

↳ **Luke 3:1-3**; We were introduced briefly last time to John the Baptizer; we are going to be more formally introduced to him this morning. John was an unusual person, no wine, no haircut, living like a Wildman; started his prophetic ministry in utero! Born with great promise, **Luke 1:15c**. Short lived, but very powerful ministry! **Mark 1:5** "all" is a lot of people! What did he do to get this kind of following?, verse 3.

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## 1. The Forgiveness of Sins.

- ✓ Mankind's single greatest problem is sin, and the single message of the gospel is that of forgiveness. God is willing to forgive our sins. Mankind's second greatest problem is to agree with God about his condition and his need for forgiveness.
  - ✓ The Jews' entire religious existence revolved around the issue of sin and being forgiven for it. Their sacrificial system reminded them constantly that they were sinners in need of forgiveness. But you can't be forgiven and thus, saved, until you agree with God about your condition. **Repentance**, repentance was the bulk of John's preaching.
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## 2. Repentance

- ✓ Repentance stood between them and forgiveness; that is why repentance was the theme of all the prophets; it was the theme of Jesus preaching. **Matthew 4:17; Luke 5:32; Luke 13:3 or Luke 13:5.**
  - ✓ Repentance stood between them and forgiveness; repentance stands between us and forgiveness. Repentance is a repudiation of a person's old life and calling it what God calls it.
  - ✓ It is also the realization that you cannot change your situation one iota and that your only hope is that God will be gracious and merciful to you.
  - ✓ Repentance is not a human work where you earn salvation; it is not a pre-salvation attempt to set your life right. It's not anything you do to change your condition; instead, repentance is a correct assessment of your condition. It is seeing your true condition, **which is hopeless!**
  - ✓ This is what John came preaching; this is what Jesus came preaching. Repent, because it stands between you and salvation.
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## 3. Baptism of Repentance

- ✓ This was the real test of sincerity; this was something no prophet before him had ever done. Baptism had never been tied to repentance; that was something the Jews required of a Gentile convert. So, John's call was repentance, but a repentance that required them to say that their lives were no better than the Gentiles, that they were all the same sinners!

**Baptism both then and now doesn't produce anything (i.e.. Salvation) but does say something.**

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