

Message Notes

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

Scripture Passages

(taken from the New International Version)

Introduction - T. Hanks

My experience with stepping in to preach

Today's Message

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

Luke 3:1-20

Historical Setting

Luke 3:1-2

"Preaching a baptism of repentance"

Luke 3:3

According to Isaiah

Luke 3:4-6

John confronts the crowd

Luke 3:7-9

"What should we do?"

Luke 3:10-14

The identity of the Messiah

Luke 3:15-17

Again and again and again

Luke 3:18

The result of John's faithfulness

Luke 3:19-20

Gospel Application

Do you repent?

Luke 3:1-20

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 Tracoonitis, 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 wilderness. 3 He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 4 As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: "A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. 5 Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. 6 And all people will see God's salvation.'" 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, "Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same." 12 Even tax collectors 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 Messiah. 16 John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and 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 proclaimed the good news to them. 19 But when John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of his marriage to 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.



T. HANKS



A 3D orange speech bubble with a gradient from light to dark orange, a white highlight on the top left, and a soft grey shadow underneath. The word "Comments" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font in the center of the bubble.

Comments

The Gospel of
LUKE

Today's Message:

*John the Baptist
Prepares the Way*

Luke 3:1-20

- **Historical Setting**
- **Preach! According to Isaiah**
- **Preaching as confrontation**
 - **“What should we do?”**
 - **Ethical Standard**
- **The identity of the Messiah**
- **John’s future ministry and life**

