

Theme: As Jesus comes to take up His work as the Redeemer and Savior of mankind, the witness of heaven and earth affirms and declares Him to be the Eternal Son of God and the Son of Man. In praise and thanksgiving we add our voices to that declaration.

Background:

John has done his job, fulfilled his calling. Prepare the way!!
As Jesus assumes the mantle of the Messiah – Affirmation is given.

Introduction: What have been your life altering decisions? Did you look for affirmation regarding it.

I. Testimony of John (15-20)

A. Not me! “I am not the One”

1. His message? Judgment coming; repent/prepare
2. His baptism? For repentant sinners; sign of the cleansing needed

B. He is coming!

1. Of surpassing worth
 - Not worthy to untie sandals.
2. He will baptize
 - a. With the Holy Spirit - Sign of God’s presence. Joel 2:28-32; Eze.36:25-27
 - Gives *inwardly* what John’s baptism symbolized outwardly
 - Jesus has authority to give the Spirit!
 - b. With fire! Purifies and purges
3. The mighty Judge
 - Winnowing fork (divide wheat from chaff- no universal salvation)

C. John’s ministry recedes (18-20) John 3:30 “He must increase, I must decrease”

1. A fearless preacher – to small and great
2. Good news?? To Herod??
 - Flee judgment!
 - Repent – and bring forth the fruit of repentance

APPLICATION:

1. If we understand John’s message – we need to repent, turn, look to the Savior to avoid the judgment of God. (1 John 1:8-10)
2. When Christ enters into *our world*, into our lives, He must increase, we must decrease.
3. Like John – we are called to declare the good news.

II. The Testimony of God (21-22)

A. Jesus’ baptism

- Has been baptized “to fulfill all righteousness” (Matthew 3:15)
- Jesus offers himself as *the* substitute and *representative* of sinners

B. At prayer!!

- In times when wisdom is crucial

C. God *Answers*

1. “The heavens were opened”
 - No attempt to describe it
 - Confirming that Jesus is *the Son of God* in a unique and absolute sense.
2. The Holy Spirit descended upon him.
 - In form of a dove; symbol of purity, innocence
 - Equipped by the Spirit, with *official* blessing
3. A voice from Heaven!
 - a. “You are my beloved Son”; with you I am well pleased.”
 - This is the eternal Son.
 - b. “With you I am well pleased.”
 - Pleased with His submission, obedience and obedient sacrifice

Application: Jesus opens heaven to us, that we too, might see Him in glory.

III. The Testimony of His Lineage

- A. Another genealogy? Jews and Greeks alike are careful to trace lineage/heritage. Luke's genealogy differs radically from Matthew's list
 1. Numerous explanations
 - Many plausible
 - None truly definitive
 2. Personal view
 - Luke is so careful to demonstrate Joseph is *not* true father; he wouldn't trace lineage of Jesus through him - but through his mother.
 - May be unprecedented – but so is birth of Jesus!
- B. A covenant heir
 1. Heir of David – rights as royal heir - King!
 2. Heir of Abraham – blessing to the nations
 3. Heir of Adam – represents whole human race
- C. Son of God
 - Adam was a son of God (*made* by Him directly –Adam was an image bearer.)
 - Jesus is “eternally begotten” - (Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3)
 - A true and holy second Adam

Application: Our Genealogy??

1. Only one line matters - the one that connects us to Jesus!
2. We all come from the same line – but only Jesus can unite us.

IV. The Testimony of the Church

- A. Through the ages – An undeniable *positive* impact in the world
- B. And today? – Where are we?
 - Proclaiming the unique place of Jesus in heaven and on earth?
 - Living with our eyes and hearts fixed on the Kingdom of Heaven?