

Luke 3:15-17

The setting for John's teaching—3:15-16a

- 1) The people were engaged in speculation
 - a) Expectancy—¹⁵ *Now while the people were in anticipation* [προσδοκάω],
 - i) Hoping someone would deliver them (cf. 3:7-9)
 - b) Uncertainty—*and all were deliberating* [διαλογίζομαι] *in their hearts concerning John, whether **he** (emphatic) might be the Christ/Messiah,*
 - i) This could be potentially flattering to someone with the wrong focus.
 - (1) Cf. John 1:19-25 the Sanhedrin sent Pharisees to ask him directly
 - ii) The Jews were susceptible to those who offered false hopes of deliverance.
- 2) What did John do?
 - a) ¹⁶ *John responded, saying to them all,*

John corrects their theology—3:16b-17

- 1) John compares his ministry to that of Jesus
 - a) “*On the one hand* [μέν] **I** (emphatic) *am immersing* [βαπτίζω] *you^{pl} in water* [dative of sphere],
 - i) One is rightly related to John and his message by submitting to his **external** immersion in water.
 - b) *but on the other hand* [δέ] ...
 - i) John's humility
 - (1) Recognition of Jesus' superiority—*One more powerful than I am is coming,*
 - (2) Recognition of John's servant-hood—*whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie.*
 - (a) Even though John was God's chosen prophet, he considers himself not worthy to perform even the most degrading, menial task.
 - (3) John makes sure to emphasize that Jesus is not a disciple that will eventually surpass John. Jesus is superior from the beginning.
 - ii) John's anticipation—**He** (emphatic) *will immerse* [βαπτίζω] *you^{pl} in* [έν] *the Holy Spirit and fire.*
 - (1) Immersed in the Spirit at Pentecost (cf. Joel 2:28; Ezekiel 36:25-27)
 - (a) One is rightly related to Jesus and His message by experiencing His **internal** immersion in the Spirit.
 - (2) Immersed in fire at God's judgment
 - iii) Jesus' immersion is greater than that of John (cf. Acts 19:1-7)
- 2) John explains Jesus' greater immersion in the Holy Spirit and fire (cf. 2:34)
 - a) Salvation: the righteous are immersed in the Holy Spirit
 - i) Preparation—¹⁷ *His winnowing fork is in His hand,*
 - ii) Decisive judgment—*and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor,*
 - (1) Separation of the wheat from the chaff is rooted in the very nature of the wheat and chaff. Their true character is revealed during the threshing process.

- iii) Security—*and He will gather the wheat into His barn,*
- b) Judgment: the unrighteous are immersed in fire—*but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.*
- i) Cf. Psalm 1:4

Take-home truth: Which baptism/immersion have/will YOU experience