

John - cont.

- He was rejected and ridiculed (Matthew 11:12-19; 17:11-13; 21:32; Luke 7:29-30).
- He was firm; not shaken or softened (Matthew 11:7-10).
- He was put to death for preaching truth (Matthew 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29; Luke 3:19-20; 9:7-9).

For us to be great, we have to ask: Am I courageous (Matthew 10:28; Galatians 1:10)?

Greatness in the Kingdom

Yes, John was indeed great. But, what made him great was not tied to anything physical or worldly. What made him great was that he did a great work of preparing people, he exercised a great humility in his relationship to Jesus, and he exhibited a great courage when preaching God's truth to others.

Friend, you can be "great" too in God's sight. You can follow John's example. It begins with you entering into the Lord's church today (Matthew 11:11)! Then, go out and bring others to Jesus, stay humble as you go through life, and remain courageous as you tell others the truth. - *Chris Reeves*

- Word of the Week -

"Love" (Gr. *agape*) in the New Testament means to show sacrificial and kind actions to others. But, in our world today "love" often means just the opposite - love your self first. However, Christians are to love God, love Christ, love their enemies, love others, and love one another. In fact, all that Christians do, is to be "done in love" (1 Corinthians 16:14). Christians will not love the way the world loves. Christians will love by putting others first. Let's go out this week and truly love God and others with sacrificial and kind acts.

Warfield Blvd. church of Christ
290 Warfield Blvd.
Clarksville, TN 37043

Website
wbcoc.org

Assembly Times
Sunday: 9:30 am, 10:30 am, 5 pm
Wednesday: 7 pm

Everyone Is Welcome!
For More Information Call
(931) 647-1324

Published and Edited By
Chris Reeves
(615) 389-3250
chrisreevesmail@gmail.com
TheGoodTeacher.com

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

There Came A Man ... Whose Name Was John

There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John
- John 1:6 -

For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and he shall drink no wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb
- Luke 1:15 -

Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist: yet he that is but little in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he
- Matthew 11:11 -

Who Was John?

- The birth of John was prophesied in the OT that he would come (Isaiah 40:3-5; Malachi 3:1; 4:5-6; Matthew 11:14).
- He was born into a family of godly parents (Luke 1:5ff).
- He worked no miracles; his effectiveness was solely related to his message (John 10:41).
- He lived a pure and plain life (Luke 1:15, 80).

- He was a “great” man because of the spiritual qualities that he exhibited (Luke 1:15; Matthew 11:11).

Let's consider now what made John the Baptist great.

John Made Preparation

- First, John was great because his mission was great. His mission was to make people ready and prepared to meet Jesus; he pointed others to the Christ (Mark 1:2-3; Luke 1:16-17, 77-79; John 1:29-34)

For us to be great, we have to ask: Is my heart prepared for the Lord? Am I looking for the Lord to obey him?

John Knew His Place

- Second, John was great because his attitude was great. He felt unworthy; his place was behind Jesus; he would decrease while Jesus increased (Matthew 3:13-14; Mark 1:7-8; John 3:26-30).
- John was humble and he would not be provoked to envy or jealousy.

For us to be great, we have to ask: Am I humble (Luke 17:10; 1 Peter 5:5-6)? Do

others see Jesus in me (Matthew 5:16)?

John Was a Courageous Preacher

- Third, John was great because his preaching was great. He courageously preached repentance and baptism (Matthew 3:2, 8; Mark 1:4-6).
- He preached the coming kingdom (Matthew 3:1-2).
- He preached coming judgment (Matthew 3:10-12).
- He preached with urgency (Matthew 3:2).
- He preached with application (Matthew 3:7; 14:4).
- He preached with boldness (Matthew 11:8).
- He preached the light of truth (John 5:33-35).
- He preached against all evil (Luke 3:19).
- He preached to all classes of people (Luke 3:2-20). - *continued*