

What Constitutes Greatness?

A Study of John the Baptizer - Luke 1

John's Greatness: Of Noble Birth

- We are still fascinated with nobility.
- John was a descendent of Aaron, born into a priestly family - 1:5, 8-9; 7:28; 1 Pet. 2:9
- This was of value because his parents were righteous in their service - 1:6

John's Greatness: An Unworldly Focus

- Consider his residence, food, clothing, and workplace - Lk. 1:80; Mt. 3:4-6
- His holiness was not based on being a hermit
 - Crowds flocked to him - 7:25
 - True holiness is found in the separation of heart from worldly things - 2 Cor. 6:17-18
 - Christians must have this same focus - Col. 3:1-3

John's Greatness:

Controlled His Appetites

- John was to achieve greatness in his control over fleshly desires - Lk. 1:15
 - He lived an austere and pure life - 1 Tim. 5:23
 - We face the same challenge - 1 Jn. 2:15-16
- Importance? No one can follow the Spirit without having self-control - Gal. 5:22-23; Rom. 6:13-14; 8:13

John's Greatness: Filled with the Spirit

- John was honored by God choosing him in this special way - Lk. 1:15; 1:41; 1:16-17
- Though there are no more inspired prophets today, we are to be “filled with the Spirit” - Eph. 5:18 How?
 - Not a supernatural takeover of our being
 - We must accept the Spirit's truth - Eph. 5:17-19
 - We let the word of God dwell in us - Col. 3:16
 - We must obey words of Spirit - Eph. 4:29-30

John's Greatness:

Fulfilled His Godly Mission

- John had a mission of being the forerunner of the Christ - Lk. 1:16-17; Jn. 3:25-30
- Those great in God's sight understand they are born to a new mission in Christ - Jn. 1:12-13
 - To love the brethren - 1 Jn. 4:7
 - To be righteous and sinless - 1 Jn. 2:29; 5:18
 - To overcome the world by faith - 1 Jn. 5:4

John's Greatness:

Had Unwavering Courage

- He was not a “reed shaken in the wind” - Lk. 7:24
 - He preached repentance for all - Mk. 1:4-5
 - Rebuked sin of the Pharisees - Mt. 3:7-12
 - Rebuked sin of a Herod - Lk. 3:18-20
- Christians who will be great must have this same courage - 2 Pet. 1:5; Eph. 5:11