

What Does True Humility Look like?
John the Baptist
Luke 3:1-6

I. Tools to enhance humility

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| 1. | Conflict | Luke 3:7 |
| 2. | Desert times | Luke 1:80 |
| 3. | Times of doubt | Luke 7:18-23 |
| 4. | Process of death | Luke 9:7-9 |

II. Characteristics of humility **John 3:22-30**

1. Embrace their identity and purpose
2. Know their weak spots
3. Handle applause well
4. Descend into greatness

Questions for this week:

I. For Starters:

1. Who in the Bible, besides Jesus, if you could, would you like to spend a day with? Explain why.
2. When is the last time someone hated you or rejected you for your love of Christ and the Gospel? How did the event affect you?

II. Overview of Scripture

1. Read Mark 1:1-8 (one of the other accounts of John the Baptist's ministry). What do you see that encourages you?
2. What does 1:1 tell us about Mark's Gospel?
3. In your own words, who is John the Baptist? (vs. 1-2)
4. In your own words, why was he sent? (vs.2-3)
5. Why were the Jewish people to be baptized? (vs. 4)
6. What did the people have to do before they were baptized? (vs. 5)
7. Do you think it would be right for everyone being baptized today to be asked to confess that he/she is a sinner saved by grace or to give a short testimony? Why might this be important?
8. Sum up John's attitude about Jesus? (vs. 7)
9. What was John's message? (vs. 7)
10. How did John's baptism differ from Jesus' baptism? (vs. 8)
11. Have you followed Christ's command to be baptized as a believer? If not, what or who is stopping you from obeying Christ in this matter?

III. Growing deeper

1. Review Sunday's message with someone.
2. Read Acts 9:15-16 and 2 Corinthians 12:7. What does God often do with his choice servants who He gives a great ministry? Why?
3. Read the below article by Neal Anderson. Discuss why humility is so important and how we can help people in the church who fit the descriptions below.

Everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted. Luke 14:11

A small percentage of people defend against rejection by buying into the dog-eat-dog system of the world and learning to compete and scheme to get ahead of the pack. These are the movers and shakers, people who earn acceptance and strive for significance through their performance. They feel driven to get on top of every situation because winning is their passport to acceptance. They are characterized by perfectionism and emotional insulation and they struggle with anxiety and stress.

Spiritually, the beat-the-system individual refuses to come under God's authority and has little fellowship with God. This person is committed to controlling and manipulating people and circumstances for his own ends, so it is difficult for him to yield control in his life to God.

In our churches this person jockeys to be chairman of the ruling board

or the most influential member on a committee. His motivation is not to serve God in this position, however, but to control his world because his self-worth is dependent on it. Beat-the-system controllers are some of the most insecure people you will meet.

*Sadly, the controlling individual's defensive strategy only delays inevitable rejection. Eventually his ability to control his family, his employees, and his church diminishes and he is replaced by a younger, stronger controller. Some survive this mid-life crisis, but many who make it to retirement don't enjoy much of it. Studies show that high-powered executives live an average of nine months after they retire. They base their lives in the world system they seek to conquer, but inevitably the world claims its own. **"See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ"** (Colossians 2:8).*

4. Finish with Matthew 11:11. What does this verse say about you as a follower of Christ? Pray for one another.