

# **Adult Vacation Bible School 2020**

**“Wild About Jesus”**

**Encounter at the River  
Matthew 3:1-17  
Day 1**

*Palestine Missionary Baptist Church of Jesus Christ  
Rev. James D. Watkins Sr. - Pastor*

***Each of our lessons beginning with tonight's  
lesson,  
will focus on life  
changing encounters with Jesus.  
Each lesson will provide a snapshot of  
Jesus' life & provide us an opportunity  
to respond to the gospel.***

# Goals for tonight...

- Review the encounter at the river with Jesus and John the Baptist
- Appreciate what repentance is and how to it helped prepare the way for Jesus to come into people's heart
- Apply the (7) fruits of repentance
- Commit to applying specific steps when repenting of our sins

"To repent is to  
change one's attitude  
toward self,  
toward sin,  
toward God,  
toward Christ."

~ H. A. Ironside

**3** <sup>1-2</sup> While Jesus was living in the Galilean hills, John, called “the Baptizer,” was preaching in the desert country of Judea. His message was simple and austere, like his desert surroundings: “Change your life. God’s kingdom is here.”

<sup>3</sup> John and his message were authorized by Isaiah’s prophecy:

Thunder in the desert!

Prepare for God’s arrival!

Make the road smooth and straight!

<sup>4-6</sup> John dressed in a camel-hair habit tied at the waist by a leather strap. He lived on a diet of locusts and wild field honey. People poured out of Jerusalem, Judea, and the Jordanian countryside to hear and see him in action. There at the Jordan River those who came to confess their sins were baptized into a changed life.

7-10 When John realized that a lot of Pharisees and Sadducees were showing up for a baptismal experience because it was becoming the popular thing to do, he exploded: “Brood of snakes! What do you think you’re doing slithering down here to the river? Do you think a little water on your snakeskins is going to make any difference? It’s your life that must change, not your skin! And don’t think you can pull rank by claiming Abraham as father. Being a descendant of Abraham is neither here nor there. Descendants of Abraham are a dime a dozen. What counts is your life. Is it green and blossoming? Because if it’s deadwood, it goes on the fire.

<sup>11-12</sup> “I’m baptizing you here in the river, turning your old life in for a kingdom life. The real action comes next: The main character in this drama—compared to him I’m a mere stagehand—will ignite the kingdom life within you, a fire within you, the Holy Spirit within you, changing you from the inside out. He’s going to clean house—make a clean sweep of your lives. He’ll place everything true in its proper place before God; everything false he’ll put out with the trash to be burned.”

<sup>13-14</sup> Jesus then appeared, arriving at the Jordan River from Galilee. He wanted John to baptize him. John objected, “I’m the one who needs to be baptized, not *you!*”



<sup>15</sup> But Jesus insisted. “Do it. God’s work, putting things right all these centuries, is coming together right now in this baptism.” So John did it.

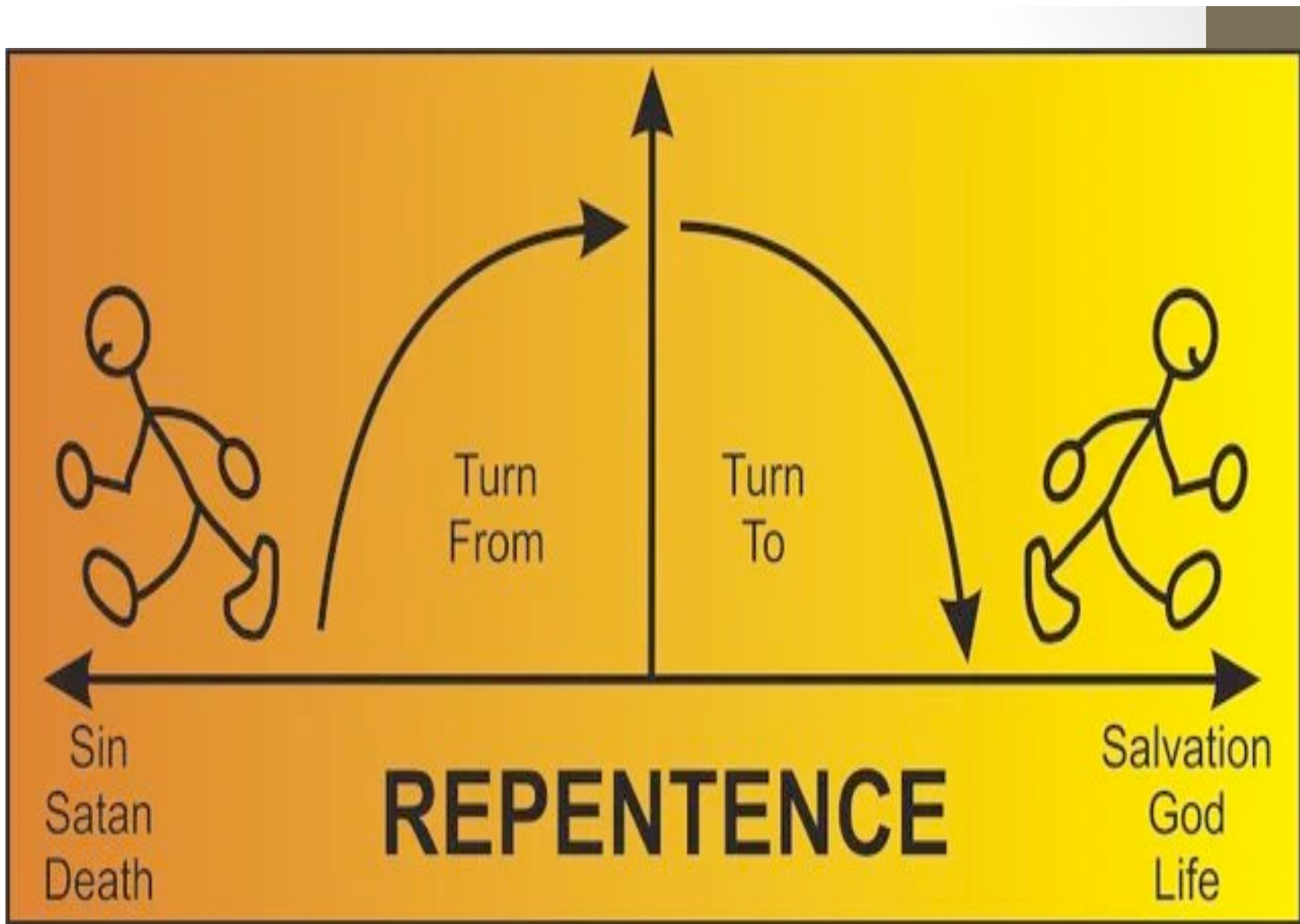
<sup>16-17</sup> The moment Jesus came up out of the baptismal waters, the skies opened up and he saw God’s Spirit—it looked like a dove—descending and landing on him. And along with the Spirit, a voice: “This is my Son, chosen and marked by my love, delight of my life.”



