specific time in history.
- John grew up strong in spirit. He answered God's call and lived with clear direction.
- God has a specific calling and purpose for our lives today.

**II. THE MESSAGE: Repent**

- John didn't call people to be sorry but to change their ways. They were to have a change of mind, a change of attitude that translates to a change of action, a changed life. He preached repentance.
- **Repent** [Gk.' Metanoēō ' ] - to change one's mind or purpose. Repentance is not a feeling of sorrow, though you can feel sorrow as you repent, but more than that, repentance is a call to action.
- The full biblical definition of repentance is 'a change of mind that results in a change of action.'
- Turning from sin is a part of repentance, but it's much deeper...It's also turning from unbelief...and turning to faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior.

### III. THE MISSION: Forerunner [v.3]

#### A. The Voice

- Voice in Hebrew means 'aloud', noise, thunder - so the Message bible says, "Thunder in the desert"! Jesus was the Word, John the voice to declare the Word.
- Remember if somebody is coming ahead of the king, he's announcing the king, he is the forerunner. This is what the role is. It says when a king would visit a town, his servants would go before him to announce his visit.
- John was paving the path for the Messiah. Clear the Path. Trail Blaze. So, it wasn't just about announcing, it was physically preparing the way for the king

#### B. Wilderness

- Isaiah chose this metaphor to describe Israel's special condition of desolate/dry/barren
- These words demand *a spiritual renewal* in preparation for Messiah's advent.

#### C. Prepare the way for the Lord

- John continued on in his mission. He chose obedience to God's call.
- He said "yes" to God's mission. Even when it probably was not easy. Even when he could have chosen his own way. He didn't allow his own desires to interfere with what he knew he was there to do.

### IV. THE MINISTRY: Baptism of Repentance [vv.5-6]

- John's Baptism was not made up but was from heaven.
- John's Baptism was **2-fold**:
  - It **prepared** the Nation for Christ. *Matthew.3:6 he brought them to confess their sins.*
  - It **Presented** Christ to the Nation. *John1:31 I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that **He** might be revealed to Israel.*

#### A. John the Baptist was a strong and humble leader.

- He didn't live for the opinions of others but lived with compassion to see others brought to repentance towards Christ.

#### B. John the Baptist was a devoted servant of God.

- He lived solely to point others to Christ, and he was obedient to God's purposes.
- His mission was only to give direction to our Savior.

### CHALLENGE:

- John the Baptist generated conflict because his message upset the status quo. He was an ordinary man but he made an extraordinary move to advance the Kingdom of God.
- John's life is an example to us of the seriousness with which we are to approach the Christian life and our call to ministry, whatever that may be.

### DISCUSSION

1. What is your mission from God? Have you said 'yes' to it? Share.
2. How are you breaking the status quo around you? Explain.