

HE MUST INCREASE, BUT I MUST DECREASE  
JOHN 3:22-36

WE ARE FINISHING THE THIRD CHAPTER OF JOHN'S GOSPEL TODAY. WHAT A RICH PORTION OF SCRIPTURE THIS HAS BEEN INDEED. TO RECAP, JESUS HAS EXPLAINED TO A PHARISEE NAMED NICODEMUS THAT ONE MUST BE BORN AGAIN TO ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD. GOOD DEEDS, KNOWLEDGE, AND MORALITY BY THEMSELVES CAN NOT EARN YOU A PLACE INTO THE KINGDOM. ONE MUST BE CLEANSED AND FILLED WITH GOD'S SPIRIT TO BE BORN AGAIN. THIS IS A DEATH OF SELF WILL, EGO, AND PRIDE. ONE MUST BECOME CHILDLIKE IN RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ALMIGHTY GOD. THIS IS A GIFT FROM ABOVE. JUST AS WE HAD NO AUTHORITY IN OUR BIRTH HERE ON EARTH, WE HAVE NO AUTHORITY IN OUR SPIRITUAL RE-BIRTH. YET, EVERY DECISION WE MAKE, WE ARE 100% RESPONSIBLE FOR AND WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR ALL OF THEM. FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONE AND ONLY SON, THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE. THIS IS AMAZING GRACE! THE APOSTLE JOHN'S PURPOSE OF HIS GOSPEL IS THAT WE MAY READ IT AND BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD, AND THAT BY BELIEVING WE MAY HAVE ETERNAL LIFE IN HIS NAME. NOW THE APOSTLE SWITCHES FROM THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS TO ANOTHER TESTIMONY FROM JOHN THE BAPTIST. WE WILL SEE THE HUMBLE HEART OF A SERVANT AND A PERSPECTIVE THAT EVERYONE SHOULD HOLD WHEN IT COMES TO MINISTRY AND A CHRIST EXALTING LIFE. LET'S GET STARTED.

### John 3:22-36 NIV

<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 coming and being 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—look, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him."<sup>27</sup> To this John replied, "A person can receive only what is given them from heaven. <sup>28</sup> You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Messiah 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."<sup>31</sup> The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. <sup>32</sup> He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. <sup>33</sup> Whoever has accepted it has certified that God is truthful. <sup>34</sup> For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit. <sup>35</sup> The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. <sup>36</sup> Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.

John 3:22 NIV

<sup>22</sup> After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, and baptized.

AFTER THE ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN JESUS AND NICODEMUS. JESUS AND DISCIPLES WENT FROM THE CITY TO THE COUNTRYSIDE WHERE HE TAUGHT AND FELLOWSHIPED WITH THEM. ACCORDING TO 4:2, ONLY DISCIPLES BAPTIZED

SPENT SOME TIME/DIATRIBO/TO WEAR AWAY, RUB THROUGH, TO CONSUME BY RUBBING

John 3:23-24 NIV

<sup>23</sup> Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were coming and being baptized. <sup>24</sup> (This was before John was put in prison.)

JOHN THE BAPTIST IS BAPTIZING ON THE OTHER SIDE AND WEST OF THE JORDAN. THIS IS WHERE THE SHORT OVERLAP OF MINISTRIES BETWEEN JESUS AND JOHN HAPPENED, BEFORE JOHN WENT TO PRISON IS ADDED BECAUSE EVERYTHING DESCRIBED UP TO THIS POINT PRECEDES THE BEGINNING OF JESUS' GALILEAN MINISTRY DESCRIBED IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

John 3:25-26 NIV

<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—look, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him.”

WHAT STARTED OUT AS AN ARGUMENT OVER THE VALIDITY OF BAPTISM VS. CEREMONIAL WASHING CAUSED THE DISCIPLES OF JOHN THE BAPTIST TO BE JEALOUS OF JESUS

UNFORTUNATELY, SOME PEOPLE EXALT THE SERVANT INSTEAD OF THE SAVIOR

John 3:27-28 NIV

<sup>27</sup> To this John replied, “A person can receive only what is given them from heaven. <sup>28</sup> You yourselves can testify that I said, ‘I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him.’”

