THE KING’S AMBASSADOR

Matthew 3:1-12

1. What was one secret of John’s Spirit-filled life?

John 3:30 He must increase, but I must decrease. 

NOTE: The Spirit-filled John was marked by unusual humility. He was willing to witness to Jesus, even though he knew he did not deserve to be called the Baptist.

2. Did John the Baptist read the Scriptures? 

John 1:23 He said: “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Make straight the way of the LORD,” as the Isaiah said.” 

NOTE: John quoted from the Old Testament as evidence that he had a solid grasp of the Scriptures. The Bible also tells us that John taught his disciples to fast and pray often (Matthew 4:1-4). This is another testimony of his deep love for the Lord. In the same way, through our personal devotions and Bible study, we can come to know and love God and to receive of His Spirit.

3. Was John the Baptist willing to witness for Jesus?

John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” 

NOTE: By nature, John was a solitary soul (Luke 1:80). Yet he was willing to risk ridicule and even to lay his life on the line in order to point people to Jesus as Savior of the world. In the same way, those who truly love the Lord today will be willing to set aside fear and convenience to witness for Jesus.

4. Was the straight preaching of John popular among the political and religious leaders?

Luke 7:30 The Pharisees and lawyers resisted the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him. 

Luke 3:19 But Herod the tetrarch, being greatly perplexed by him … for all the evils which Herod had done, … that John up in __________. 

NOTE: John boldly spoke out against the popular sins of the day that were indulged even by the religious leaders. God’s last-day message of repentance and holiness will also be unpopular among most of the respected political and church leaders, but it will be biblical.

5. Does the Bible discourage the wearing of jewelry and fancy clothing?

1 Timothy 2:9 In like manner also, that the women (and, of course, men) adorn themselves in __________ apparel, … not with braided hair or __________, or costly clothing. 

NOTE: The Spirit-filled life of John the Baptist was marked by unusual humility. There was a direct connection between John’s powerful ministry and the complete surrender he had made to the Lord. It was John’s highest joy to point others to Jesus rather than to himself. All he did was designed to bring glory to God’s name.

6. Was there a connection between John’s Spirit-filled life and his simple diet?

Luke 1:15 For he … shall drink neither __________ nor strong drink. He will also be filled with __________ 

NOTE: Christians should completely abstain from all fermented beverages in order to keep their minds clear and to keep God’s Spirit (Proverbs 23:31, 32; Habakkuk 2:19; 1 Peter 5:8).

7. Why is God concerned about what we eat and drink?

Judges 13:7 Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. Now drink no wine or similar drink, nor eat any __________. For the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death. 

1 Corinthians 6:19 Do you not know that your __________ is the __________ of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God? 

NOTE: There is a direct connection between what we eat or drink and our mental clarity, ability to resist temptation, and capacity to distinguish between right and wrong. Everything a Christian does—including what he eats and drinks—should be done to God’s glory (1 Corinthians 10:31).

8. What does the Bible say about worldly behavior?

James 4:4 Wherefore, take heed to yourselves: for where envy and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. 

2 Corinthians 6:17 Come out from among them and be __________ says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. 

1 John 2:15 If anyone loves the __________, the love of the Father is __________ in him.
9. What should a Christian choose to think about?
Philippians 4:8 Whatever things are ____________, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue, and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Psalm 101:1 I will set ____________ wicked before my face.

NOTE: John the Baptist commanded the people to abstain from all violence (Luke 3:14). For us, this would include watching violence as a form of entertainment. Entertainment taught that sins of sex and violence originate in the thoughts and attitudes (Matthew 5:22, 28). Therefore, a Christian should avoid any TV programs, videos, or reading material that would encourage impure thoughts.

10. What type of music will a true Christian enjoy?
Psalm 40:3 He has put a ____________ in my mouth—praise to our God.

1 Samuel 16:23 And so it was, whenever the spirit from God was upon Saul, that David would take a ____________ and play it with his hand. Then Saul would become ____________ and well, and the distasteful spirit would depart from him.

NOTE: It is obvious that a great majority of the popular music in the world does not help us spiritually. Instead, it destroys our desire for heavenly things and often strengthens the lower nature. However, music can be a tremendous power for good. When King Saul was tormented by an evil spirit, the soothing music from David’s harp refreshed him and drove away the evil influence.

11. Is dancing good recreation for a Christian?
1 John 2:6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to live ____________ just as He lived.

Titus 2:12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and lust, we should live soberly, righteously, and in the present age.

NOTE: Most of the popular contemporary dancing is associated with worldly music and has a very strong sexual emphasis. In almost any situation we should ask, “What would Jesus do?” I think we all agree that our Savior would not abandon His reason to swing body and limb to the beat of some syncopated rhythm.

12. Will a Christian play the lottery or gamble?
1 Timothy 6:10 For the ____________ is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many ____________.

2 Thessalonians 3:10 We commanded you this: If anyone will not ____________, neither shall he eat.

Proverbs 28:20 But he who ____________ to be ____________ will not go unpunished.

NOTE: Gambling can be just as addictive as many drugs. Some have squandered entire family savings at casinos or on state lottery tickets. Most “get rich quick” schemes are associated with undue risk, unfair prices, and questionable ethics.

13. What should be the aim of God’s people today?
1 John 3:22 We ____________ His commandments and do those things that are ____________ in His sight.

Ecclesiastes 12:13 Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is ____________

NOTE: A person cannot live any way he wishes and finally be saved in God’s kingdom. This is one reason Jesus came to earth—to give us an example of holy living (1 Peter 2:21).

14. What makes it easy to obey God in the matters of lifestyle discussed in this lesson?
John 14:15 If you ____________ Me, keep My commandments.

1 John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His ____________ are not ____________.

Psalm 40:8 I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your ____________ is within my ____________.

15. Why is the Christian life such a high calling?
1 Peter 2:9 But you are a ____________ generation, a royal priesthood, a ____________ nation, His own special people, that you may ____________ the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

NOTE: As ambassadors for Jesus, Christians do indeed have a high calling! John the Baptist helped prepare people for Jesus’ first coming, and God has called His people today to live holy lives as they help others prepare for Jesus’ second coming.

YOUR RESPONSE

Are you willing to be a unique “voice in the wilderness” and witness through a godly lifestyle to prepare others for Jesus’ second coming?

ANSWER: ____________

SUPPLEMENT

This section provides additional information for further study.

Ambassadors for Christ

When a person becomes a Christian, he or she is enlisted as an ambassador from a better kingdom. The Bible says, “Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ.” 2 Corinthians 5:20.

The dictionary defines an ambassador as “a diplomatic official of the highest rank appointed and accredited as representative in residence by one government or sovereign to another, usually for a limited length of time.”

Ambassadors are just as important in the spiritual realm as they are in the political realm. Citizens of the kingdom of heaven are not like the citizens of this world. We have been sent into the world to demonstrate who Jesus is and what He is like. Through the Holy Spirit, we become His representatives—to reflect His image in everything from the way we talk and work to the way we eat and dress. In other words, when we become part of God’s spiritual kingdom, we should be living demonstrations of the government we represent. In 2 Corinthians 3:18, the Scriptures say that “we all ... are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

We, the Church, are the hands and feet, the eyes and mouth, and yes, even the ears of Jesus in the world today. We are the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22, 23; 5:29, 30; Colossians 1:18). Before He ascended to heaven, Jesus told us, “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” John 20:21.

Every facet of our lives should be a reflection of the life and person of Jesus. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5:16.