Advent: Preparation Ends

John 1:24-28

# Context

The religious leaders of Jesus’ day want to discover by what authority John the Baptist is baptizing Jewish people. The religious leaders wonder if John is the Christ, or Elijah, or the Prophet (important prophetic figures). What could justify his baptism? But John had denied being the Messiah. John is only “a voice.” Despite the very tangible effects of his preaching ministry, he remains unaffected by his success. He is conscious only that he prepares for the coming Messiah. Since John is not a messianic figure, why does he baptize? The Pharisees were not satisfied with John’s answers and wanted to know more about it.

**John 1:24–28 CSB**

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.

So they asked him, “Why then do you baptize if you aren’t the Messiah, or Elijah, or the Prophet?”

“I baptize with water,” John answered them. “Someone stands among you, but you don’t know him.

He is the One coming after me, whose sandal strap I’m not worthy to untie.”

All this happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

“If baptism is necessary to salvation or the means of regeneration, then the sick, the dying, infants, must be baptized, or at any rate something must be done for them if the real baptism (immersion) cannot be performed because of extreme illness or want of water. The Baptist contention is to protest against the perversion of the significance of baptism as the ruin of the symbol. Baptism, as taught in the N.T., is the picture of death and burial to sin and resurrection to new life, a picture of what has already taken place in the heart, not the means by which spiritual change is wrought. It is a privilege and duty, not a necessity. It is a picture that is lost when something else is substituted in its place.” A.T. Robertson

**Acts 8:36** As they were traveling down the road, they came to some water. The eunuch said, “Look, there’s water. What would keep me from being baptized?”

**John 3:25**

**John 1:10-13** He was in the world, and the world was created through him, and yet the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name, 13 who were born, not of natural descent, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but of God.

# **Preparation for Advent ends with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_.**

# **Pray**

“Dear Jesus, I confess I am a sinner and deserve judgment and hell, but I believe You love, came to this earth for me, lived a sinless life, and died on the cross for my sins. I believe God raised you from the dead to forgive me. Please forgive me, come into my life, and grant me eternal life in You name. Help me glorify you in all I do. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

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O Lord God, heavenly Father, it behooves us to thank You that You first instituted by John the Baptist the blessed gif of baptism, which reminds us of the forgiveness of our sins, the indwelling Holy Spirit, and the gift of eternal life for the sake of Your beloved Son, Christ Jesus. We beg You to sustain us in such confidence in Your grace and mercy that we may never doubt, but in various tribulations, take comfort in our baptism. Grant us also by Your Holy Spirit that we may avoid sin and remain in innocence, and whenever we may fall and in our human weakness cannot rise again, that we may not remain lying in sins, but may by true repentance turn away from it and take comfort again in Your promise, and so by Your grace obtain enteral salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. - Adapted from a Lutheran Prayer Companion