JOHN REDIRECTS HIS DISCIPLES TO THE TRUTH; MY MISSION IS TO PREPARE AND MAKE STRAIGHT THE WAY OF THE LORD

1 Corinthians 4:6-7 NIV

<sup>6</sup> Now, brothers and sisters, I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that you may learn from us the meaning of the saying, “Do not go beyond what is written.” Then you will not be puffed up in being a follower of one of us over against the other. <sup>7</sup> For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?

EACH ONE OF US HAS GIFTS GIVEN FROM THE FATHER TO GLORIFY THE SON. THEY ARE WITHOUT REPENTANCE. HOWEVER, WE HAVE NO REASON TO BE JEASLOUS OF ONE ANOTHER OR PRIDEFUL (LIKE WE MANIFESTED THE POWER)

REDIRECT THE ATTENTION BACK TO JESUS ALWAYS

John 3:29 NIV

<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.

THIS SELFLESS ATTITUDE SHOULD BE HELD BY ALL. WE ARE VESSELS HOLDING THE SPIRIT OF GOD, LEADING OTHERS INTO THE ARMS OF JESUS

John 3:30 NIV

<sup>30</sup> He must become greater; I must become less."

THIS MAY BE THE GREATEST ONE LINER OF SANCTIFICATION OBEDIENCE OVER SACRIFICE, EXALTATION OF CHRIST AND SELF DENIAL

THERE ARE 3 MUSTS IN THIS CHAPTER.

THE MUST FOR THE SINNER

John 3:7 NIV

<sup>7</sup>You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'

#### THE MUST OF THE SAVIOR

John 3:14 NIV

<sup>14</sup>Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up,

#### THE MUST OF THE SERVANT

John 3:30 NIV

<sup>30</sup>He must become greater; I must become less."

#### NOW JOHN SHIFTS TO CHRISTOLOGY

John 3:31 NIV

<sup>31</sup>The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all.

#### ABOVE/ANOTHER/FROM THE BEGINNING

#### ABOVE/EPANO/MORE THAN, SUPERIOR

#### EARTH/GE/GROUND, SOIL

John 3:32-33 NIV

<sup>32</sup>He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. <sup>33</sup>Whoever has accepted it has certified that God is truthful.

PEOPLE IN GENERAL REFUSED HIS TEACHING

CERTIFIED/SPHRAGIZO/MARKED WITH A SEAL TO SHOW  
POSSESSION

John 3:34-35 NIV

<sup>34</sup> For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit. <sup>35</sup> The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands.

THE FATHER GAVE JESUS THE SON UNLIMITED POWER AND  
AUTHORITY. THIS SPEAKS OF HIS HUMANITY AND DEITY

Jesus never wrote a book, yet all the libraries of the world could not hold the books that have been written about Him. He never wrote a song, yet He has furnished the theme of more songs than all song writers combined. Our Lord never founded a college, yet all schools together cannot boast of as many students as He has following Him. Jesus never practiced medicine, but He has healed more broken hearts and lives than doctors have healed broken bodies.

John 3:36 NIV

<sup>36</sup> Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.

TO BELIEVE IN THE SON IS TO LIVE IN OBEDIENCE TO HIS WORD  
TO REJECT THE SON IS TO LIVE A LIFE OF DISOBEDIENCE

THIS IS NOT ABOUT PERFECTION BUT DIRECTION

WE WERE BORN SINNERS DESERVING THE WRATH OF GOD  
THAT WILL COME TO ALL WHO REJECT THE GOSPEL OF JESUS  
CHRIST

CHRIST DIED IN PLACE OF THE SINNER, HIS PERFECT LIFE LIVED  
AND HIS SINNLESS BLOOD SPILLED, IS THE SUBSTITUTION  
SACRIFICE THAT HAD TO BE PAID IN ORDER FOR SINFUL MAN  
TO BE SAVED

END