Matthew 3:1-17

• Review...

- o Immanuel...
 - While still BETROTHED a young woman named Mary was pregnant of the Holy Spirit...
 - An Angel of the Lord came to her husband Joseph in a DREAM...
 - The child to be born was to be called JESUS because He would save us from our SINS...
 - All of this happened according to the PLAN of God spoken by the prophet **Isaiah 7:14**
 - The Virgin will give birth the child will be called IMMANUEL God with us!
- o Birth of Jesus...
 - After these things [Matthew does not record the birth of Jesus]
 - Wise men [μάγος] came to WORSHIP the new King of the Jews [three gifts]
 - But when Herod [the great] heard about Jesus he sought to KILL him...
 - Joseph was warned in a dream and fled with his family to Egypt...
 - After the death of Herod they returned but settled in Nazareth!

• 1^{ST} - JOHN THE BAPTIST... VS. 1-6

- o 1st Who was John... vs. 1
 - 28 Years...
 - In those days John the Baptist came!
 - The Gospel of Matthew picks up almost 28 years later Luke 3:23
 - Jumping from the return of Jesus to Nazareth to the start of His public ministry...
 - It began with a man called John the Baptist one of the KEY men in the Story of Jesus!
 - Cousin of Jesus Luke 1:13-17
 - John was the son of Zachariah [priest] and Elizabeth [relative of Mary]
 - They were UNABLE to have children and were VERY old **Luke 1:7**
 - But an angel appeared to Zechariah in the Temple Elizabeth would have a son called John...
 - JOHN [יוֹחֶנָן] meaning the LORD [יְהנָה] is GRACIOUS [חָנַן]
 - He would be a NAZARITE from birth [no alcohol] set apart to serve the Lord **Numbers 6:2**
 - Filled with the Spirit...
 - Luke 1:15 "[John was] filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb."
 - After Mary found out she was carrying Jesus she went to see Elizabeth...
 - When Elizabeth heard Mary John leapt in her womb filled with the Spirit– Luke 1:41
 - There is a great deal of controversy today over when life begins...
 - The Bible removed all question makes it very clear life begins at conception!
 - **Psalms 139:15-16** "You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. You saw me before I was born." [NLT]
 - Prophet Elijah...
 - Malachi 4:5 "I will send Elijah the prophet before the... great and dreadful day of the LORD."
 - The very last verse of the Old Testament promised the return of Elijah...
 - Elijah was one of only TWO men in the OT who never died [chariot of fire] II Kings 2:11
 - Elijah will return and prepare the hearts of the people to receive the Messiah...
 - John the Baptist would deny he was Elijah John 1:21
 - But Jesus would confirm John was Elijah to those who BELIEVE **Matthew 11:14**
 - To UNBELIEVERS Elijah will return as one of the TWO witnesses Revelation 11:3
- o 2nd His message... vs. 2
 - Preaching...
 - Preaching in the wilderness of Judea!

