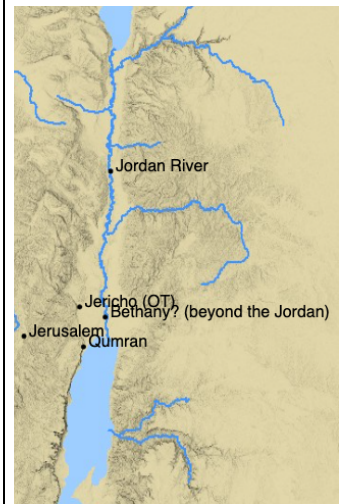


Glossary:

- **Essenes** – a sect of disaffected/disenfranchised priests who isolated themselves from mainstream society. They opposed the Sadducees, whom they viewed as usurpers over the Temple. The Essenes were based in Qumran where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. Given many similarities, scholars speculate the degree to which John the Baptist was affiliated with or influenced by the Essenes.
- **Pharisees** – If the Sadducees were the privileged class, the Pharisees were the mainstream Jews of Jesus’ day. They also opposed the corrupt Sadducees. Most Pharisees focused on their own strict obedience to the Torah. Not all Pharisees were good, but not all Pharisees were bad either. On many occasions, Jesus endorsed Pharisaic doctrine. “To paint all Pharisees with the brush of legalism and hypocrisy is unfair and incorrect. Many of them were a powerful force for good among God’s people.” (Ray Vander Laan).
- **Sadducees** – the elite, wealthy, and powerful group who had absolute control over the Temple. With Roman support, held on to this control at all costs. They were the most threatened by Jesus because they had the most to lose. This fear became reality. When the temple was destroyed and the people were driven out of the land, the Sadducees ceased to exist.

Setting:



Wilderness | Bethany
Beyond the Jordan

Memory: Matthew 3:8 – “Bear _____ in keeping with _____.”

Walking in His Dust: Gal 6:10 “As we have opportunity, let us do _____ ...”

Lesson notes & questions

Lesson Reflections (review before Apply nights):

What is at least one new thing I learned about loving God or loving my neighbor?

Which topics discussed would I like to know more about or need clarification on?

How does the Holy Spirit want me to apply the lesson’s Scripture to my discipleship?

(You may wish to spend time in prayer before answering.)



“Go make disciples...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Mt 28:19-20)
Word Wednesday Lesson 6: John the Immerser – Luke 3:1-18 / Mt 3:1-12 / Mk 1:1-8 / Jn 1:19-28

APPLY! (30-35 minutes)

- Share your “Lesson Reflections” responses with the group. Jot down others’ observations.
- Read Luke 3:7-9.
 - Why might John refer to the multitudes coming out to be baptized by him as a “generation of vipers”?
 - A modern paraphrase of “we have Abraham as our father” might be, “I’m a Christian because I’ve been going to church for as long as I can remember.” What is the danger of such a statement? What might be your next question to someone making this type of statement to probe whether the person indeed has a relationship with Jesus as Lord of her/his life?
- Read Matthew 7:17 and John 15:8.
 - What does bearing good fruit mean to you?
 - Billy Graham once asked, “If you were arrested for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?” Can you answer “yes” to this question? Why or why not? If not, what should you do next?
- Read Luke 3:12-14. How do you honor God in all areas of your life (work, marriage, family, and your free time)?
- Now go back and read Luke 3:3. What does it mean to “repent”? Is there more to repenting than being sorry?

GO! (20-25 minutes)

What is God saying to you right now, and how are you responding?

Matthew 9:37-38 – the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few, therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into His harvest.

What is something you are excited about right now?

Psalms 37:4 Delight in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart.

What is a big challenge you are facing right now?

Gal 6:2 Bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the Law of Christ.

Who is on your heart right now and why?

James 5:13 Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise.

Review the last lesson’s GO section. What prayers has God answered?

Philippians 4:8 Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Pray for one another!