

April 21, 2024  
La Jolla Christian Fellowship  
**Gospel of John // S3E3 John the Baptist Testifies**  
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### John 3:22-30 NIV 1984

<sup>22</sup> After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, and baptized. <sup>23</sup> Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptized. <sup>24</sup> (This was before John was put in prison.) <sup>25</sup> An argument developed between some of John's disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing. <sup>26</sup> They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—well, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him."

<sup>27</sup> To this John replied, "A man can receive only what is given him from heaven. <sup>28</sup> You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him.' <sup>29</sup> The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. <sup>30</sup> He must become greater; I must become less.

### We All Have A Testimony

**Revelation 12:11** And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

**Main Point: The power of our testimony is found in word and deed.**

**Context of this text: Vs. 22-24** *After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, and baptized.* <sup>23</sup> *Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptized.* <sup>24</sup> *(This was before John was put in prison.)*

**Word: John had built a reputation through the word of his testimony.**

- Matthew 3:1 *In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea.*
- Mark 1:14 *Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God.*

**Deeds: The word of John's testimony had struck a chord. Now he would begin fulfilling his words with deeds. (Baptism/Martyrdom)**

**Understanding Baptism: Vs. 23** *Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptized.*

- **Why were so many Jews trekking into the Wilderness to be baptized by John?**
  - **Ceremonial Cleansing:** Beyond its practical significance, ceremonial cleansing holds deep symbolic meaning in Jewish tradition. It represents the removal of spiritual impurity, the restoration of holiness, and the opportunity for spiritual renewal and transformation.
  - **In the Old Testament ceremonial cleansing was done to purify you before you met with God. In the New Testament, baptism is used as a testimony that you have already met with God.**
    - **Acts 19:4** *Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.*
  - **In the Old Testament, you needed to be continually washed in water to remain purified before God. In the New Testament, you were washed in his blood once and for all and only baptized once as a symbol of that washing.**
    - **Revelation 1:5** *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.*
    - **1 John 1:9** *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

**Practical Takeaways:**

1. Reboot your testimony.
2. Embrace the blood of Jesus as the basis for your righteousness and acceptance with God.

### Discussion Questions:

1. What point was the most impactful to you in the sermon?
2. **Role of Testimony in Faith:** How does John the Baptist's response to his disciples about Jesus' increasing popularity (John 3:30 "He must become greater; I must become less.") help us understand the role of personal testimony in relation to Jesus' mission?
3. **Baptism:** In the Old Testament, cleansing was done before we met with God, in the New Testament, baptism was done after having met with God. Why is this important?
4. **Efficacy of Christ's Blood:** Reflect on the statement from Revelation 1:5 about being washed from our sins in Jesus' blood. How should this understanding influence our daily lives and interactions with others?
5. **Living Out Our Testimony:** The sermon highlights that our testimony should be evident in both word and deed. Can you share examples from your life or community where someone's testimony through deeds powerfully communicated their faith?