- The Judean wilderness extends all the way from Jerusalem eastward to the Jordan River...
- It is a barren desert wasteland with very rain or vegetation or PEOPLE...
- The only source of water is the Jordan river that flows through it into the Dead Sea...
- It was here that John began PREACHING [κηρύσσω] his message!
- PREACHING [κηρύσσω] is not the same as TEACHING [διδάσκω]
- The emphasis on PREACHING is declaring the TRUTH...
- The emphasis on TEACHING is explaining the TRUTH!
- Repent...
 - Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!
 - The MESSAGE of John was simple people need to REPENT...
 - REPENT [μετανοέω] to think about our sins [νοέω] and CHANGE our ways...
 - And to do so while there was still time because the Kingdom of heaven is CLOSE!
 - Sadly the message of REPENTANCE has been neglected by the church in recent years...
 - While it is TRUE that God does accept SINNERS he does NOT accept SIN...
 - The KEY to receiving Jesus is seeing our need to CHANGE!
- o 3rd His Purpose... vs. 3
 - For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah. The voice of one crying in the wilderness.
 - Prepare the way of the LORD. Make His paths straight!
 - The PURPOSE of John according to the prophet Isaiah Isaiah 40:3
 - Was to prepare the way for the coming of the LORD [יְהֹנָה]
 - He prepared the hearts of the people to receive Jesus by telling them to REPENT…
 - So that the LORD could bring comfort to His people by forgiving their SINS!
 - Isaiah 40:1-2 "Comfort My people... that her iniquity is pardoned."
 - God gave us the most incredible GIFT He DIED so that we could LIVE John 3:16
 - What is amazing is that MOST of the world does NOT want His GIFT!
 - The problem is most people do NOT want to admit they are SINNERS...
 - But if we do NOT admit the PROBLEM we will NOT see our need for the SOLUTION…
 - Jesus [יְהֹוָה] came to take away our SIN but FIRST we need to prepare our hearts and REPENT!
- o 4th His appearance... vs. 4
 - Now John himself was clothed in camels hair with a leather belt around his waist.
 - And his food was locusts and wild honey!
 - The clothing of John was a direct connection to Elijah...
 - Who was also described as HARRY [camel] with a leather belt II Kings 1:8
 - The food of John ate was based on a KOSHER diet honey and locusts [protein] Leviticus 11:22
 - Put together it spoke of a man who lived SIMPLY desiring to follow the commands of God!
 - That does NOT mean we have to wear camel hair and eat locusts...
 - It does mean we realize it is NOT about the outside it is about the inside…
 - We should NOT be putting on a fashion show drawing attention to ourselves...
 - We should want instead people to see what is on the inside let them see Jesus in us!
 - I **Timothy 2:9** "Be modest in appearance... wear decent and appropriate clothing and not draw attention... by the way [we] fix [our] hair or by wearing gold... or expensive clothes." [NLT]
- o 5th His audience... vs. 5
 - Then Jerusalem all Judea and all the region around the Jordan went out to him!
 - Multitudes continually [imperfect] came from ALL $[\pi\tilde{\alpha}\varsigma]$ over to see John...
 - But WHY did so many people want to come see some guy preaching in the wilderness...
 - It was the very question Jesus would ask them the multitudes!
 - Luke 7:24 "What did you go out into the wilderness to see?"
 - Malachi was the LAST of the prophets from the Old Testament...

- God had been silent He had not spoken to His people for FOUR hundred years...
- Which is why when John spoke a prophet of God everyone came Luke 7:26
- They were willing to walk for days into the desert just to hear the Word of the LORD!
- We live in unprecedented times with access to the Word of God like no other generation...
- Not only do we have church we have online teachings Bibles on our phones…
- The question is do we have the DESIRE to we make the time to hear the WORD!
- o 6th His Baptism... vs. 6
 - Unclean...
 - [They] were baptized by him in the Jordan confessing their sins!
 - John BAPTIZED the people that came in WATER as they CONFESSED their sins...
 - He used the picture of needing a BATH so show people they were spiritually DIRTY!
 - Water baptism was common even back in the Old Testament among the Jews...
 - They would use MIKVEH [מקווה] to become ceremonially clean!
 - If someone never takes a bath they might think they are OK but in truth they STINK...
 - If we refuse to tell them confront them they go on smelling BAD...
 - In the same way we need to confront SIN let people know they are UNCLEAN...
 - Let them know they are SINNER so they see their need for a SAVIOR!
 - When ...
 - There is some debate within Christianity over WHEN someone is baptized...
 - John was NOT baptizing INFANTS these were ADULTS!
 - BAPTISM is about CHOOSING to REPENT and letting God make us CLEAN...
 - An INFANT cannot CHOSE therefore baptism is for those old enough to DECIDE!
 - How...
 - There is also a debate over HOW to baptize sprinkle or dunk...
 - BAPTISM [βαπτίζω] literally means to be fully immersed!
 - The poet Nicander [200 B.C.] wrote down a recipe for making pickles...
 - You BAPTIZE [βαπτίζω] the cucumber and it comes out changed a PICKLE!
 - I love the picture when we are BAPTIZED $[\beta\alpha\pi\tau i\zeta\omega]$ we go in a SINNER...
 - But we come out something different [pickled] we come out a SAINT!
 - Picture...
 - We are commanded as believers to be water BAPTIZED Acts 2:38
 - But water BAPTISM does not save us the thief on the cross Luke 23:43
 - Neither does BAPTISM make us part of a denomination...
 - BAPTISM is a picture of what happens when we believe in Jesus!
 - **Romans 6:4** "We were buried with Him through baptism into death that just as Christ was raised from the dead... even so we also should walk in newness of life."
 - If we have a diploma the paper does not give us any more knowledge...
 - But the paper represents the time and effort that went into earning that diploma!
 - Water baptism is the OUTWARD statement of what takes place WITHIN us...
 - We are BURIED with Jesus taken under the water a picture of our DEATH...
 - We are RAISED up with Jesus taken out of the water a picture of new LIFE...
 - We do it publicly so that everyone can see we believe in Jesus Romans 10:10
- 2ND Religious Leaders... vs. 7-12
 - o 1^{st} Vipers... vs. 7
 - Two Groups...
 - When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism.
 - Not everyone who came to John was there to be BAPTIZED...
 - There were TWO groups who came to SEE what John was doing!

