

Discussion Questions for “Spirit & Power: John’s Ministry”
Matthew 3:1-12, Pastor Tom Olson, Weekend of December 6th & 7th, 2025

Sermon Outline

Why pay attention to John’s ministry?

1. His calling (v. 3)
2. His fruitfulness (v. 5)
3. His look (v. 4)

What’s the substance of John’s ministry?

1. King Jesus (vv. 2, 11)
2. Fruit-bearing repentance (vv. 2, 5-10)
3. Baptism (vv. 6, 11)
4. Eternal Judgment (vv. 10-12)

Sermon Questions

1. John the Baptist had *huge crowds* coming to hear him preach (v. 5).
 - a. When are big numbers a *bad reason* to pay attention to someone?
 - b. When are they a *good reason* to pay attention to someone?
2. Is there someone in your life – a grandparent, mentor, coach, etc. – whose *fruitfulness* you really admire? What have you learned from them?
3. Matthew 3 is the third passage we’ve studied (along with Luke 1 and John 3) where it’s been incredibly clear that John’s focus is on *King Jesus*.
 - a. Why is this repetition a reason to *tune in* rather than *tune out*?
 - b. Do you ever get tired of repetition in your spiritual life?
 - c. Why is repetition *good for our souls*? (See Philippians 3:1.)
4. What is the meaning of the word *repentance*?
 - a. How does today’s passage help *define* it? (Try to highlight at least 3-4 ways.)
 - b. If we’re all sinners – and if none of us will be perfect this side of heaven – how can we tell if *we are or are not* repentant?
5. Have you been baptized?
 - a. If you have, what do you remember about that day? How did it bless you?
 - b. If you haven’t, what’s holding you back?
6. How does John the Baptist talk about hell in this passage? And why is it important to wrestle with his teaching, regardless of how uncomfortable it may feel to us?
7. Any other takeaways from this passage or message?