



new life fellowship

**Sermon Title: Advent: The Gifts of John the Baptist**

**Guest Speaker: Jason Gaboury**

**Scripture: Matthew 1:1-3**

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea <sup>2</sup> and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." <sup>3</sup> This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

"A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"<sup>[a]</sup>  
(NIV)

**Sermon Outline:**

Although talking about John the Baptist might seem a bit off-brand for this time of the year, in today's scripture we see three gifts that John the Baptist offers us this Advent season.

The first gift from John the Baptist is the Kingdom of God. When John the Baptist lets us know that the Kingdom of God is at hand, he means the reign and rule of God has come to Earth. It is because of this that we are summoned to a whole new way of life.

Kingdom of Empire

- Self-protection
- Acquiring
- Amassing Wealth
- Roles
- Hoarding Resources
- Striving
- Human desire
- Making people into tools
- Never satisfied
- Worships itself

Kingdom of God (Shalom)

- Self-giving
- Sharing
- Creating Wealth
- Relationships
- Stewarding Resources
- Sabbath
- Human flourishing
- Makes tools to serve people
- Knows when to say enough
- Worships Creator

John's second gift are the waters of repentance which are meant to refresh us and restore us. In the Bible and in the way of Jesus, repentance is a good thing. Repentance is acknowledging that you are walking in the wrong direction and turning to walk in the right direction with God. Repentance is meant to renew and change us.

John's third gift is the fire of the Spirit. John is filled with the fire of God, spreading the news that it would be Jesus who would bring about hope, healing, and the transformation of the Kingdom of God.

You are not too small to have a big life with God. The Kingdom of God is at hand, can you empty your hands to receive it?

**Sermon Summary:**

This Sunday, Guest Speaker Jason Gaboury, Director of Alumni Relations with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, continues our sermon series on Advent. Jason shares a message on John the Baptist's life being wildly off-brand for the holiday season and how the three gifts that John brings are the same ones we need this Christmas.

**Sermon Questions:**

1. Do you feel an invitation from Christ in today's scripture passage? Do any of the words resonate with you? If so, why?
2. Because the Kingdom of God is at hand, we are to take our hands off other kingdoms and invited to live a new life. Which of the kingdoms listed above do you live in? We need each other to live

the kingdom of God and not in the Kingdom of Empire. How and when can you open your hands this week to receive what God has for you in his kingdom?

3. Being honest with yourself, do you need to repent and begin walking in the right direction with God? God is not mad at you or looking to judge you but is looking at you with love. God's posture towards you is come and turn back to him so that you can have life and receive his refreshing and grace. Offer your repentance up to God this week, turning towards him asking for his washing and renewal in your life.
4. We need each other to be in community with one another. Are you currently in a small group or part of a community? If you are can you let someone in your group know that you need help to pray, be generous or listen to what burdens you might be carrying in this season? If you are not part of a small group or community, would you be willing to join a community to receive and give love? [Click here](#) to find out more about our small group and communities.