

The Call to Burning and Shining – The Life of John the Baptist

I. GOD'S COMMITMENT TO ESTABLISH FORERUNNERS AT THE END OF THE AGE

What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, “Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.’ (Matthew 11:9-10)

Is a trumpet blown in a city, and the people are not afraid? Does disaster come to a city, unless the Lord has done it? “For the Lord God does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets. The lion has roared; who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken; who can but prophesy?” (Amos 3:6-8)

II. THE PRACTICALITIES OF THE FORERUNNER MINISTRY

- A. The fact that God is committed to raising up the forerunner ministry has profound practical implications for those who feel called to it.
- B. We as a community want to commit to going deep in the subject of the end-times not simply to understand it but to make appropriate lifestyle decisions. We're looking at the subject of eschatology so that our lives honor God within the historical context that we find ourselves in.
- C. Those who feel called to the forerunner ministry are called to a unique level of consecration. To some this will sound elite. But once you become familiar with the rigors and pressures that are inescapable for those who are called to this ministry you begin to understand that spiritual elitism isn't their biggest problem – quitting is.
- D. My hope is that many who hear this message concerning the forerunner ministry will make radical lifestyle decisions and understand the pressures associated with this ministry.
- E. John the Baptist is the clearest picture in Scripture of both. John made radical lifestyle decisions and experienced unbelievable pressure.

III. 7 FACETS OF THE LIFE OF JOHN THE BAPTIST PROPHESED BY THE ANGEL (LUKE 1)

But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared." (Luke 1:13-17)

- A. John's Heritage ("Zechariah, your prayer has been heard")
- B. John's Greatness ("He will be great before the Lord")

- C. John's Consecration (the resisting of legitimate and illegitimate pleasures)
- D. John's Anointing ("He will be filled with the Holy Spirit")
- D. John's Message ("He will turn many")
- F. John's Mandate ("He will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah")
- G. John's Mandate ("To make ready a people prepared for the Lord")

IV. JOHN'S LIFESTYLE VINDICATED BY JESUS (MATTHEW 11)

- A. John's Consecration 7-10
- B. John's Greatness 11
- C. John's Violence 12-15
- D. John's Message 16-19

V. JOHN'S 6-FOLD REVELATION OF HIS MANDATE (JOHN 3)

And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, he who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you bore witness--look, he is baptizing, and all are going to him." John answered, "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven. You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him.' The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete. (John 3:26-29)

- A. John's revelation of Ministry – *"A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven."*
- B. John's revelation of Ministry – *"You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him.'"*
- C. John's Revelation of God – *"The one who has the bride is the bridegroom..."*
- D. John's revelation of the People of God – *"...who has the Bride..."*
- E. John's revelation of Himself – *"...the friend of the bridegroom..."*
- F. John's revelation of His Ministry Mandate – *"...stands and hears and rejoices greatly..."*