



STUDY QUESTIONS FOR JANUARY 18

Series: *God Fulfills His Promises*

Promised Prophet (Matthew 3:1-12)

Icebreakers!

1. What's coming up this year that you're looking forward to?
2. What are you denying yourself in the new year, and what do you hope to see in your life instead?

Digging Deeper

3. **Study Matthew 3:1-12 on the back of this page.** What stands out about who John is? What stands out about his message?
4. **Read Isaiah 40:3-5.** How does preparing the way show that we look forward to the one who is coming? How must we prepare the way of the Lord today?
5. **Read Malachi 4:4-6.** What made Moses and Elijah important as prophets? What does sending Elijah (long gone) mean? How does **Luke 1:16-17** connect with this mission?
6. **Read Mark 1:2-8, Luke 3:2-9, and John 1:19-28.** Every gospel introduces John, who introduces Jesus. What elements do they share? What differences do you see?
7. **Read Matthew 4:17.** How does Jesus' message compare to John's message (Mt 3:2)? How does this reflect a handoff from the prophets to Jesus?
8. **Read Matthew 11:7-15 and 17:9-13.** How does Jesus describe John the Baptist? Why does Jesus keep connecting John with Elijah? Why does it matter to Jesus?
9. **Read Acts 11:15-18.** What was a big difference between John's baptism and Jesus'? How did that play out here – even among the Gentiles?
10. **Read Acts 26:19-23.** How does Paul's message (v. 20) overlap with John the Baptist's? Should we carry these themes into the Christian life today (and why, or why not)?
11. What did you hear in the message this Sunday that stood out to you? Is there anything you would emphasize, add, or change?

Application

12. How does your life show that you are looking forward to – and getting ready for – Jesus' coming again?
13. What does repentance look like in your life today, in an ongoing way? What fruit is the Holy Spirit producing in you that matches your repentance?

MATTHEW 3:1-12

In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea,

“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said,

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

**‘Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.’”**

Now John wore a garment of camel’s hair
and a leather belt around his waist,
and his food was locusts and wild honey.

Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan
were going out to him,
and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan,
confessing their sins.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism,
he said to them,

“You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.

And do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father,’
for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.

Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees.

Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

“I baptize you with water for repentance,
but he who is coming after me is mightier than I,
whose sandals I am not worthy to carry.

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

His winnowing fork is in his hand,
and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn,
but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”