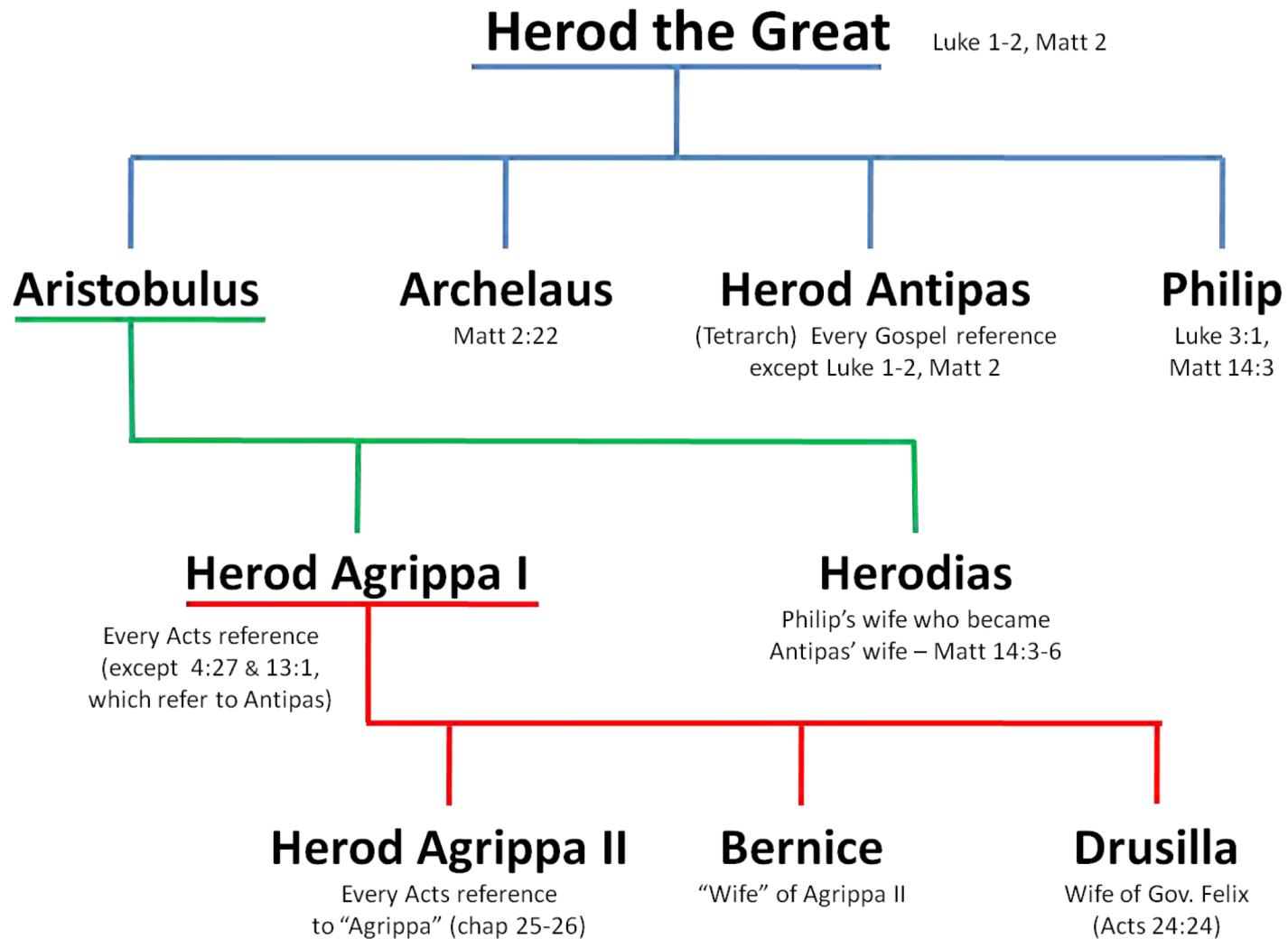
MAIN POINT

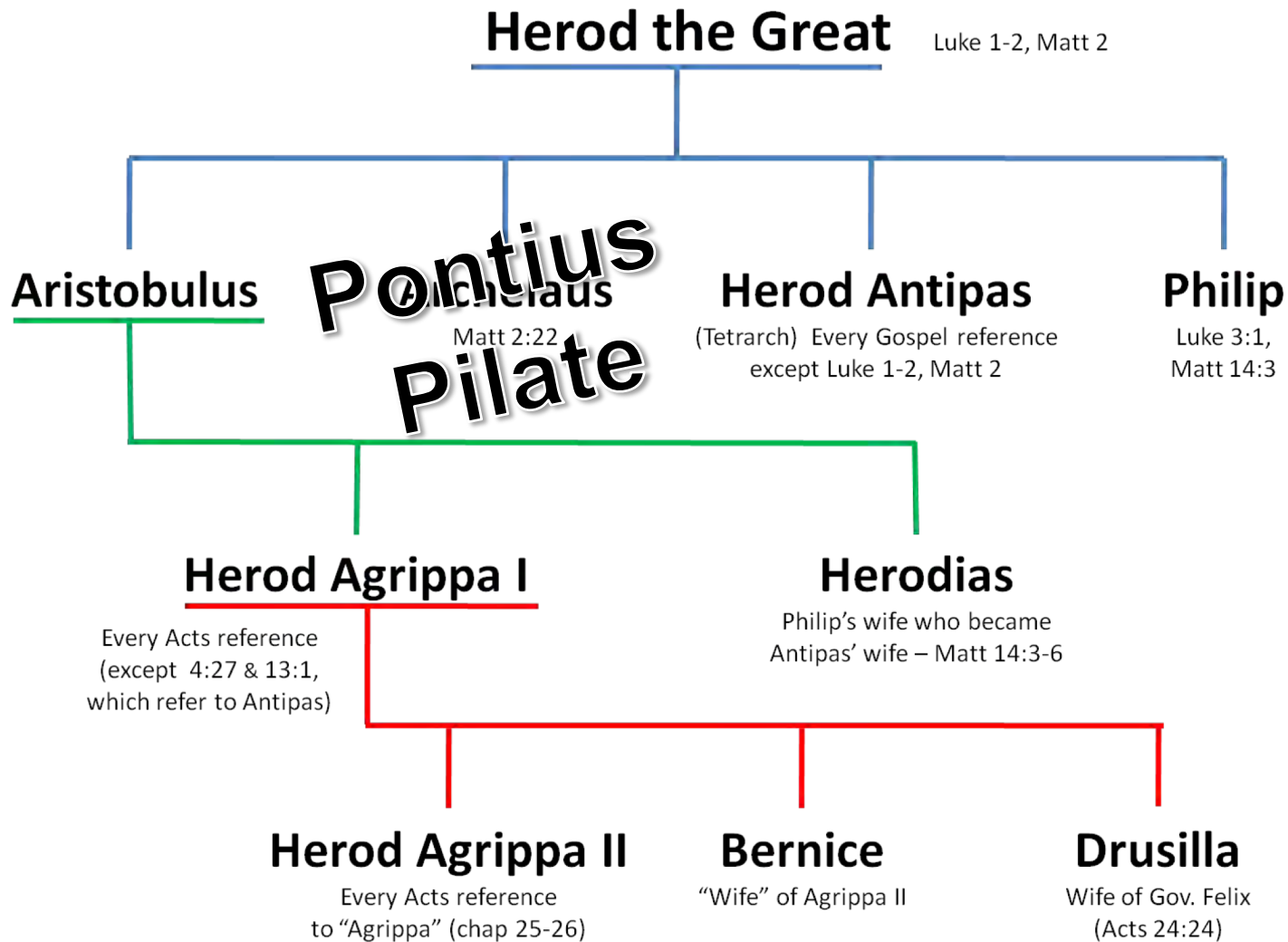
The good news of God's salvation
(as proclaimed by John the Baptist)
works from the Inside-Out.

