

*Assignment – January 18 2009*

*Luke 3:1-20- John's Ministry of Preparation: Shaking up the Status Quo*

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1. Read Luke 3:1-20. As you reflect on the entire passage, what impression do you think Luke most wants to give by his description of John's ministry? What stands out to you as John's primary role in the story? In your opinion, what phrase most captures the heart of John's message?
2. Verses 1-2 – Compare these verses with Isaiah 1:1 and Jer. 1:1-4. The language Luke uses to introduce John's ministry would be familiar to those who read the prophets of the OT. Why do you think it is important for Luke to introduce John in this familiar way? How would this give extra weight to the ministry of John in the minds of those initial readers?
3. Verses 4-6 – Talk about how John's ministry fulfilled the words of Isaiah's prophecy. Imagine how we might be involved in a similar kind of ministry in our day – what does it look like for us to prepare the people in our world to see God's salvation?
4. In vs. 7-9, John speaks some hard words to the crowds of people. What does it mean to “produce fruit in keeping with repentance” and how can we apply this challenge to our own life and society today?
5. John speaks specifically to 3 groups in v. 10-14 – the crowd, tax collectors, and soldiers. What values are upheld in the injunction to each group and how might we apply them to our own life circumstance?
6. Note how John clearly points attention away from himself and onto Jesus, the One who would come after. What does this teach us about John's understanding of Jesus and how can we similarly be sure that our lives point to Jesus and not to ourselves?