

Matthew 19-02-24b

We resume our study in Matthew chapter three, we're looking at the ministry of John the Baptist. And it tells us that John himself was clothed, verse four, in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. I purposely wore my camel colored coat this morning so that I could suggest the difference between actual camel hair and what we might think of today.

Today, camel woven goods are expensive, but in the days of John the Baptist, this was a very, it was the cheapest cloth you could get. Camels would shed annually, and their hair would come out in tufts that were basically collected and then woven into a coarse type of material that was used for tents and for cloaks. It would shed water, and so it was practical, but it was cheap, very inexpensive.

And it would be available in the wilderness, any caravan that came by, you could collect this stuff, whether John wove his own, or maybe got his garments from the passing Bedouin or caravaneers or whatever, but of course it requires camels in order to get the camel hair. And it was not the finely woven material such as you find the one piece garment of the Lord Jesus. It's at the opposite end of the spectrum.

So it says clothed in camel's hair. Some people have tried to suggest that maybe this was a camel hide, but this is not. And this stuff is scratchy.

It's, when they talk about wearing a hair shirt, if it's a camel's hair shirt, you're gonna suffer a bit. But this is what he wore with a leather belt around his waist. And because this thing is something of a basic flat garment, it's just probably a sort of a long rectangle with a hole in the middle for your head to go through and then open on the sides.

And so you close it with the leather belt and that holds it on you. And that's what gives you protection from the sun. You can get sunburnt in the Mediterranean climate in the summer.

And it also is pretty good in terms of its insulating value. That's the reason they used it for tents. But if you could imagine, our tent material today is generally canvas, except for the new high-tech nylon things.

But in days before they came out with all these plastic and fiberglass poles and the rest of it, tents were made out of canvas. So you could imagine a piece of canvas and then you just tie a belt around you and you make that do. So he is not a picture of wealth.

He's not being subsidized or supported. And his appearance is in stark contrast to the finery of those who are coming out to be baptized in particular. When you start seeing the Pharisees and Sadducees coming out, you couldn't see a wilder contrast.

John is gonna be out there as a hairy man. He is in the spirit and power of Elijah. And we know from 1 Kings that Elijah is described as a hairy man.

And John, as a Nazarite, has not had a razor applied to his hair or probably his beard. And so he's got this hairy camel garment. He himself looks like a pirate that's been far away from the barber for years.

And he is out in the Jordan in the wilderness. And so when the Pharisees come out with their refinement and their pale skin and they don't get outdoors if it's too bright or too sunny. And they've got these finely woven, expensive garments with gold embroidery and they're stepping carefully as they come down to the Jordan to not get their very fine Corinthian leather sandals muddy.

And John is out there in the mud and the Jordan is not noted for its clarity. Do you remember what Naaman the Syrian said when he was told to go dip himself? He said, we've got a lot better rivers than this where I come from. This is pathetic.

And yet he dips himself in that water and is clean. And the idea of being dipped in the Jordan is to be clean, to be cleansed, to be renewed, to start fresh. You can't help but think of Naaman in that regard.

But baptism as it was practiced in these days for proselytes to Judaism and so on was self-baptism. Nobody stood in the baptistry and said in the name of anything and then helped you down and helped you back up. Proselytes would dip themselves.

And if they were male, they would be circumcised as a first step. Then they would dip themselves in a mikvah and then come out and begin to subscribe to the tenets of the law of Moses. But this was the change and the unique feature of the baptism of John is that he was the baptizer.

I've seen this translated John the Dipper, John the Dunker, because that's what it literally means to put something under the water and bring it back out. This is how swords were tempered and so on. So he is uniquely dressed and his diet is unique.

His food is locusts and wild honey. The word for locusts here is *Acris*, A-K-R-I-S. And it is actually the Latin genus name for several species of locusts.

And it's an interesting fact of the Old Testament that the only insects that are kosher, the only insects that are okay to eat are locusts. And there are four different varieties of locust that are permitted by the law and they are described. The appearance is described for these.

And so much so that people have said, well, but he's only living on grasshoppers and honey. Surely there was something else. And this term was also applied to the seeds of a carob tree.

They were called locust beans, if you will, locust seeds, not related to our locust tree, but this tree, this carob seed, they were called locusts for whatever reason. And so they said, well, maybe he was eating these seeds with honey because they want him to be a vegetarian. This is why I was picking on the vegetarians earlier.