Repentance

## *5 Steps to Repentance*

- **Acknowledge the SIN**
- **Confess the SIN**
- **Asking forgiveness**
- **Turn away from the SIN**
- **Restoring the wrong done**



# Who is John the Baptist

- Only son of Zechariah (priest) and his wife Elizabeth
- Grew up in a religious desert community
- Devoted himself to Bible study and prayer
- Wanted to know “who he was” and “what God wanted him to do in his life”
- Had an unusual birth
- Parents raised him in the fear and the knowledge of God

# Who is John the Baptist cont'd

- Words of Isaiah 40:3 caught his attention...A voice of one calling: “In the desert prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God.” He refers to them in verse 3 of Matthew...They were God’s personal message to him.
- Found his life purpose in the Bible
- Found his true identity as the messenger of the Lord and he found his mission was to prepare the way of the Lord

# Matthew 3:2

His message was simple and austere, like his desert surroundings: "Change your life. God's kingdom is here."

-Message Bible

Question:

**Why is repentance so  
much a matter of the  
heart?**



WHEN WE  
**repent,**  
GOD CAN  
**restore**  
WHAT OUR PRIDE  
AND HARD HEART  
HAVE WRECKED.

—CHUCK SWINDOLL

INSIGHT  
FOR LIVING  
MINISTRIES

# #1 The message of repentance

- John said, “Repent”
- Repentance has been the message of God throughout time
- Without repentance, no hope, no forgiveness, no life
- Repentance is the way BACK to God
- Repentance is a sign of a Humble HEART
- Way of Repentance...humble ourselves and find a way back to Him

## #2 The message of the kingdom of heaven

- Kingdom of heaven is also the way back to God
- Choice – continue to journey in sin or journey back to the kingdom of heaven
- The kingdom of Heaven is our home. It is also our only HOPE.
- John preached hope. He gave his people something to hope for...something they can hold on to that will not parish
- REPENT of our worldly hopes and put our hope in Christ and his Heavenly Kingdom

# Verse 4

## Verse 4

John dressed in a camel-hair habit tied at the waist by a leather strap. He lived on a diet of locusts and wild field honey.

## John identifies with the people...

John was popular and beloved. He lived in the desert by choice and wore raggedy clothes.

Why does this matter?

He wanted to obey the will of God and he lived by the words of God.

# Verse 5

## Verse 5

People poured out of Jerusalem, Judea, and the Jordanian countryside to hear and see him in action. There at the Jordan River those who came to confess their sins were baptized into a changed life.

## The people identify with John...

The message of repentance is a message of grace. John loved his people with the love of God. He rebuked them to repent. They didn't hate him. Instead, they accepted his love and loved him back. They responded to this grace message by repenting with their hearts. They wanted to come back to God.

# Verses 7 - 9

Not everyone who came to see John came to repent. (religious leaders, men in authority)

They performed their religious duties really well, but they were corrupt because they took God's grace for granted. Self-righteous

Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. God wants us all to produce

John 15:16

# Signs/Fruits of Repentance

## 2 Corinthians 7:11

- **EARNESTNESS** – Aggressively pursuing righteousness. Sincere about getting free from sin. They are genuine and sincere about being more Christ-like.
- **CLEAR THEMSELVES** – This isn't paying for their own sin, they don't want to hide their sin but have it removed at all costs. Willing to do whatever it takes to ensure it is gone.
- **INDIGNATION** – Their attitude toward sin is one of anger. Sin isn't wrong because they were found out or someone told them but because they know it hurt their relationship with God.
- **ALARM OR FEAR** – Their eyes are open to keep from sinning again. They have set up boundaries and precautions. They also have a fear of God's wrath towards sin as well.

# Signs/Fruits of Repentance

## 2 Corinthians 7:11

- **DESIRE TO BE IN A PERFECT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** – They want to have a rich, full, growing relationship with Jesus.
- **ZEAL** or **PASSION** to serve and live for HIM
- **DESIRE TO AVENGE SIN** – They desire to make all wrongs..right. These signs, Paul says, leads us to “being innocent in the manner.” It isn’t pretending the sin never happened but resting in the blood, suffering, and cleansing work of Jesus death on the cross.



# Prayer of Repentance

Lord, you know my heart,  
there's nothing I can hide  
from you. I have strayed  
from the path, I have  
been lured away, but  
Oh Heavenly Father,  
restore to me the joy of  
Your salvation, that  
wonderful freedom  
and joy  
when I  
first came  
to know you.



Read full Prayer at: [christianstt.com](http://christianstt.com)