



The Turn God Is Waiting For!

October 18, 2026

Scripture: Matthew 3:1-10, *New King James Version (NKJV)*

Supporting Scriptures: Exodus 16:1-8; Leviticus 11:21-22;
2 Kings 1:8; Isaiah 40:3; Matthew 11:13-14; 17:10-13; James 1:22-25

Part#1: Fruit Follows the Turn

On the first Sunday, I introduced the opening message in this three-part series. We learned that from the beginning of Jesus' ministry, **repentance** was central to His teaching. To gain a theological understanding of the word **repentance**, the takeaway was **repentance** is not simply saying we are sorry about sin, but it is an intentional and deliberate action to turn from it. **Repentance** is aptly depicted by the military command "About Face!" The **repentant** person in effect turns around 180 degrees and goes the other direction. And keep in mind that the spiritual dynamics of **true repentance** are enabled by the Holy Spirit - **Repentance is a GIFT FROM GOD! In last week's lesson**, we also saw similarities in Jesus' and the Baptist's call to **repentance** (compare Matthew 3:2 and Matthew 4:17).

Today's message calls us to look back at the prophetic voice of John the Baptist. So, don't miss these important mentions in the text:

- **His apparel** (see 2 Kings 1:8).
- **His diet** (see Leviticus 11:21-22).
- **His audience** (Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan).
- **His message** (see Isaiah 40:3).
- **His geographical location** (see Exodus 16:1-8).

Taken together, these details show that the wilderness setting was no accident. Matthew's Jewish audience would have recognized it as the place where their ancestors learned to listen to God. Each detail affirms John the Baptist's prophetic identity and the authenticity of his message, which points to the arrival of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, who also entered the wilderness (see John 4).

Beloved, this passage of Scripture is packed with historical moments that is parallel to our own spiritual journey. I pray that your takeaway is that the wilderness is not our final destination; it's a place of preparation where we learned to humble ourselves; where we learned to listen to God; the place where we learned obedience means submitting to the voice of God (see James 1:22-25). **No one** is exempted from repentance! Genuine repentance produces fruit!

Matthew 3:1-10 (NKJV)

In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ² and saying, "**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!**" ³ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: "The voice of one crying in **the wilderness**: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.'" ⁴ Now John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him ⁶ and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

Show the Change You Say You Made

⁸ Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance,

Deal With What's Underneath, Not Just What's Visible

⁹ and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as *our* father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. ¹⁰ And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees.

Live Like the Consequences Are Real

Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

Our Mission Statement

To love and serve God through Jesus Christ our Savior by the power of the Holy Spirit. To be committed to reshaping the lives of our families, our church, and our communities through *biblical worship, discipleship, and evangelism*.

