

John the Baptist. Who was he? What was his purpose? Why is he called John the Baptist? Why was he baptizing people?

Was John the Baptist simply performing some Jewish baptismal tradition. Was it some form of a ritual purification?

If you would like to find out the answers to those questions. Stay with us and we will be right back.

Intro

What John was doing was something new, something which had not previously been done before.

In the OT there were ritual washings that the priests and other Jews had to do in order to be “clean” and able to perform their duties.

However, in the New Testament baptism is always something that is done TO you, not done BY you.

In the Old Testament, any washings were done by the person being washed.

They washed their own hands.
They washed their own bodies.

The Old Testament washings were more than just dipping themselves in water but included scrubbing and removal of the filth of the flesh.

So the baptism of the New Testament was very different.

But who is John the Baptist?

He was a cousin of Jesus, born 6 months before Him. He was a man with a mission, of which had been prophesied 100's of years earlier. He was a preacher who lived an eccentric lifestyle, and yet people still flocked to hear him.

His purpose was simple, yet complex. He was to prepare the way for the Lord. In other words, his purpose was to prepare the people for Jesus. His message was one of repentance and confession of sin.

Why was he called John the Baptist?

Just so you know, it is not because Baptist was his last name. To put it simply it is because that is what he did. He baptized people. In fact, the word "Baptist" could just as easily, and maybe even more properly, be translated as "immerser." Thus, John the Immerser.

Why was he baptizing people?

We are told that people from Jerusalem, all Judea, and around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins (Matt. 3:6).

First, remember his message was a message of repentance, so those who came to him repented or changed their minds which resulted in a change of action in the life they were living (Matt. 3:2)

Second, he was baptizing them in the Jordan river, because there was enough water there to immerse a person.

Third, when they came to be baptized, they confessed their sins (or acknowledged them). This is also an indication of repentance.

You see John didn't just baptize anyone and everyone, but instead commanded them to repent because there was a kingdom coming.

In fact, John refused to baptize the Pharisees and Sadducees until they showed fruits worthy of repentance (Matt. 3:7-8).

John's baptism was in preparation for the coming of Jesus and His kingdom, and included repentance and confession of sin, but it also included one other important aspect. Remission of sins (Mark 1:4)

This is the exact same wording found in Acts 2:38 and in Matthew 26:28 when Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper. In this way, John prepared the people for the coming of the one who of which he did not feel worthy to even carry his shoes.

But did you know, that while John was baptizing, Jesus came out to be baptized by him!

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Bye for now...oh...wait just a minute. Be sure to look for the next video about the baptism of Jesus.