He couldn't have been a vegetarian if he's wearing a leather belt and leather sandals, but they've said, well, instead of consuming the flesh of insects, maybe he was eating these seeds and then the seeds and honey would be okay. So, and the word for honey cake is also close to this. Akris is the word for locust, but the Greek word for honey cake is enkris, E-N-K-R-I-S.

So you have akris or enkris. And these honey cakes were mentioned in the gospel to the Ebionites, which is like a fourth century after the fact, non-inspired account. But they talk about these honey cakes and it's a cake that is cooked in olive oil and made from plant products that are found in the wilderness.

And it's similar to manna in that sense and has a similar taste. The manna was described as like coriander seed, white and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. Well, these are those wafers made with honey.

And so it's been suggested that maybe one or more of these additional things might've been a part of John's diet, but there's nothing wrong with it being the actual locusts because they are still eaten today by a lot of Arab cultures. In fact, I was reading an article that came out about six years ago. There was a rather rare locust swarm in Israel back in 2013.

And some of the people were so upset at the loss of their crops that they started eating the locusts and they became a kind of a trend and everybody wanted them. And so they were breeding them, they were dipping them in chocolate and there was an abundance because of this locust swarm. And so the BBC had an article that I was perusing breaded locust, chocolate covered locust and four types of desert locust, the red, the yellow, the spotted gray and the white can be eaten.

And the people in Israel who are observant Jews wanted to know, well, you're serving up these locusts but aren't insects forbidden by the law? And they said, no, these four kinds of locusts are specifically included. And so these people that were eating them decided they liked them crunchy. So you drop them into a boiling broth, clean them off, roll them in a mixture of flour, coriander seeds, garlic and chili powder, then deep fry them.

Pan frying is another good option. They are crunchy, tasty and sweet. Sometimes they're mixed with caramel and sprinkled into meringue.

And he says, this guy is a chef, Moshi Basson. And he says, this is a big interest. People will pay a fortune.

They say, let us know when you're doing them. Locusts that have feasted on sesame plants acquire an oily, shiny tinge and are said to be particularly delicious. What do they taste like? Something between chicken schnitzel, toasted sunflower seeds and prawns.

These things have a pretty good nutritional value. They are high in iron and they contain zinc and they're a good source of protein. And a lot of people around the world lack those minerals in particular, the iron and the zinc.

And so there are women today, even in Africa, who go out and collect these locusts from the millet fields where they're growing millet. And they actually make more money off of the locusts than they do the millet. The farmers are growing the millet, but they go out and pick these locusts and these grasshoppers and make a better profit on them.

They collect them. They've got a picture here of a couple of little kids picking them up in plastic bottles, just popping them in the top, fill up the bottle, take them in and sell them. So they say that when there's a meat crisis in a lot of these places, insects are an eco-friendly, nutritious alternative.

But these women who get them in millet fields, this happens in Niger, they sell them in the market. So it is possible to eat these and thrive. It's a high-protein diet, high-protein, low-carb.

So Jesus contrasted this camel hair coat with the soft raiment of the Pharisees and other noblemen. This is gonna be coming up in Matthew 11, verse eight. And the hairy mantle is the mark of a prophet.

Not only are we told that Elijah was a hairy guy, but in Zechariah 13, verse four, it says, on that day, every prophet will be ashamed of their prophetic vision. They will not put on a prophet's garment of hair in order to deceive. So a hair garment was associated in Israel with a prophet.

But there hadn't been a prophet in Israel in over 400 years. Malachi is like 430 BC. And there had been no revelation and no prophetic function in Israel in four centuries.

And if you think about this, this is roughly how long it's been since the pilgrims? We're coming close to 2020. Do you remember the song in 1620, the pilgrims came over? That was 400 years ago. So that's how long it had been in Israel.

There's still a memory of it, the way we remember the Mayflower and such. But long, long time of a dearth of revelation from God. So this is what John is representative of and so he is symbolic.

He is emblematic. He stands out. He is utterly different from what purports to be spiritual revelation in that day.

You would expect if there was going to be revelation, where would it be? It would be in Jerusalem. It would be at the temple. It would be from the learned scholars, scribes and Pharisees and Sadducees and those who had made themselves into experts, who had long debates about the finest points of the law and how many times you could brush the mud from your clothing and such.

But John is a biblical figure. He quotes the Bible. He is dressed as the Bible says a prophet should be dressed.