- Pharisees a conservative SECT of Judaism created after the Babylonian Captivity...
- Sadducees a liberal SECT of Judaism who did NOT believe in the supernatural...
- These TWO groups DISAGREED on almost everything unless it challenged their POWER...
- And the large crowds coming to see John was just such a THREAT!
- Warning...
 - He said to them Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
 - Generation [from] of VIPERS a title both John and Jesus used– Matthew 23:33
 - Connecting them to their TRUE father the SERPENT [satan] John 8:44
 - They taught empty RELIGION that KEPT people from a true relationship with God...
 - Therefore John warned people to flee from them because of the COMING [present] wrath!
 - Mathew 23:13 "Woe to you... Pharisees hypocrites! You shut up the kingdom of heaven to men. For you neither go in yourselves nor do you allow those who are entering to go in."
 - We live in a country where many are hardened towards the Gospel...
 - Because they have been indoctrinated in a lifetime of RELIGION...
 - And they need to be WARNED their RELIGION will not save them from the coming WRATH!
- o 2nd Empty Religion... vs. 8-10
 - Good Fruit... vs. 8
 - Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance!
 - John would challenge RELIGION in THREE ways...
 - FIRST he called on them to examine their FRUIT...
 - Just because they went it the water it was NOT enough!
 - Just because we have been BAPTIZED does not mean we have REPENTED...
 - Our lives after we BELIEVE in Jesus should be DIFFERENT there should be good FRUIT!
 - **II Corinthians 13:5** "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you."
 - Stones... vs. 9
 - Do not think to say to yourselves We have Abraham as our father.
 - For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones!
 - SECOND John warned them NOT to put their FAITH in their NATIONALITY...
 - Some Jews believed because Abraham was their FATHER they were SAVED...
 - But God could make ROCKS children of Abraham and ROCKS are not going to heaven!
 - Just because someone is born in the Philippines does not make them a Christian...
 - Just because someone belongs to a church does not make them a Christian...
 - It does not matter if our parents are Christians even if they are a pastor [sorry Hallel]
 - Everyone has to CHOSE for themselves God does not have grandkids!
 - The Fire... vs. 10
 - Even now the ax 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!
 - ullet THIRD John warned of the DANGER of NOT bearing GOOD [καλός] fruit...
 - The AX was already [present] on the root of the tree [religion]
 - If God did not see GOOD fruit He would chop it down and throw it into the fire!
 - **John 15:6** "If anyone does not abide in Me he is cast out as a branch and is withered. They gather them and throw them into the fire and they are burned."
 - Those who are RELIGIOUS people who just go through the motions [even baptism]
 - Anyone who thinks they are a Christian by birth or church membership
 - But are not ABIDING in Jesus if there is no good FRUIT then they are NOT saved...
 - And the consequence for NOT being saved is ending up in the FIRE [hell]
- o 3^{rd} Baptism of the Spirit... vs. 11

