# **Matthew Part 3**

**Matthew 3:1-6 NIV**

1 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea 2 and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” 3 This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: “A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’ ” 4 John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. 5 People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. 6 Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

2. John the Baptist is presented to us here.

a. John is a symbol of Jesus’ kingdom

i. He forsook his earthly father’s ministry for the sake of his heavenly Father’s

ii. He isn’t found in the cities but out in the desert

iii. He isn’t dressed up

iv. John was positioned perfectly to allow people to come free of distractions

v. How distracted are we?

3. What John is, is a herald

a. Now a herald during this time had two primary responsibilities

i. He would *prepare* the way for a king

ii. And he would *proclaim* the coming of a king

b. He does this by “preaching” or “proclaiming” or “heralding” a message. It’s the first thing we see John say here, it’s the first words we will see in the preaching of Jesus ([Matt 4:17](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt4.17)), and when Jesus sends out the disciples ([Mark 6:12](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mk6.12))

4. The message is “repent.”

a. The message is “repent - take off the old evil self, and put on the new and draw near to God”

5. Repentance calls us to action

Many mourn for their sins that do not truly repent of them, weep bitterly for them, and yet continue in love and league with them - Matthew Henry

1. So, the message is clear - “repent.”

a. When we see this message, or we hear this message most often we think of an angry message, an angry messenger, and an angry God

b. And most certainly our sin is great and absolutely deserving of punishment

c. But we should not view repentance as a bad thing

d. Rather we should see repentance as an extension of God’s grace

e. What we are deserving of is immediate wrath and immediate judgment

f. But our king of grace doesn’t operate that way

2. John says “repent.” why? because the kingdom of heaven has come near. Or probably more accurately “has drawn near.”

a. So, part of what John is preaching is turn from your sins. Turn from your old self. Turn from the former things

b. But what I also believe is happening here is the call to repent for misunderstanding the kingdom of God

c. This kingdom that has drawn near is nothing like the kingdom that was expected. And so part of the repentance for the original audience and I believe for us is to repent for completely missing it

g. John is saying “You guys are waiting on a kingdom that is not coming and meanwhile you’re missing out on the kingdom that is here”

h. How often do we miss out on what God is doing because it didn’t look how we thought it would?

**Matthew 3:6 NIV**

6 Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

1. John the Baptist got his title because he was known to baptize people in the Jordan river

a. The word means to dip, plunge, submerge, or immerse. It was also used in the passive to mean “be drowned” and it was used to describe ships that had sunk.

b. We shouldn’t miss this violent imagery. Baptism signifies death to a whole way of life.

c. It’s the symbol of us drowning out our old self and being raised to life in Christ.

d. And it goes hand and hand with repentance and salvation

e. So here is my urge to you. If you truly want to repent of your sins, die to your old self and lay your life down to follow King Jesus then the next step for you is to be baptized.

› Pray