

God's Calling Requirements Part 14

"1 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea 2 and saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.' 3 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.' " 4 John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. 5 People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. 6 Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. 7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? 8 Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. 9 And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. 10 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. 11 "I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matthew 3:1-12)

You can learn from the ministry of John the Baptist and how he responded to God's call and how he performed his service and ministry unto God and the people.

1. He was in the wilderness, separated from the world, yet the people went out to him:

John the Baptist was not a social figure or entertainer. He was a Nazarite, separated from the world. His life was based on holiness. The same thing for you today if you separate yourself from worldly things, TV, U tube, friends and parties, the people still will be attracted to come to you and listen to the Word and the message of God to them.

2. He was living a simple life, yet that was used as a testimony for him: His dress and his food were simple. He was eating what is available and affordable to him. His style of holiness and thriftiness attracted more people to him. Simple life needed so you will be guided by the Holy Spirit to do the full will of God.

3. He was at Jordan river, yet he moved around, "3 He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins." (Luke 3:3): He continued to move to reach people. God called you to continually move around to reach new people and give them the message. God called to continue to evangelize and to invite people to follow Christ.

4. He was rooted with the word of God: He knew what to say, how to speak, and how to answer, ***"19 Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. 20 He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah." 21 They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." 22 Finally they said, "Who are you? Give***

us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" 23 John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.' " (John 1:19-23) John was raised up in a priest family and he was trained on Scripture from childhood. You will be able to respond correctly to the call of God when you are deeply rooted and established with God's word, then you will be able to speak to the people and to answer their questions. Therefore continue to read your bible, daily, and in continuity from the beginning to end, meditate and apply in your life so you can grow and share to others your experience and how much the Word of God had helped you in your life.

5. His ministry was based on the Scripture: "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." (Luke 3:4-6) The ministry of John was recorded and described and prophesied in the Scripture; the valleys' defects and depression will be filled (needs and insufficiency will be met), the high mountain will lowered down and humbled (pride will be dealt with), the crooked roads and ways will be straightened (wickedness and crookedness will be judged), roughness will become smooth (sin will be dealt with, attitude and life will be transformed), and death will be reversed by life (the salvation of God will be imparted to the people).

6. He has an effective message: "7 And this was his message: "7 After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. 8 I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." (Mark 1:7-8) In his message he was humbling Himself and directing the people toward Christ Who is the Savior and the Holy Spirit Baptizer. His message was preparing the people to receive Christ. The same to you, God is directing you to reach a certain people and you need to have the message that will make things clear to them.

7. He was a witness for Jesus: "6 There was a man sent from God whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. 8 He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. 9 The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world." (John 1:6-9) John was a witness for Jesus. In the same way, you are called to be witness to Christ, in the way that you live for Christ and how you deal with lives events and the people around you, ***"13 You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. 14 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:13-16)***

8. He confronted the people with uncompromising message: "2 and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? 8 Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. 9 And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham." (Matthew 3:2,8-9) He rebuked the people and confronted them with their sins. Be willing to confront the people and rebuke them for their sins.

9. He warned the people and spoke about the coming judgment of God: “10 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. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” (Matthew 3:10,12) You need to warn the people about the judgment of God. Speak about the consequences of their sins. Speak to them about the true presence of Hell, speak to them about the second coming of Christ, the tribulation and the eternal fire.

10. He expound to the people and showed them their sins and what they need to do in more clear way: “10 What should we do then?” the crowd asked.” (Luke 3:10) The people when they will repent they will ask you what they need to do and you need to direct them and instruct them with what they need to do. The following are good examples that you can learn from how John explained and expound to the people their sins.

- A- Selfishness: “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.” (Luke 3:11)**
- B- Greediness: “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.” (Luke 3:12-13)**
- C- Taking advantage: 14 Then some soldiers asked him, “And what should we do?” He replied, “Don’t extort money.” (Luke 3:14a)**
- D- Slander, lies and slur: “and don’t accuse people falsely” (Luke 3:14b)**
- E- Non contentment: “be content with your pay.” (Luke 3:14c)**
- F- Other sins: “18 And with many other words John exhorted the people and proclaimed the good news to them.” (Luke 3:18)**
- G- Adultery: John rebuke Herod for doing adultery, “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.” (Luke 3:19-20)**

11. He discerned when the Pharisees and the Sadducees came to him and they were non willing to repent: “7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?” (Matthew 3:7) You need to be discerning in you ministry, to know who are the people who are reaching you and be discern of their motive and if they are repenting or not. Devil might send some people to disturb you, so you need to be discerning of how to handle them.

12. He persevered in his ministry; he took his stand and patiently continued his ministry till he met Jesus: The Holy Spirit revealed to John that Jesus will come to him as you can read here, **“32 Then John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. 33 And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’” (John 1:32-33)** So he needed to persevere till Jesus would come to him, so later on after Jesus would water baptized John will hand over to him the ministry and the people. All of us now the same, we are waiting for Jesus to come to take us

with Him, therefore we need to persevere in in our service and ministry till Christ would come and take us with Him.

13- The ministry of John the Baptist was fruitful: As he continued to preach and admonished, the people went out to him; they repented, they confessed their sins, their lives transformed and they got water baptized and were prepared to receive the teaching of Christ and later on the Holy Spirit Baptism.

My Dear and Beloved: God called you to do the same, to be separated from the world, rooted with His word and continue to persevere in your calling, preaching, exhorting, expounding the Word of God, leading people to repentance and teaching them the true way of life, baptizing them in water and preparing them for the Lord to fill them with the Holy Spirit and be ready to be taken with us when Christ will come. Commit yourself to this ministry as we pray.

My Prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give eternal life. Lord thank you for your clear word to me. I commit myself to apply the principles that I learn from this message in my life and ministry. Lord give me boldness, strength and perseverance to continue to serve you and reach the lost. Direct me with your word and the Holy Spirit to whom I will go and preach. Give me discernment to grasp and see the kind of people that you are allowing to come to me. I thank you and praise you; this is my prayer in Jesus name, Amen.*

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