

He Must Increase

John 3:22-36

- John the Apostle
 - Author, Close to Jesus (John 19:26-27)
- John the Baptist
 - Cousin to Jesus – Luke 1:36
 - The prophet to clear the way - Luke 1:76
 - Fulfilled Old Testament prophecy – Isaiah 40:3, Malachi 3:1
 - He practiced the baptism of repentance
 - An outward act to prepare for the arrival of salvation
 - The last prophet by office was Malachai, ~400 years prior
 - The bridging prophet between the Old and New Covenants.
- The location of Aenon
 - Southern Judea, bordering on Sumeria
 - Dry hills descending into a green river valley

- Purification

- καθαρισμός (katharismos) — “cleansing, purification.”
 - Used in John 2:6, Hebrews 1:3, Mark 7:4
 - For the Jews, a ritual washing.

- “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 3:26

- John had previously testified to Jesus’s divinity.
 - John 1:29 – “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.”

- John's humble and clear response – John 3:27
 - οὐ δύναται λαβεῖν (ou dynatai labein) – “A man can receive nothing”
 - οὐ = “It is not so.”
 - μή (*mē*) = “It should not be” or “would not be.”
 - λαβεῖν (labein) – “to receive, to take hold of.”
 - δεδομένον (dedomenon) – “To give”
 - Perfect Passive Participle
 - Perfect tense means it is a completed action with continuing result
 - Passive voice means the subject (man) receives the action

- The wedding analogy

ששבין

- Shoshbin - The friend of the bridegroom
 - Helped negotiate the marriage contract
 - Delivered invitations
 - Provided the wedding gifts
 - Guarded the bridal chamber

- John's humble confession – John 3:30
- “He must increase, but I must decrease.”
 - ἐλαττοῦσθαι (elattousthai) — “to become less, to diminish.”
 - Also used in Hebrews 2:7 when quoting Psalm 8:5
 - “You have made Him for a little while lower than the angels”
 - The decrease has a divine purpose
- The reason He must increase
 - “He who comes from heaven is above all”
 - Truth flows down from heaven, it does not originate on earth

- “What he has seen and heard...”
 - Many OT prophet's calls have two sensory words – Seeing & Hearing
 - Isaiah 6:1-9, Ezekiel 1:1-3, Jeremiah 1:11-12, Amos 1:1-3
- “... ,of **that** He testifies;...”
 - τοῦτο (*toûto*) – “this, that which is near or present”
 - Directly relates to what Jesus has seen and heard
 - Other prophets testify what the Lord has shown or told them. Jesus testifies what He has seen and heard
- “... and no one received His testimony.”
 - οὐδεὶς (*oudeis*) – No one.
 - οὐ + εἷς = A negating particle that denies a fact
 - It functions as a negative pronoun expressing the general human condition of disbelief
- Set our seals that God is true
 - ἀληθῆς (*alēthēs*) – True, manifests, full reality; that which cannot deceive or conceal.
 - John 5:32, 7:28, 8:16, 8:26, 17:3, 1 John 5:20

- John's conclusion

- He gives the Spirit without measure

- οὐ γὰρ ἐκ μέτρου – “No with limitation”
 - The strong negation used again to define.

- God has given ALL things to His Son

- If you believe in the Son, you will have eternal life

- πιστεύων (pisteuōn) – “believing, ongoing trust”

- If you do not obey the Son, you will not see life

- ἀπειθῶν (apeithōn) – “the one who refuses to be persuaded”

- Reflection

- Christ must increase!

- Where might we need Him to increase in our lives and the Church?

- The Church is guided by what is from above, not from the earth

- Are we making sure our worship, teaching, and priorities are shaped by God's truth?

- Faith is an active allegiance.

- Is our ongoing obedience showing that we truly believe?

Closing Prayer

Now may the God of peace
himself sanctify you completely,
and may your whole spirit and
soul and body be kept blameless
at the coming of our Lord Jesus
Christ.

1 Thess. 5:23