

He Must Increase

John 3: 22 – 36

5 January 2020

Series: John: The Deity of Christ

John 3: 22 - 26

²² After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He was spending time with them and baptizing. ²³ John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and *people* were coming and were being baptized— ²⁴ for John had not yet been thrown into prison. ²⁵ Therefore there arose a discussion on the part of John's disciples with a Jew about purification. ²⁶ And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified, behold, He is baptizing and all are coming to Him."

John 3: 27 - 30

²⁷ John answered and said, “A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, ‘I am not the Christ,’ but, ‘I have been sent ahead of Him.’ ²⁹ “He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice. So this joy of mine has been made full. ³⁰ “He must increase, but I must decrease.

John 3: 31 - 36

³¹ “He who comes from above is above all, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all. ³² “What He has seen and heard, of that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. ³³ “He who has received His testimony has set his seal to *this*, that God is true. ³⁴ “For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure. ³⁵ “The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. ³⁶ “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

A Potential Ministry Rivalry. Vv. 22 – 26.

- Jesus' Disciples baptizing and John also in the North.
 - John 4: 2, specifies that it wasn't Jesus Himself doing the baptizing.
- The Discussion of purification.
 - Was it a question of a difference between the baptism under Jesus and John?
 - Was the question related to Jewish purification laws versus John?
- The question for John.
 - Doesn't seem to have anything to do with purification.
 - The statement is made that Jesus is attracting a greater following than John, and some of that was at John's loss.
- Ministry rivalry continues.
 - Not all preachers are gifted the same.
 - God blesses some with a greater following than others.

God Gave Me My Ministry. Vv. 27 - 30

- God's Heralds receive from God their called ministry.
 - There was no rivalry between John and Jesus.
 - John reminded them that His call was to prepare the way for Jesus.
 - God's pastor cannot do what God has not given him to do.
- John compares himself to the best man of a groom.
 - Jesus is the groom, John's job was to rejoice after completing his task.
 - John's job was to bring the bride to the groom.
 - With that accomplished all that was left for him was rejoicing.
- He must increase, but I must decrease.
 - John's ministry was coming to an end and it was time for him to fade out.
 - It is as if John is saying, "When will you realize that I am telling you to follow Jesus?"

Why Christ Must Increase. Vv. 31 – 36.

- He came from above.
 - Jesus came down from heaven, John was from the earth.
- He is the eye witness of heavenly things.
 - John had a wonderful ministry, but Jesus' is greater.
 - Sadly the fact is spelled out here that only a few receive Christ.
 - Those who believe have signed off on Jesus.
- He speaks the word of God having the Spirit without measure.
 - Prophets and indwelt Christians today limit the Spirit's work due to their sin and flesh.
 - Jesus is loved by God and has all things given to Him.
- Believe in Him proving by obedience and you have eternal life.
 - Disobedience is not believing and already the settled wrath of God is present.

Conclusion

- There should be no rivalry in Christianity between Pastor's or other Christian ministers or ministries, and especially between ministry leaders and Christ.
- Every minister has been given the ministry by God, including the uniqueness of that ministry and the results whether small or large.
- The goal of every Godly Pastor and minister is that Jesus must increase and I must decrease.
- Church, Ministry, and all of Christianity is about Jesus being elevated and glorified by all that we say and do.
- He whom God has sent speaks the words of God (v.34) obviously applies directly to Jesus and all He said as recorded in the Scripture, and should apply to every Pastor preaching from the pulpit.