So what does the Bible tell us about communication of God's word today? It tells us that those who communicate should have certain characteristics. You find the qualifications of an elder in Timothy and in Titus. Their household should be orderly, a one woman man.

Their children should be well-behaved. They should not be given to excess. They should not be subject to wild behavior.

Yeah, all of those qualifications are given. Secondly, communication not only should come from a biblical source in the sense of not disqualified. I think anybody that runs off with the church secretary is disqualified.

I think anyone whose own life is a shambles can't communicate the word of God. That's just what Timothy and Titus say. Doesn't mean sinless, doesn't mean without problems, but it does mean that the pattern is visible.

John was visible. The Lord Jesus was visible. The apostle Paul says, follow my example.

You've seen the way I live and you've seen the priorities that I have. Emulate me, imitate me. And so there is a visible aspect to the communicator and you just can't get around it.

It's an uncomfortable subject for me, but that's what it is. And if you observe something in a communicator of the word of God that is out of keeping with scripture and it's not an occasional or a momentary blip, it's a pattern problem. I don't think an alcoholic can be a, I mean, a practicing alcoholic can't be a communicator of the word of God.

There is a lack of discipline. There's a lack of self-control, which are features and qualifications for a communicator. This communicator in Matthew chapter three fit the biblical description in every way.

And he describes himself as the voice crying in the wilderness and his message is prepare the way of the Lord. And his appearance is consistent with his message. You can't say one thing and do another.

And all of us should be this way. If we claim to belong to Christ, then the visible parts of

our life should reflect that role and that identity. You can't have an inconsistency and you have the pattern here.

So Jerusalem, all Judea and all the region around the Jordan went out to him. Now, once again, literal hermeneutic. I believe what the Bible says.

And if the Bible says that I believe it, that settles it. What does it say? Jerusalem went out to John. All Judea went out to John.

All the region around the Jordan went out to John. Now we have metonymy of the adjunct here. The region didn't fold itself into the Jordan.

The land didn't fold up and come here. The dirt didn't rise up and deposit itself at John's location. When it says the region came, it's talking about the people of the region, right? The people who dwell in the region.

When it says all Judea, it means people from all parts of Judea. It doesn't mean that every single individual in the region came. It doesn't mean that every single individual in Judea came.

It means that there was a huge level of interest and people from all parts came. There was no little village where somebody had not come to see John and gone back and talked about him. All of the region and all of Judea heard about John because of this very universal exposure.

Everybody was exposed, but it's convenient in a literary way of talking about all the region went out to him. And of course, all the region and all around the Jordan and all of Jerusalem were baptized by him in the Jordan. Again, not every single individual was baptized, but vast numbers, so much so that all parts and economic classes, rich, poor, slave, free, distant, local, there was a constant stream of people.

It's like it says in Acts about the ministry of the apostles and the first generation of Christians, these men have turned the world upside down. Well, they didn't literally turn the world upside down. It's a figure of speech that means this has made a huge substantial impact in this area.

So you would think, well, if you can get the leadership on board, now it's going to echo and resonate and be repeated and you're gonna reach even more people because one thing John is not doing is he's not going down to the temple and he's not addressing people in the synagogues. John evidently never darkened the door of a synagogue and there were synagogues all over. Jesus is gonna speak in synagogues in several places.

Paul the apostle is gonna speak in synagogues all over the Greek speaking world. John never went to a synagogue, never went evidently, although his father is a priest at the temple, which makes him a Levite and qualified, always makes me think of that song,

that movie that Neil Diamond made where he was supposed to be a cantor and follow in his father's footsteps and be a singer for the services, but he wants to sing pop music. It's like a remake of the jazz singer and he wants to use his talents and bless the world and so on, but there's this friction because, well, you've been gifted, you've got this tremendous voice, you need to be at the worship service and use your voice for that.

You can imagine John the Baptist as a Nazarite needed that angelic introduction and that prophetic declaration of his mission to avoid being shoehorned into a life of being one of the 24 courses and working down at the temple, but evidently John was never at the temple. He's in the wilderness and he's been there a long time. He knows how to live off the land and he doesn't buy anything.

He's got no money, everything he needs is out there. He can pick up tufts of blowing camel hair and make his own clothes. He can make his own food and it's right off the land.

So he sees many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism and he says, at last, the leadership of the land is coming. This is vindication, wonderful, you've finally seen the light, I'm so glad you're here and now the movement is really gonna take off. This is the exact opposite of what mostly happens in Christianity today.

