

## Genuine Preachers

Luke 3:15-20

Last time we examined the message of John the Baptist. In these verses of Scripture, Luke gives us his final word about *the life and ministry* of John the Baptist. It serves as a guide for all those who preach.

*“Let everyone regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. In this case, moreover, it is required [a]of stewards that one be **found** trustworthy”* ( 1 Corinthians 4:1-2). The word **found** is actually the word “discovered,” referring to an active search. There are two obligations:

- (1). That those who preach the gospel of Jesus Christ live lives that are faithful and trustworthy.
- (2). That those who hear the gospel of Jesus Christ discover the character of the teacher.

### I. A trustworthy preacher is never afraid to disturb others.

True preaching is sometimes disturbing, heart-piercing, thought provoking. It disturbs men, especially religious men. Luke tells us that when religious men and women, men and women who presumed that they knew God, heard John preach, they *“wondered in their hearts if he was the Christ”* (v. 15). A trustworthy minister will cause people to contemplate Christ, and show forth Christ’s character.

### II. A trustworthy preacher is always exalting Jesus Christ.

Faithful men serve Christ, exalt Christ, point sinners to Christ, and preach Christ. They do not serve their own interests, and they are forever uninterested in the man’s praise (1 Cor. 4:1-5; 2 Cor. 4:1-5). *“Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; For we preach not ourselves (for or about ourselves), but Christ Jesus the Lord (for and about Christ); and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake”* (2 Cor. 4:1,5 - Authorized Version). How much do you learn of Him?

### III. A trustworthy preacher knows and acknowledges his weaknesses.

When the people presumed that John was himself the Christ, he quickly pointed out that he not only was not the Christ, but that he was utterly incapable of doing anything for their souls (v. 16). This is exactly what Paul had to deal with in 1 Corinthians 1-3. The power and efficacy of the gospel does not depend upon the preacher, but upon Christ. Our sufficiency is of Him (see II Cor. 4:7).

- A. Preachers cannot save you or damn you.
- B. Preachers are unworthy of the slightest esteem or reverence.
- C. The Lord Jesus Christ is both the Savior of the world and the Judge of the world.

### IV. A trustworthy preacher reminds sinners of eternity.

*“His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire”* (v. 17). The three-pronged fork would throw up against the breeze the mingled wheat and chaff; the light particles would be carried to the side, while the grain would fall and remain on the threshing floor. The chaff is said to be set ablaze with ‘an unquenchable fire’ to prove that once the dry chaff has been set on fire, nothing anyone can do to stop the flame. So it is with God’s judgment; only His ‘not guilty’ counts.

### V. A trustworthy preacher is faithful unto death.

Time is the great revealer. In time, you and I will all show our cards. We will eventually make ourselves known. This is the last time John is mentioned in Luke. He is beheaded. He was faithful. *“It’s never about how or where you start, but rather how and where you end your life of faith.”*