



Why You Can't Be Saved Unless You Repent

Luke 3:1-14
January 15, 2023

The Big Idea: Before Jesus had a public ministry God called John to preach a message that would prepare people to understand and receive the **salvation** Jesus would offer them. John's call was to repent: turn away from sin and ask for God's forgiveness. John's is not a message that **expired** and is no longer necessary – you can't be saved unless you repent!

Luke 3:1–14 (ESV)

3 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, **the word of God came** to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³And he went into all the region around the Jordan, **proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins**. ⁴As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

⁵ Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight,

and the rough places shall become level ways,

⁶ and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’ ”

⁷ He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him,

“You **brood of vipers!** **Who warned you** to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸**Bear fruits** in keeping with repentance. And **do not begin 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.** ⁹Even 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.**”

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, “**What then shall we do?**” ¹¹ And he answered them, “Whoever has **two tunics is to share with him who has none,** and **whoever has food is to do likewise.**” ¹² 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 you are authorized to do.**” ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “**Do not extort money** from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and **be content** with your wages.”

What John Teaches Us About True Repentance:

1. A **true Word** of God will always include a call to repent from Sin. (v. 3)
2. Repentance reminds us that the real problem behind all problems is the condition of the **human heart**. (v. 3)
3. Salvation comes only from **God** (v. 6)
4. At all costs, avoid false repentance that is **outward**-focused and **pride**-driven and doesn't result in a saved heart. False repentance gives false assurance about your standing before God. (vv. 7-9)
5. Each generation needs men and women who will be **messengers** of the Good News of God's Salvation. The good news can't be understood apart from knowing the **bad news**.
6. If I've truly repented of sin and received God's salvation, there will be an undeniable change in my **desires**, **attitudes**, and **behavior** – in other words, my heart will be changed!

“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand;
repent and believe in the gospel.”

Mark 1:15 (ESV)
