

John the Baptist's Testimony About Christ at Aenon

John 3:25-36

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Text:

John 3:25-36,

25. An argument developed between some of John's disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing.

26. They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan – the one you testified about – well, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him."

27. To this John replied, "A man can receive only what is given him from heaven.

28. You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him.'

29. The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete.

30. He must become great, I must become less.

31. "The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all.

32. He testifies to that he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony.

33. The man who has accepted it has certified that God is truthful.

34. For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.

35. The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands.

36. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."

Commentary:

John 3:25, 26, An argument developed between some of John's disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing. They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan – the one you testified about – well, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him."

I. It is not known exactly what the question was but it may have related to the relative efficacy of John's baptism in relation to Christ's baptism.

II. This appears to refer to the great success of the early ministry of Jesus.

III. The question may have been designed to produce jealousy between John and Jesus.

John 3:27, To this John replied, "A man can receive only what is given him from heaven."

I. John stated that Jesus could not be enjoying his great success had God not given him this ability to succeed.

A. 1 Corinthians 3:6, I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.

B. Deuteronomy 8:18, But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

II. No preachers should be jealous of each other as success in ministry is a gift of God.

John 3:28, You yourselves can testify that I said, ‘I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him.’

I. John again affirmed that he was not the Christ, but was sent before the Christ.

A. **Hosea 2:19, I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion.**

B. **Malachi 2:11, Judah has broken faith. A detestable thing has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem: Judah has desecrated the sanctuary the Lord loves, by marrying the daughter of a foreign god.**

John 3:29, 30, The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom’s voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. He must become great, I must become less.

I. John’s later decrease (imprisonment) opened the door of opportunity for Christ’s unimpeded success.

John 3:31, “The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all.

I. John the Baptist here said:

A. Christ came from heaven and he is above all.

B. John the Baptist came from the earth, spoke with the perspective of one from the earth, and was inferior to Christ, as are all people.

John 3:32, He testifies to that he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony.

Note: Literally this verse reads: That which He (Jesus) has seen and heard, this is what he testifies about, yet His testimony no one accepts. John says, Now people have the opportunity to hear testimony from heaven and they are not listening.

I. However, not even all of his disciples accepted Jesus as the Messiah.

John 3:33, The man who has accepted it has certified that God is truthful.

I. “He that receiveth his witness” contrasts with “no man receiveth his witness.”

A. John the Baptist received God’s witness. Many of his disciples did not; that is, did not make the transition from John to Jesus.

B. God had witnessed clearly to the identify of his Son at Christ’s baptism.

John 3:34, For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.

I. True prophets/teachers of God speak the word of God faithfully.

A. This applies to John the Baptist.

B. This also applies to Jesus Christ.

C. Indirectly it applies to all faithful proclaimers of the Word of God.

II. The Spirit was not given to Jesus in a limited way. He received the Spirit without limit/measure.

A. Therefore Jesus spoke the true gospel of God.

B. Disciples of Christ receive an earnest (like a down payment, or an engagement ring) of the Spirit. Not even the apostles possessed the Spirit to the extent Jesus possessed the Spirit.

John 3:35, The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands.

I. John was trying to counteract the jealousy of his disciples by affirming that . . .

A. God the father loves the Son.

B. God had entrusted all things (the full ministry) to the Son.

John 3:36, Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."

I. He that **believeth** on the Son hath eternal life.

II. He that **obeyeth** not the Son shall not see life but will receive the wrath of God!

A. The faith that saves is an **obedient** faith.

B. The Bible speaks of the "wrath of God!"

C. This is an unpopular Biblical teaching, but an absolutely true teaching of the Bible!

D. “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!”

III. To follow Jesus or not to follow Jesus was not an option for John the Baptist’s disciples and it is not an option for us, if we are truly seeking life eternal.

A. Believe/trust/obey Jesus and live!

B. Fail to follow/obey Jesus and die by rejecting the only sacrifice sufficient to pay the debt we owe.

C. Hopefully John’s disciples and the people of our day will choose life through Jesus.

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Questions

1. An _____ developed between some of _____ and a certain _____ over the matter of _____.

2. It was reported to John that Jesus was _____ and _____ was going to him.

3. John replied, "The _____ belongs to the _____." The bride was _____, the bridegroom was _____ and the attendant was _____.

4. The one who came from heaven was _____. The one who is from the earth was _____.

5. The one who _____ has sent speaks the _____ of _____, for _____ gives the _____ without limit.

6. "Whoever _____ in the _____ has _____, but whoever _____ the _____ will not see _____, for God's _____ remains on him."

7. What was the argument about in regard to ceremonial washing?

8. John was not jealous of Jesus? Why not?

9. Many of _____'s _____ did not make the _____ from _____ to _____ easily.

10. He that _____ on the Son has eternal life. He that _____ not the Son shall not see life. The _____ that saves is an _____.