

The Cost of Silence

World Outreach Church
Sermon Discussion Guide
Sunday Sermon: **September 15, 2024**



Our focus is on Luke's Gospel, and Pastor Allen highlights some consistent threads of thought throughout Luke's very pointed and intentional narrative: *"Since many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, it seemed fitting to me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in an orderly sequence, most excellent Theophilus; so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught"* (Luke 1:1-4, NASB®). So, as we read Luke's Gospel, we want to diligently seek the Lord and mindfully examine what Luke was communicating. Church, if we make an effort, God will meet us in a unique way—and we *desperately* need God to meet us. Tell God: "I'm interested, and I would like to know You better. I would like to know how to live out what You've called me to be."

So, we're going to take the book of Luke as a homework assignment. Let's begin to read this Gospel with more focused attention, even a chapter a day for the next 24 days. In this session, we're seeing Luke's perspective on John the Baptist—one who made a tremendous impact on the culture around him, carrying that baton for a season and handing it off to Jesus.

***When was a time you felt the Lord took you through training, ultimately in preparation for Him unleashing something in your life. In hindsight, how was the Lord preparing you to do His will?**

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

John the Baptist

Luke 3:1–4 ¹ *In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene—* ² *during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, **the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the desert.*** ³ *He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.* ⁴ *As is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: "A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"*

John's Message

Luke 3:7–20 (NIV®)

⁷ *John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?" ⁸ **Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.*** ⁹ *The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."* ¹⁰ *"What should we do then?" the crowd asked.* ¹¹ *John answered, "The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same."*

¹² *Tax collectors also came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?"* ¹³ *"Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them.* ¹⁴ *Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?" He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—be content with your pay."* ¹⁵ *The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Christ.* ¹⁶ *John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.* ¹⁷ *His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."*

¹⁸ *And with many other words John exhorted the people and preached the good news to them.* ¹⁹ *But when **John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and all the other evil things he had done,*** ²⁰ *Herod added this to them all: He locked John up in prison.*

Luke's Narrative

- ❖ Uncomfortable Message
- ❖ Resistance & Rejection of Message
- ❖ Unlikely Candidates Accept the Message
- ❖ Dimensional Life: Impact & Importance of Spiritual Things

*** We must allow God's Truth to be the lens through which we interpret all the uncertainties of life, even though it can sometimes offend others. How can followers of Jesus encourage others, who view these truths as harsh, to be obedient to God's Word?**

***In what ways can you be a “forerunner” to point the way to Christ? What is your biggest challenge in being a “forerunner?”**

Luke 3:21–22 ²¹ *When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened* ²² *and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”*

Jesus’ Commentary on John the Baptist

Luke 7:21–30 ²¹ *At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind.* ²² *So he replied to the messengers, “Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.* ²³ *Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me.”*

²⁴ *After John’s messengers left, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? ²⁵ If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear expensive clothes and indulge in luxury are in palaces. ²⁶ But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷ This is the one about whom it is written: “I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’ ²⁸ I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”*

²⁹ *(All the people, even the tax collectors, when they heard Jesus’ words, acknowledged that God’s way was right, because they had been baptized by John. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God’s purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John.)*

***Each generation is responsible for passing the baton of their Christian faith to the next, and each person should do their best to run the race. What are you currently doing with your baton? In what ways can you run your race better?**

Jesus’ Ministry

Luke 4:1–2 ¹ *Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, ² where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.*

❖ Jesus “Led by the Spirit” in the Desert

Luke 4:5–7 ⁵ *The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶ And he said to him, “I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. ⁷ So if you worship me, it will all be yours.”*

❖ The Devil Understands Spiritual Authority

Luke 4:9–11 ⁹ *The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down from here. ¹⁰ For it is written: “He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; ¹¹ they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”*

❖ The Devil Knows & Quotes Scripture

***Commit to begin reading the Gospel of Luke this week.**

PRAYER

Father, thank You for Your Church in the earth. In Your wisdom, You have called us to stand under the authority of the Prince of Peace in this season of great change, conflict, and turmoil. Give us wisdom and boldness to fulfill all You created us for. May we have greater reverence for You than for any person or thing, and may we recognize serving You is greater than any real or perceived threat. You have abundantly given us freedoms, liberties, and every blessing. May we choose to humble ourselves before You and turn from our ungodliness, indifference, and compromise so we might turn our faces to You in such a way that it would delight You to pour out Your blessings upon us once again. Today, we cry out to You, Almighty God—the all-powerful and all-knowing God of creation. We submit to Your purposes, commandments, and direction. We thank and praise You for what You've done for us through Jesus Christ. In His name, amen.