



STORIES OF LIFE!

The Gospel of Luke

Prepare to Tell His Story! Part 2

Luke 3:1-20

Message #9 of 50 – S783

Sermon given on March 18, 2018



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Prepare to Tell His Story! Part 2

Luke 3:1-20

Opening Comments

- Turn to **Luke 3**
- We continue a study through the Gospel of Luke – **The Stories of Life**
- Last week I shared part one of a two-part message entitled: Prepare to Tell His Story!
- God is writing a story in your life
- It is the story of Jesus in the life of a believer, in the life of a child of God – it is a story that helps others to see Jesus more clearly
- Only the parts of your story that do that will matter in the end
- This reality answers the biggest question in human life, “Why am I here?”
- You are here to glorify God by telling the story of Jesus in the power and leading of the Holy Spirit!
- God is the author of the story of your life – Jesus is the star of the story of your life – you are the pen God is using to write the story
- But unlike pens we would use, we can choose to cooperate with the author of our story or resist Him
- Resisting God as He writes the story of Jesus in our lives is called sin
- There are some things we need to do to prepare ourselves to tell Jesus’ story through the story of our lives
- Let’s pray and then look at those things
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Prepare to Tell His Story! Part 2**
- We are in Luke 3 – the account of John the Baptist and his message
- **Luke 3:1-7**
- John’s message was simple – the King is coming – get ready for His arrival
- It would not be long after this that Jesus would come to John to be baptized as Jesus begins His public ministry

- John's message was simple **Matthew 3:1-2**
In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"
 - Our sins, whether they be small or great get in the way of the telling of Christ's story
 - The first step to prepare yourself to tell the story of Jesus in your life is to **Prepare your heart!**
 - The first and most important step in that process is repentance
 - Repentance is not something that just the most vile and wicked are called to do
 - As we grow in our faith, we ought to be thankful for every opportunity to repent
 - Every time we humbly repent, we move a little closer to the God who loves us, and we are becoming a little more like Christ
 - And we also discover greater joy and freedom in our life
 - Repentance is a gift that God gives His people so that they can experience more of His grace and mercy
 - I am especially thankful because of what John says next
 - **Luke 3:7**
 - There was something about the people who were coming to John that caused him to challenge their motives
 - This is spiritual discernment – the Holy Spirit communicated to John to let him know they were not sincere
 - 'Brood of vipers!' is a very strong statement = children of the Serpent/the devil/Satan
 - And because they weren't sincere, John warned them of the wrath (judgment) to come
- Wrath – the punitive outworking of God's righteous indignation at sin; perhaps describing anger long-building.**
- This is one of the reasons we are to tell the story of Christ in our life
 - There is a terrible consequence to sin, to rebellion against God
 - We don't like to think about it, or talk about it, but God really hates sin
 - That is one of the reasons He sent the Holy Spirit **John 16:7-8**
Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to

you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment...

- And because the Holy Spirit lives in every true believer, that message will sometimes come out in our story
- The world hates that about us – it hates it when we tell the story of Jesus in our lives and it convicts them of their sin, and reminds them that wrath/judgment is coming
- Because the world hates it so much, some churches won't talk about it for fear that someone might be offended
- Personally, I would rather offend someone with the truth told in love than offend God for withholding the truth that may have led someone to His forgiveness, grace, and love
- John's strong words continue
- **Luke 3:8-9**
- Some people believe that there is something about their lives that makes them immune to the wrath of God
- In the case of John's listeners, it was that they were Jews
- John says, that's no big deal – God can turn stones into children of Abraham
- God made the first man out of the dust of the earth, it is no big deal for Him to do the same thing with rocks
- People are no different today, they believe that somehow, they are immune to God's wrath
- Maybe because of their religion, maybe because of their good works, maybe because in their minds their good outweighs their evil
- Another common one today, is the false idea that because God is love He wouldn't judge anyone
- John tells them to 'bear fruits worthy of repentance'
- Fruit is the natural byproduct of a tree
- A person who has repented of their sins will show that through the things they are doing in their life
- This brings us to the second thing we must do to prepare to tell His story – **Make His Story Our Story**
- God is the author of our story, Jesus is the main character, we are the pen in God's hand