You get a celebrity, you get somebody that's got influence and power and you think, ah, I made it and he says, you bunch of snakes, you're snakes and this is particularly painful for somebody who's got religious aspirations because how does evil get introduced into the world? How does the first sin happen? It's suggested by a snake. The snake is what fooled Eve into sinning in the first place and so he doesn't say you jackals, he doesn't say you dogs, he doesn't say you spiders, you scorpions, you spoiled fish, what does he say? You vipers and you're not just snakes, you're a brood of snakes, you're all related, you're in it together, you're like a big bag of coiling, writhing snakes and these men have come out and in their dignity and in their flowing robes and their finery and they have deigned to come out and I ask myself, why did they come out? Why do they come? They can't be genuinely convicted and beating their breasts and coming out there. If they did, John wouldn't say this, he's a prophet, he knows their hearts, it's part of his gift and he says, you're a bunch of snakes and what are they doing? They're trying to insinuate, they're trying to writhe their way into, this is a popular movement and it's sort of, if you can't beat them, join them.

All of the people, they're not coming to the synagogues and they're not coming to the temple anymore, they're all going down there and not only are they being baptized but they're sitting and listening to John because there are people who spend days there, we know this because that's what Jesus' disciples are doing they've been down there for some time listening to John because he's not only saying, change your mind but he's giving Bible class and people are going out for that and it's a huge movement and the

Pharisees are sitting there looking at empty pews and saying, well, we got to get a piece of this action some kind of way, let's go down and be one with it and then the people will see us the way they see John and it'll be celebrity by proxy and it'll rub off then they'll say, well, he's a good guy, he's in agreement with John. So they come down there for their own purposes whatever they may be. When he sees them coming to his baptism, notice they don't seem to be coming to his Bible class, they come to the baptism and John didn't spend all day baptizing, he's baptizing part of the time and he's preaching part of the time.

He may be preaching while he's baptizing it when the numbers of people show up. So there is a group of these leaders that come out, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Of all of the things that he could say, I asked myself, why does he say this? You're just jumping on the bandwagon. I mean, he could have said any one of a number of things but he says, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? He didn't warn them to flee from the wrath to come.

So are they trying to flee wrath to come? Because if they don't flee, the wrath to come is going to hit them, that's the point. And he says, bear fruits worthy of repentance. They have come out and been baptized by John.

He warns them, but they've come out and they're coming to the baptism. And he says, this one episode doesn't change you. Change of mind is reflected in fruit.

What's the thing about fruit? I planted some grapefruit seeds because I really liked that Texas ruby red grapefruit. And I planted those seeds years ago, seven, eight years ago now. The trees have grown, they've survived.

They're in the ground now. But how long is it going to take before they bear fruit? Bearing fruit is a process and it requires cultivation and it requires direction and it requires consistency and it requires preservation. It requires a lot of things.

You don't just stick something. They've got, we got for Christmas or something, a little box of three cans that's got herbs and things in it. And you pop the tops off these cans and add water and pretty soon you're going to have kale and parsley and things you can garnish and spice your food with.

And it's great. But you don't pop the can off and out they shroom. They don't just manifest themselves.

If you're going to bear fruit, what do you have to do? You've got to be a tree planted by the rivers of water and wait for your season. And it's seasonal. You've got to survive all of the non-fruit bearing seasons.

You've got to soak up nutrients. You've got to have that living water right at your roots. Bear fruits.

He says, you've come out here to tip your hat or your headgear here to the baptism. You think you can come down here and get dunked and you're good to go? You've got to bear fruit. There's got to be consistency and a pattern and a process.

Bear fruits. Fruits, plural. Bear fruits in keeping with repentance, worthy of, products of, consistent with, repentance.

If you have a genuine change of mind, the baptism is a symbol of change of mind. You can't do the symbol and not have the change. If you have the change, there will be fruits, plural.

There will be manifestations, plural. There will be changes, plural. And it will be consistent over time.

Change of mind bears fruits that are consistent over time. We get convicted. We hear a biblical message and it steps on a toe.

And we say, whoa, I need to do better. I need to change. Well, where is the consistency? There should be fruits.

Genuine change of mind is going to bear fruit over time. And do not think to say to yourselves, we have Abraham as father. Do not rely on positional truth.

There is a flashing in the oven. I've seen it several times. It's distracting me.

