

**THE BAPTIST AND THE BRATS // Luke 7:24-35**

*From the series, The Gospel of Luke*

This week, we resumed our study of Luke by picking up where we left off: John the Baptist is in prison and the messengers who visited him have returned, only to find themselves being confronted by Jesus. The thesis for this sermon is, simply, don't be a (spiritual) brat.

By examining the questions Jesus asked to confront His audience, we can learn about the character of John the Baptist:

- 1. John is bold, maintains strong convictions, and stands firm in his beliefs. (v. 24)**
- 2. John is not a man of wealth or status. (v. 25)**
- 3. John is a prophet – and not just a prophet, but the prophet of prophets, God's man, and God's messenger. (vv. 26-27)**
- 4. John is above all others because he was the one to point to Jesus. (v. 28)**

YET, the second part of v. 28 teaches that it is more important to be a Christian than it is to be a follower of John – we must ensure that we are in the Kingdom and not just going through the motions of the religious life.

- 5. John taught an unusual concept: repentance. (vv. 29-30)**

When the subject of repentance was broached, there was a parting of ways – some declared God just while the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves. (*These* are who Jesus essentially calls “brats.”)

By examining Jesus' words to these spiritual brats, we see both a stark contrast to the character of John the Baptist and perhaps a not-so-pretty glimpse of ourselves at times:

- 1. They were disagreeable, difficult, and selfish. In the illustration provided by Pastor Neal, they did not want to play any of the games anyone else was playing – they were impossible to please and simply wanted to do their own thing. (v. 32)**
- 2. They did not like what John was teaching, so they attacked his character – they did not want to play his “games.” (v. 33)**
- 3. They did not like what Jesus was teaching, so they attacked his character – they could not be pleased. (v. 34)**

Our study of this passage reminds us of the importance of repentance. Without repentance, we become spiritual brats – arrogant, disagreeable, and unwilling to think we might not always be right. Repentance is a constantly occurring practice of the Christian life. A repentant life affirms that Christ is indeed Lord.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What does “repentance” mean? How do we repent, and when should we repent?
2. Why is it important for Christians to repent?
3. Think for a moment about your own faith. In light of this sermon, can you identify a point in your life when you may have been a “spiritual brat?”
4. What does this passage teach us about Jesus and His desires for His followers?