

Life Group Questions - January 27, 2013

Matthew 3:1-6

1. What additional information do we have in Matthew 11:7-12 regarding John the Baptist? What do you think made John great? (Luke 1-2 is instructive) How do we grow to be greater than John according to the end of verse 11?
2. Define repentance and why is it necessary to enter into the kingdom of heaven.
3. What is the kingdom of heaven? How is this different than the kingdom of earth? As a citizen of the kingdom of heaven that has come to earth, how then are we to live while living with citizens of the kingdom of earth? Are you tempted to live for this earthly kingdom? If so, how or what are you wanting to build for yourself with you as the King?
4. Why is John baptizing? What is this baptism for? Does this save? Why or why not?

Matthew 3:7-10

1. The Pharisees were considered to be religious and pious on the outside. They were ritualists doing everything they could do to secure their future in the kingdom of God. They were also separatists, separating themselves from sinners, tax collectors, and anyone deemed to be unclean. The Sadducees on the other hand were rationalists, free thinkers who were skeptical of much. They lived for what they could get now as they denied the resurrection. They were both working hard for what they could get either now or in the after life. Which of these two parties are you more like? Why do you think you are that way? Is this consistent with the gospel of grace?
2. John tells the Pharisees and Pharisees to “bear fruit in keeping with repentance”. What does this mean? And why does this have monumental importance within the scope of Christianity?
3. What happens to the tree that does not bear good fruit in keeping with repentance?

Matthew 3:11-12

1. John's baptism seems to be preparatory for salvation. What must take place for true salvation?
2. In verse 12 we have an illustration that John gives. Identify the components of this illustration.
 - a. What is a winnowing fork? Whose hand is it in?
 - b. What will the King do with the winnowing fork?
 - c. Who does the wheat represent? Who does the chaff represent?
 - d. What emotions are conjured up when you read something like this? How important is it that we make sure of our salvation? If this is an illustration of what is coming, how then should this affect our evangelism and what ought to be the mission of the church?
3. Who do you know that is not a citizen of God's kingdom? Pray for them by name.