

Luke 3:7-18

John Preaches to the People

⁷ Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as *our* father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. ⁹ And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰ So the people asked him, saying, "What shall we do then?"

¹¹ He answered and said to them, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise."

¹² Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?"

¹³ And he said to them, "Collect no more than what is appointed for you."

¹⁴ Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages."

¹⁵ Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not, ¹⁶ John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire."

¹⁸ And with many other exhortations he preached to the people.

Are You Ready to Meet Jesus?

A couple of messages ago, I talked about 2 main events that are foretold in the bible that have not happened yet; the Rapture and Jesus' second coming. In the scripture I just read, John is talking about an event that was foretold in the bible and has already occurred some 2000 years ago. John is telling them about the Christ or Messiah the Jewish nation has been waiting for since Moses wrote of him or even foretold by God in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve first sinned. All the prophecies of Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection have come to be. Not one was missed or left out. Doesn't that make you wonder about the prophecies yet to be fulfilled? Some of those have come to fruition and many are still to come. I think in the times we are living in; prophecies should be more important than we sometimes make them. People tend to think of prophecies as legends, old time stories or even old wives tails. Many think that in our time of technologies and great knowledge, we can change or even control our destiny. We think we have the power and knowledge to pretty much do anything. I know, let's make a movie of it, change it to be more action packed and make sure we win in the end.

The first coming of Jesus has already come some 2000 years ago; and gone very differently than most of the Jewish nation had thought it would, even to the disciples. Their vision of how it would have occurred is more like what will happen in the second coming of Jesus. They thought that he was going to throw out these invaders, set up his kingdom here on earth and rule for ever and ever. Now that will happen, just not then; but it could happen.....at any time starting, with the rapture. Are you ready to meet Jesus?

John the Baptist talks about Jesus, the Messiah's first coming but he is also describing what is going to happen in the second coming and at judgment day. John is putting the fear of God into the hearts of those

who are listening to him. In verse 9, he says, "And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." They know that they could be one of those trees. Everyone is asking,

"What shall we do then?"

That is a great question for them and now even us. He tells us how to bear good fruit;

1. Help the poor with food and clothing
2. Do not lie or bare false witness
3. Do not steal
4. Do not be greedy, be content with what God gives you

Before Jesus was taken up to heaven, he gave us a few more that we need to follow;

1. Love your God with all your might
2. Love your neighbor as yourself
3. Spread the Godspell to all the world

In the Ten Commandments, The first 4 are how we are to love and honor God or encompassed in Love your God with all your might. The last 6 deal with how to love your neighbor. To spread the Godspell is both honoring God and loving your neighbor. We would bare good fruit following these three commands.

They thought that John might be the Messiah, but he quickly corrects them by saying;

"I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire."

I think that this would put the most "Fear of God" into the hearts of people. Many of us have been burned at one time or another; or have been close to a very hot fire but I can't imagine being thrown into unquenchable fire. We definitely want to be the wheat and not the chaff! Are you ready to meet Jesus?

We as believers have nothing to worry about when it comes to the ax at the root of the tree or the chaff being burned up by unquenchable fire. If you're ready to meet Jesus, can I get an Amen?

(the ancestry of Joseph in Matthew and Mary in Luke)

The advent candle we lit today is the candle of Joy. Mary and Joseph had great joy with the birth of their son, Jesus, both knowing who he really was.

The Shepherds out in those fields had great joy when the angels announced the birth of the Messiah. Out of all the people on earth, he picked the lowly shepherds out in those fields; but remember who these lowly shepherds were!

The three wisemen had great joy when they found the 2-year-old Messiah. They gave Mary and Joseph gifts that would sustain them as they had to go to Egypt to stay out of Herod's clutches and finally settle back in Nazareth.

And I could go on with the disciples, the hundreds if not thousands of people that Jesus healed while he walked on earth, the millions or billions that have accepted Jesus as their savior and changed their lives forever. And finally, *our* Joy as believers and followers of Jesus.

We need to bare good fruit. It began with hope, the first candle that was lit. We have hope in a savior, from that hope, faith, the second candle that was lit. By God's grace, He sent his son and by accepting that gift, in faith, we are saved. Now joy fills our hearts as children in the family of God, the third candle that was lit. The bible tells us that

Third Advent - Joy (pink candle)

we are in the family of God. Jesus is not only our savior but is our brother. We are brothers and sisters in Christ. We now have an inheritance as a brother or sister of Jesus and will reign with him for ever and ever. And in that forever Joy, Peace.

Are you ready to meet Jesus? Amen

Third Advent - Joy (pink candle)

Abraham was the father of Isaac,

Isaac the father of Jacob,

Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,

³ Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar,

Perez the father of Hezron,

Hezron the father of Ram,

⁴ Ram the father of Amminadab,

Amminadab the father of Nahshon,

Nahshon the father of Salmon,

⁵ Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab,

Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth,

Obed the father of Jesse,

⁶ and Jesse the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife,

⁷ Solomon the father of Rehoboam,

Rehoboam the father of Abijah,

Abijah the father of Asa,

⁸ Asa the father of Jehoshaphat,

Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram,

Jehoram the father of Uzziah,

⁹ Uzziah the father of Jotham,

Jotham the father of Ahaz,

Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,

¹⁰ Hezekiah the father of Manasseh,

Manasseh the father of Amon,

Amon the father of Josiah,

¹¹ and Josiah the father of Jeconiah[□] and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon.

¹² After the exile to Babylon:

Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel,

Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,

¹³ Zerubbabel the father of Abihud,

Abihud the father of Eliakim,

Eliakim the father of Azor,

¹⁴ Azor the father of Zadok,

Zadok the father of Akim,

Akim the father of Elihud,

¹⁵ Elihud the father of Eleazar,

Eleazar the father of Matthan,

Matthan the father of Jacob,

¹⁶ and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.

Third Advent - Joy (pink candle)

Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph,
the son of Heli, ²⁴ the son of Matthat,
the son of Levi, the son of Melki,
the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph,
²⁵ the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos,
the son of Nahum, the son of Esli,
the son of Naggai, ²⁶ the son of Maath,
the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein,
the son of Josek, the son of Joda,
²⁷ the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa,
the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel,
the son of Neri, ²⁸ the son of Melki,
the son of Addi, the son of Cosam,
the son of Elmadam, the son of Er,
²⁹ the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer,
the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat,
the son of Levi, ³⁰ the son of Simeon,
the son of Judah, the son of Joseph,
the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim,
³¹ the son of Melea, the son of Menna,
the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan,
the son of David, ³² the son of Jesse,
the son of Obed, the son of Boaz,
the son of Salmon,^[a] the son of Nahshon,
³³ the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram,^[a]
the son of Hezron, the son of Perez,
the son of Judah, ³⁴ the son of Jacob,
the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham,
the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,
³⁵ the son of Serug, the son of Reu,
the son of Peleg, the son of Eber,
the son of Shelah, ³⁶ the son of Cainan,
the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem,
the son of Noah, the son of Lamech,
³⁷ the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch,
the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel,
the son of Kenan, ³⁸ the son of Enosh,
the son of Seth, the son of Adam,
the son of God.