Do not think to say to yourselves, we have Abraham as father. This is positional truth, right? This is, I am who I am because of something out of my control. I was born.

I was the product of good genes or I'm happily born in Israel. That's not what counts. You can't rely on something in the past, especially things over which you had no control.

God can raise up children to Abraham from these stones. Anybody can be passively turned into a child of Abraham. And it's interesting that he's practicing baptism and somebody who wants to be a proselyte to Judaism and become by their own choice, a child of Abraham would be baptized.

And he says, you know, anybody can come down here and dunk themselves, get circumcised and say, okay, I'm a son of Abraham now. I just saw a documentary about Sammy Davis Jr. And he was kind of an anomaly because he was a black man and he converted to Judaism and was very faithful and diligent in it. It was no fly-by-night thing, but he was a Jewish black singer, entertainer, comedian.

And it was somewhat unusual for the time. A lot more black men seemed to have gone the route of Cassius Clay becoming Muhammad Ali and Lou Alcindor becoming, can't remember his name, but you know, moving into Islam and the black Muslim movements. But Sammy Davis became Jewish and wanted an acquaintance with the God of Israel.

And, but becoming a son of Abraham, they say, you know, this one-time thing isn't what counts. It's over time. Even now the acts of Abraham 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. What's significant about this is these people are not unbelievers. Do the Pharisees believe in God? Do they believe in the resurrection? Yes.

Sadducees are a little further afield, but they believe in God. They believe in the law of Moses. They believe that God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

They spend their lives dedicated to the law. They've got a lot of practice problems, but in the area of belief, they believe. If you have to believe that God is and that he's a rewarder of them that diligently seek him to be saved, they're saved.

But John tells them, if you're not bearing fruit, now does salvation depend on your bearing fruit? Are you not saved if you don't bear fruit? Calvinists would tell you, yes. The Bible tells you, no. What does happen? If you're a tree and you're not bearing fruit, Jesus is gonna demonstrate this later on when he goes to the fig tree.

It's a living tree. It's supposed to be bearing fruit. It doesn't bear fruit.

Jesus withers the fig tree, and it's symbolic of the nation and its lack of acceptance. Here, even now, the ax is laid at the root of the trees, plural. You should be bearing fruit like a tree.

The ax is going to chop you down. Every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. And people like to say, well, that's the lake of fire.

There was no such thing as the lake of fire in the days of John the Baptist or the days of the Lord Jesus or the days of the apostle Paul. Nobody had heard of a lake of fire until the revelation. When he says thrown into the fire, this is the fire of judgment.

This is the judgment seat of Christ type of fire. There's fire there, right? Gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, and stubble. What doesn't survive the fire is gonna be burned up.

We don't think that's lake of fire. That's judgment fire. This is judgment fire.

I baptize you with water with a view toward repentance, looking at change of mind. I baptize you with water. It is connected with, it is symbolic of, it is emblematic and represents change of mind.

But if you have genuine change of mind, the evidence of that is not your baptism. It is your fruit. Claiming that you got saved, claiming that you go to church, claiming that you've got a cross necklace or a fish on your bumper doesn't make you a fruitful believer.

Fruit makes you fruitful. Fruit of the spirit. And Galatians tells us in detail what that fruit looks like.

I baptize you with water with a view toward change of mind. He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. John's ministry, like all of the Old Testament, is shadow.

It is emblem. It is anticipation. It is a small, literal, ritual-based picture of the reality that is coming.

The reality is invisible. The reality is greater and mightier. Baptizing in water was a foreshadowing.

Baptism in the spirit is the reality. One is visible. One is invisible.

One is easily participated in by somebody whose heart is not right or whose heart is not in it. You can be part of the brood of vipers and come down for baptism. You cannot fake the baptism of the spirit in terms of its fruit.

You can say you're getting baptized. You can roll on the floor and pretend to speak in tongues and pretend to be healed or pretend to heal others. You can pretend to have a baptism of the spirit, but the baptism of the spirit is like the baptism associated with change of mind in that it is proved out in its fruit.

Fruit over the long term. Fruit of the spirit is not hysterics. It is not miracles.

It is not flashy. It is not distracting. It partakes of the word of God.

It reflects the word of God. It reflects stability and consistency and integrity and character and self-sacrifice and genuine love that looks out for the interests of others. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

And you notice there's a text note there that says the majority text omits and fire. The M text, but the earliest and best text, the Nestle Allen UBS text says and fire. And there is a baptism of the Holy Spirit and there is a baptism of fire.

