

John #19

3:22-30

04.29.07

“He Must Increase ... I Must Decrease”

Intro: It has been said of John the Baptist that he stood as a _____ with one foot in the Old Testament and the other in the New bridging the two. It was his to _____ the people of the Old Covenant to come into the New by pointing them to Jesus Christ, who is the Mediator of the _____ Covenant.

A. On this Lord’s Day, as we look to our text, we will read a portion of _____ that further _____ of the beginnings and moreover, the rise of the Lord’s ministry and simultaneously, of the fulfillment and winding down of John the Baptist’s ministry.

John 3:22-30

I. _____ and His disciples _____ out from the city of Jerusalem into the Judean countryside.

A. Jesus was _____ with His disciples and baptizing.

1. The word translated “spending time” is the same from which we get the word “diatribe.” It refers to that which is _____, lengthy and on going. It literally means “to _____ or consume by rubbing.”

a. Jesus tarried with His disciples. He spent a considerable amount of _____ with them making an impression upon them, _____ them into the men God desired them to be, teaching and training them, making mature _____ of them.

2. According to The Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) each and every believer is to be a deliberate purposeful disciple-maker whereby we invest our God-given time and God-granted resources and God-given abilities to _____ God-fearing _____!

a. If we will carefully _____ our Lord _____ as the Master disciple-maker and obediently pattern our lives after His, we will _____-makers ourselves.

b. As a part of disciple-making, the good Lord _____ His disciples in the functions of ministry; something which all proper Christian disciple-making must include - _____ to _____.

II. John the Baptist and his disciples were _____ and baptizing in the same vicinity as Jesus and His disciples.

A. While there, a Jew (who is unknown to us) _____ with John’s _____ about purification.

1. It appears that this “discussion” served as a catalyst in bringing John’s disciples to tell him that _____ was _____ in the same area with favorable results.

B. John’s disciples wanted to _____ their Rabbi of the events concerning Christ and _____ of his response, for he was their teacher.

1. The Baptist responded to the news by _____ the Lord Jesus and _____ in His success, and began teaching his disciples to _____ the work of God through whomever God would choose to manifest the work of His hand.

2. John reminded his disciples that he was not the Christ, but _____ who was not even so worthy as to unlatch His sandals, but who was granted the divine _____ of going before Him to prepare the people to receive Him.

3. John expressed that it was only right that the _____ go to the groom; and that, since he was a friend of the groom he rejoiced greatly that the groom’s call was being heard and that the bride was _____. And so, as his disciples brought the good news of the Lord’s rise in popularity, and knowing that he had served His purposes, John could truly say “this _____ of mine has been _____.”

C. John said, “_____ increase, but _____ decrease.” These are the words of a humble minister who knows what ministry is all about.

1. John was saying to his disciples, “Since I have by divine call prepared the way of the Lord, and since He has come, I and my ministry must now decrease. I must of divine necessity, diminish. And He, our Lord and God in His ministry must increase. He must of divine necessity, enlarge. Disciples, it is _____ about _____ or you, but _____ our Lord _____, who is the Christ! May Christ be glorified!”

Closing: “He must increase, but I must decrease!” Dear church, this is a phrase we should learn and memorize and _____. This life is not about us, but our Savior and Lord, Christ Jesus! We are not our own, for we have been bought with a price - the blood of Christ! And it is ours - _____ divine _____ - to humbly _____ our Lord for He is the _____, our Husband.

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