- External...
 - I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance!
 - John was LIMITED to water BAPTISM it could only change the EXTERNAL...
 - It was an outward confession made to show someone had REPENTED!
- Internal
 - He who is coming after me is mightier than I whose sandals I am not worthy to carry.
 - He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire!
 - John knew someone MIGHTIER than him was coming...
 - A person so great he did was NOT even worthy to carry His shoes...
 - This person [Jesus] would BAPTIZE in the Holy Spirit setting us on FIRE for God!
 - It is one thing to ADMIT we are SINNERS [baptism] but how do we STOP sinning...
 - Not one makes us SIN we SIN because we want to Romans 7:15
 - And we do NOT have the POWER to be able to change our desires...
 - But God can His SPIRIT can transform us INTERNALLY change our DESIRES...
 - Jesus can FILL us OVERFLOW [$\epsilon \pi i$] us BAPTIZE us in the Spirit all we have to do is ASK!
 - Luke 11:13 -"Your heavenly Father [will] give the Holy Spirit to those who ask..."
- o 4th The Harvest... vs. 12
 - The Wheat...
 - His winnowing fan is in His hand and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor.
 - [He will] gather His wheat into the barn!
 - John concluded by stating God had already started His HARVEST His fan was in His hand...
 - And he would separate all men into either piles of WHEAT or CHAFF!
 - In biblical times the way to separate what from chaff was with WIND [fan]
 - The chaff was lighter and would be carried farther than the wheat...
 - Because much like when rice when it is first harvested it is not ready to be cooked...
 - The rice stalk needs to be dehusked to separate the labhang [chaff] from the bugas [wheat]!
 - God uses this LIFE to separate us into two piles we either chose to be WHEAT...
 - And He will gather them into His BARN take them to Heaven!
 - II Timothy 2:19 "Having this seal: The Lord knows those who are His. Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity."
 - The Chaff...
 - He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire!
 - Those who do NOT chose to REPENT will be counted as CHAFF...
 - They are gathered together and thrown into the unquenchable [ἄσβεστος] FIRE!
 - Mark 9:43 "Hell... the fire that shall never be quenched [ἄσβεστος]."
 - There is only ONE alternate eternal destination for men...
 - Those who do not end up in HEAVEN [wheat] will be burned forever in HELL [chaff]
- 3^{RD} Baptism of Jesus... vs. 13-17
 - o 1st Unworthy... vs. 13-15
 - Baptism... vs. 13
 - Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him!
 - This is one of only handful of events in the life of Jesus recorded in all FOUR Gospels...
 - We do NOT know how long [weeks months] John was preaching before Jesus came...
 - But when the time was RIGHT it was Jesus turn to be BAPTIZED!
 - Argument... vs. 14
 - John tried to prevent Him saying I need to be baptized by You and are You coming to me?
 - At first John REFUSED [imperfect] to baptize Jesus...
 - He recognized Jesus as being the one who should do the BAPTIZING!

- Righteousness... vs. 15
 - But Jesus answered and said to him Permit it to be so now.
 - For thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he allowed Him!
 - Jesus commanded [imperative] John to Baptize Him...
 - Not because John was wrong Jesus was the greater [He is God]
 - But the BAPTISM needed to happen to fulfill ALL $[\pi \tilde{\alpha} \varsigma]$ righteousness!
 - The purpose of BAPTISM is to confess our SINS desire to be CLEAN...
 - Why then would Jesus need to be BAPTIZED He had NO sin!
 - I Peter 2:21 "Christ... [left] us an example that you should follow His steps."
 - Everything Jesus did was meant to be a PATTERN for our lives to follow...
 - That is why Jesus came to the earth as a CHILD [born]
 - He was called out of the world [Egypt] to live separate for God [Nazarite]
 - And when the time came He was water Baptized as He began His ministry...
 - Because in every way we can look to Jesus and know how we also are to walk!
- o 2nd Trinity... vs. 16-17
 - The Son... vs. 16
 - When He had been baptized Jesus came up immediately from the water...
 - Behold the heavens were opened to [John]!
 - Something miraculous happened at the Baptism of Jesus...
 - The moment Jesus out of the water the heavens opened [clouds parted] for John [dative]
 - Holy Spirit... vs. 16
 - [John] saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon [Jesus]!
 - Jesus was filled [$\dot{\epsilon}\pi\dot{\imath}$] with the Spirit at His Baptism...
 - This was the confirmation John was looking for that Jesus was the SON of God!
 - **John 1:33** "[God] told me The one on whom you see the Spirit descend and rest is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirt... [He is] the Son of God." [NLT]
 - The Father... vs. 17
 - [Behold] a voice came from heaven This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased!
 - The FINAL evidence was the VOICE that came from heaven...
 - The FATHER declared Jesus was His SON and He was PLEASED [εὐδοκέω] in Him...
 - God was PLEASED because Jesus was willing to be the SACRIFICE to save us...
 - Because the dilemma was God was NOT pleased by any other sacrifice!
 - Hebrews 10:6 "In... sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure [εὐδοκέω]."
 - As Jesus went under the water [death] and came back up [new life]
 - His Baptism foreshadowing the HOPE that He would bring through the cross...
 - Do not miss WHO was there to CONFIRM His calling and purpose...
 - All THREE persons of the Godhead [Trinity] as Jesus officially began His Ministry!