MAIN POINT

Luke 3:1-2

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when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod
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Luke 3:3

3 He went into all the country around the Jordan,
preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of
sins.

What, first, did John mean by *repentance*?...His words might be paraphrased, “Turn ye from your old thoughts, from your state of self-content, self-satisfaction; mend your ways; reform.” Here, then, the baptism which he preached and summoned men to, must be accompanied with a change of mind; the baptized must be no longer content with their present state or conduct; they must change their ways and reform their lives.

~H.D.M. Spence, Pulpit Commentary



Ezekiel 36:25-26

25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.



Of particular import is the linkage of baptism with the use of water to cleanse a person in Jewish thought. This phenomenon is related to the use of water in scriptural texts concerned with cleanness and uncleanness (e.g., Leviticus 14–15), and with the correlation of washing and ethical comportment found in a text like Isa 1:16–17.

~Joel Green, *New International Commentary of the New Testament*, *The Gospel of Luke*



He, John, certainly washed (baptized) those who came to him, but his washing was merely symbolical – it could not purify them; his work had been to stir them up to repentance, to arouse them to change their lives.

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Luke 3:4-6

4 As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: “A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. 5 Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. 6 And all people will see God’s salvation.’”

The image is a simple one, and in the East one well knows, where the roads are comparatively few, and where they do exist are often in a bad state, when a sovereign is about to visit any part of his dominions, or still more if the march of an army has to be arranged for, the roads require considerable preparation...the vanguard had to make the road even and straight, and, if it were anywhere rough and hard to be passed over, to plane it.

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Luke 3:7-9

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."

Matthew 7:16-21

“By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them. Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”

Luke 3:10-14

10 “What should we do then?” the crowd asked.

11 John answered, “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.” 12 Even tax collectors 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.”

According to Luke, John's baptism was intimately tied up with repentance and must give rise to behaviors that demonstrate repentance. Moreover, John's call to a repentance-baptism is related to his radical questioning of an ethnic basis for membership in the people of God.

~Joel Green, *New International Commentary of the New Testament*, *The Gospel of Luke*



The effect of these observations is to suggest that John's primary interest is in calling people out of normal social existence in order to align themselves fundamentally with God's eschatological (i.e. ultimate goal), redemptive purpose.

~Joel Green, New International Commentary of the New Testament , The Gospel of Luke



Luke 3:15-17

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MAIN POINT

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Gospel of Luke Application

Do you repent?

Repentance is the telltale mark of the grace of God at work in our lives. Saving faith and true repentance are always found together. Saved souls are repentant souls...Scripture (and my own experience) have taught me that an ongoing spirit of repentance – repenting not only of overt sins, but of unbelief, negative attitudes, self-centeredness, moral omissions – is not only a sign of salvation but is a necessity for spiritual health.



~ R. Kent Hughes, Luke: That You May Know the Truth, Preaching the Word

Gospel of Luke Application

Do we repent?

By definition the forgiveness of sins has a profound communal dimension; as sin is the means by which persons exclude themselves from community with the God's people, so forgiveness marks their restoration to the community.

~Joel Green, New International Commentary of the New Testament , The Gospel of Luke