- Maybe you have heard the saying, ‘God has a wonderful plan for your life!’
 - That’s true, He has written the script of your life
 - Unfortunately, we tend to ad lib along the way
 - Ad lib = Latin - ad libitum = ‘at one’s pleasure’ or ‘as you desire’
 - We live our story as we desire, or for our pleasure
 - The script that God wrote for your life is perfect
 - Ad libbing or choosing to live as you desire makes the script less perfect – God calls it sin
 - Three quick things to make Christ’s story your story
 - First – **Embrace His story for your life**
 - This is really hard for some people because life is really hard for them
 - Ungodly people have done wicked things to them
 - Or illness or disease has struck them or someone they love
 - Or some kind of disaster has struck in their life – physical, financial, relational, or emotional
 - God’s script for our lives is perfect – it is not always easy – Jesus warned us about that **John 16:33**
- These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.**
- When we embrace His story for our lives we can have peace in the midst of the tribulations of God’s script for our lives
 - Second – **Examine your life for areas where you are ad libbing and repent**
 - If you are living as you desire, rather than as God desires – repent
 - You can’t live as you desire and according to God’s script, at least not until the script of your life matches God’s script **Psalms 37:3-4**
- Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.**
- Sometimes we need help with that – like the people John is talking to, ask ‘How do we do that?’
 - The more connected you are to the community of the church the better able you will be able to see God’s script for your life
 - Third – **Expect God to help you as you walk boldly in His script for your life**
 - God will not help you live the way you desire

- If you choose to write your own script, you will have to do it on your own – don't ask God to help you – He won't
- But if you embrace His plan for your life, and are actively examining your life for ad libbing, He will gladly come to your aid **2 Chronicles 16:9**

For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.

- Make His story your story – embrace His story, examine your story, and then expect Him to help you
- The people respond to John's hard words
- **Luke 3:10-14**
- Notice, John doesn't say – 'Be like me! Dress funny, eat only locusts and wild honey, and preach on the street corners!'
- He tells them to go about their normal lives – just do it differently
- Do what is right
- Third thing in preparing to tell His story – **Tell His story by living your story**
- John didn't tell the people to become missionaries, or to go to serve the priesthood, or to build orphanages
- He didn't tell them to go to Bible College, or become monks or nuns
- He didn't tell them to change their lives, he told them to change how they were living their lives – to live in a way that proved that God was the author of their lives – that they had removed themselves from the throne of their lives through repentance
- Earlier I said
You are here to glorify God by telling the story of Jesus in the power and leading of the Holy Spirit!
- When you are living the story that God wrote for your life, Christ will be seen in your life and God will be glorified
- You can also expect the Holy Spirit to empower your life in ways that will change the world around you
- And He will lead you along the path of the story God has written so that you can experience all of the good that God has for you there
- The Spirit might lead you to be a missionary, or to serve in the church or out in the world, or to go to Bible College, or to do some radical work for Him

- But you don't need to concern yourself with anything like that, just live the life God planned for you and let the Spirit lead you to live a life that tells the story of Christ
- If you live this life, people will notice, and some will not understand
- **Luke 3:15-18**
- The Jews were expecting the Messiah, and for those who had studied their Scriptures they knew they were in the generation that see the arrival of the Messiah
- They wondered if John might be Him
- John's response was, Nope, not even close
- John's life caused people to be curious about God
- John took the opportunity of their curiosity to tell them about Jesus
- Does your life cause people to be curious about Jesus?
- If we are living it right, according to God's script, it will
- If you live your life according to God's script, some will be curious, and some might be offended by your life
- **Luke 3:19-20**
- Luke is looking ahead to the consequence of John living out the story of Christ in his life
- John's story included him speaking boldly against sin
- Herod was a particularly wicked ruler over the land of Palestine
- One of the things John spoke against was Herod's marriage to Herodias, his half-brother's wife. Herod was also married at the time
- Herod arrested John and eventually had him beheaded after Herodias' daughter asked him to
- Throughout history there have been a few people who faithfully followed God's script for their lives and paid the highest price possible to tell Jesus' story to the world
- Most people will play a much smaller role in His story than John
- But no matter how small your part is in the story of Christ in the World, it is important
- Prepare yourself to tell His story – prepare your heart – make His story your story – then tell His story by living your story
- Go live His story for your life!
- **Pray! You may be seated!**