

**Gospel of Matthew 3 “Repent”**  
**Matthew 3:1-11**  
**January 30, 2022**

**Matthew 3:1-12**

In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, **2** “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”<sup>[a]</sup> **3** For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said,

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

‘Prepare<sup>[b]</sup> the way of the Lord;  
make his paths straight.’”

**4** Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. **5** Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, **6** and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

**7** But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?”

**8** Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. **9** And do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. **10** Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

**11** “I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. **12** His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

Why John?

Why John’s message of repentance?

How do we make sure we are also living a life of repentance?

**Malachi 4:5-6**

**5** “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. **6** And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.”

John is the transition from the old to the new.

Repentance is a turning of the direction of our life and the affections of our heart.

Repentance is the doorway into what’s next.

Those who become aware of their sin become more receptive of a Savior.

Baptism was the outward authorized expression of drowning of sin and readying for God.

Matthew 3:9-10

**9** And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. **10** Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

Being born into God's family through Jesus is what mattered most.

Matthew 3:11-12

**11** "I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. **12** His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

One of the biggest hindrances to repentance is our neglect of the relational aspect of sinning.

2 Corinthians 7:10

**10** Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

Repentance is less about feeling bad over behavior and more about feeling awe and delight towards God.

### **Grow Group Discussion Questions**

- What did God say to you during our Sunday gathering?
- Have you ever been with an important person for dinner? Who? What would you do if that person were invited to your home?
- John the Baptist calls God's people out into the wilderness to get focused on God. Have you ever had a "wilderness" experience? Why is the wilderness so important to our faith?
- The message of repentance is not an easy message to hear. Why is sorrow over sin an important experience? How does the awareness of sin get us ready for grace?
- Martin Luther said that the whole of the Christian life is repentance. What do you think he means?
- How did John's announce of "the kingdom of heaven is near" create an urgency in his listeners? Do you think that urgency still exists? What is the level of urgency do you live with? Why?