

## Laying The Axe To The Root

**Matthew 3:1-12** In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to [our] father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and [with] fire: Whose fan [is] in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

THEY DID NOT KNOW THAT THEY WERE STANDING IN THE DOORWAY OF PROPHECY!

( root and offspring of David was near... the Messiah! )

God always sends a preacher to stir the pot: and Announce whats happening!

There are 3 kinds of people:

1. Those that Make things happen
2. Those that Watch things happen
3. Those that Wonder what happened

NOW THERE IS NO DOUBT ---> JOHN WAS ONE THAT MADE THINGS HAPPEN!

HIS MESSAGE WAS SIMPLE: Repent, the Kingdom is at hand! --(the church)

Repent, Because God is ready to do a new thing!

WE SHOULD BE HONORED TO BE PREACHED TO : ( God is sharing his plan )

wants us to participate

**John 15:15** Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

**I Corinthians 1:21** For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

FOOLISHNESS OF PREACHING ---- NOT FOOLISH PREACHING

( the absurdity, the simplicity of it )

It's absurd to take an imperfect human to preach a perfect Gospel to an imperfect world! --- Absurd! Silly!

NEVERTHELESS...

> **1:18** For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

Like John's day... so it is with ours: "WE TRY TO DISCREDIT PREACHING"

>>> **3:4** And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

WE PAINT HIM AS SOME WILD EYED, UNEDUCATED, HICK, JACK LEG LUNATIC!

1. Camel's Hair (type of clothing)

2. Leather Mantle

3. Locust = (some say a tree) Nevertheless, people ate locust (protein)

(-- **SYMBOLIC:** = Locust was type of judgment | Honey was a type of Canaan

JUDGMENT IS OVER... GRACE IS ON ITS WAY!

POINT: John was not some wild eyed nut!

-----> He was an articulate prophet of God filled with the H.G. from his mother's womb who shook his world and prepared it for Jesus Christ!

MULTITUDES WERE MOVED AT HIS PREACHING... AND WERE BAPTIZED!  
(still works)

He challenged the Religious Order:

>> **3:8-9** Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to [our] father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

**3:10** And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

each tree has to have fruit

PENTECOSTAL PEDIGREE WILL NOT SHIELD YOU!

-- let's see some repentance --

JOHN'S MESSAGE: ///> The axe must be laid to the root! REPENTANCE!

\*\*\*\* The ROOT is where things spring from \*\*\*\*

**Luke 6:45** A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh. ---> **Our Root is our heart!**

**Romans 11:16** For if the firstfruit [be] holy, the lump [is] also [holy]: and if the root [be] holy, so [are] the branches.

P O I N T : REPENTANCE IS NOT PRUNING! ( clipping outer edges for looks )

**REPENTANCE IS LAYING AN AXE TO THE ROT OF THE ROOT!**

--- Some folks are only spiritually mowing the lawn ---

--- never getting to the bottom line of the problem! ---

REPENTANCE IS = "WEED BE GONE!" ----> "Spiritual Paraquat"

GET RID OF YOUR SINFUL ACTIONS >>>> ---> "cut it out" "stop it"

**James 1:12-15** Blessed [is] the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

OUR SIN PROBLEM CAN BE WASHED AWAY IN ONE SERVICE!

(our fascination with sin isn't)

WE ARE DRAWN BY OUR OWN LUST (strong desire) -- when acted upon is sin!

O U R P R O B L E M : we use our past to justify our desires!

We constantly wish to analyze our parents etc... to explain our desires

BUT THE BIBLE DOES NOT DEAL WITH US SO:

Pronounces us Sinners and says Get on with it!

**LOOK FORWARD & UPWARD!**

**Hebrews 11:10** For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker [is] God.

**11:13-16** These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of [them], and embraced [them], and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that [country] from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better [country], that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

**Hebrews 11:20-22** By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, [leaning] upon the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones. -- **ALL LOOKED AHEAD!**

**Hebrews 11:25** Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; **HOW COULD HE DO IT?**

**11:26** Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

**11:37-40** They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and [in] mountains, and [in] dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

**NOW LISTEN UP CLOSE...**

**Hebrews 12:2** Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of [our] faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

**12:1** Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset [us], and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

STOP LOOKING IN THE REAR VIEW MIRROR AND GET ON WITH LIFE!

LAY ASIDE EVERY WEIGHT & SIN:

--> Wanna know why you can't stop DRINKING, SMOKING, CUSSING, ADULTERY,

IMPROPER VIDEOS, etc...

-- **because you like it!**

UNTIL OUR LOVE FOR HIM OVER POWERS OUR LOVE FOR SIN - NOTHING WILL CHANGE!

**the axe must get laid to the root!**

HERE THE INSTRUCTION!

**\*\*\*\* Philippians 3:13** Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but **[this] one thing [I do]**, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

**"THIS ONE THING I DO"**

---> only focused believers can shed the baggage & clutter of yesterday to enjoy a great tomorrow!

**Psalms 27:4** One [thing] have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.

UNTIL YOU AND I ARE READY TO GET FOCUSED ON OUR PRESSING NEED TO REPENT

--- NOTHING ELSE IS GOING TO HAPPEN IN OUR LIFE! ---

**Matthew 3:11** I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and [with] fire:

John said that if we would prepare ourselves with "axe to root" repentance

**HE WOULD BAPTIZE US WITH THE (Acts 2:4) HOLY GHOST!**

( that is a promise! )

ONLY 3 THINGS CAN KEEP US FROM RECEIVING:

1. Unrepentant Attitude
2. Insincerity (not hungry)
3. Lack of open Praise