And you pretty much are going to bear fruit in keeping with the baptism of the spirit, or you are going to lose your thorns and briars and weeds and wood, hay and stubble in the baptism of fire. Everybody's going to get baptized. Which is it going to be? Choose your baptism.

Do you want the spirit with its productivity and reflection of the glory of God? Or do you want the baptism of fire with its judgment and reflection of the glory of God? Either one is going to glorify God. Which one do you want? His winnowing fan is in his hand. He, and notice he says his winnowing fan is in his hand.

John knows that the Lord is already on the earth and that he is already ready to separate the threshing floor, gather the wheat into the barn and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. His winnowing fan is in his hand. The winnowing fan is the means by which the wheat pile is agitated.

It is disturbed. It's thrown out of its place. A lot of times we say, just, I just want to keep the status quo.

Pharisees and Sadducees wanted to keep the status quo. The Lord takes the winnowing fan, shovels that stuff and throws it up in the air. It's disturbed.

It is agitated. It is perturbed. And the wheat falls right back down where it's supposed to be.

The chaff is blown by the wind. Isn't stable. Isn't consistent.

Doesn't fall back down. And it is burned. Chaff is burned with unquenchable fire.

Doesn't say the chaff is eternal. Says the fire is unquenchable. Once that fire is lit, it cannot be put out.

An unquenchable fire isn't the same as an eternal fire. An unquenchable fire is going to burn until all of its fuel is exhausted. Then it will go out.

Not before. You can't quench this fire until it has fully destroyed all of the chaff. His winnowing fan is in his hand.

So we ask ourselves a question today. If God throws us up in the air, what do we turn out to be? When our time of testing comes, when our time of exposure comes, what kind of fruit do we bear? A tree is known by its fruits. What kind of tree are we? Do we need the ax laid to our roots and chop us out of the way so that some other tree can occupy that sunshine and take that living water and bear fruit? The question is the same regardless of dispensation, regardless of time.

God is always looking for faith and obedience. He is looking for those who, if they lack faith and obedience, will change their minds when they are confronted, when they are given the message of truth and given the opportunity to bear that fruit. Do we change our minds or not? Pharisees largely did not.

There were a few who believed, but most couldn't give up the soft life, the soft garments, the adulation they thought they were getting from the people, and the finery and the riches and the status, and the life that they built in and around their religious identity was too good to give up. They take one look at John and say, well, that's no kind of life. Do you think that John the Baptist is going to be wearing camel hair and eating locusts in the coming kingdom? The last shall be first.

The first shall be last. Those who were outside the city are going to be in, and those who were inside the city are going to be out. Right? Jesus said of the Old Testament prophets, there's none greater than John.

He is among the best and the most faithful that ever was. And his time of rest and reward and comfort is going to last a thousand years and then into the eternal kingdom of the Father. He spent a few years of hardship and selfless dedication to the mission that God called him to.

He was a Nazirite from birth, but he didn't live more than 30 years, 30, 31 years at most. And he was killed for his trouble. But look at what's coming for him.

He invested in that city whose founder and builder is God. He's a wilderness dweller in this life, but he is a kingdom and a Jerusalem dweller in the next. And we want to be like-minded.

We want to change our mind and not be too caught up in this world and too invested in its comforts and its securities and its emoluments. We want to be looking to the next. And John the Baptist is a great example of that.

Well, next time we're going to pick up at verse 13. When Jesus comes from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him, we see three different kinds of people coming to John. We see all of Jerusalem, Judea, and the region around the Jordan coming.

Then we see the Pharisees and Sadducees coming. And then we see Jesus coming. You've got three different presentations of candidates for baptism, as they'd like to say in the Baptist church.

It's a candidate for baptism. So here's the third category of candidate for baptism. And John is going to object to this candidate just like he did to the last ones, but for entirely different reasons.

So we'll look at that next time. Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the gift of your Holy Spirit and the preservation of your words so that we can learn and grow as never before in the history of the human race.

Never has there been such a open access to the treasure of truth found in your word and the opportunity to learn it in depth, to incorporate it into our thinking, and to live in its light. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will enliven these things and help us to see their pertinence and their applicability in the days ahead, the time that remains to us in this life as we look for the next coming of the Lord Jesus to this earth to receive us to himself and take us before your throne. We pray these things in Jesus' name, amen.