

# GOD & VOCATION BIBLE STUDY

## PURPOSE

Remember that we are meeting together to discover and discuss any connections we see between spirituality and vocation. Although our study will flow from a Christian worldview, we welcome perspectives from other faith and non-faith traditions. What we do with our bodies and our lives, our *vocation*, matters deeply. We will explore how our vocation can be a participation in God's work of renewing all things and how vocation is related to the career we are pursuing.

## GATHERING (10 MINUTES)

Watch this video together: [God and Vocation](#)

- What do you appreciate about this content?
- What makes you wonder? What do you disagree with?

## SCRIPTURE DISCUSSION (30 MINUTES)

Today, we will read about a man named John who came before Jesus (and was actually his cousin). This comes from the account written by Luke, who tells the story of how God first invited the people of ancient Israel, and then all nations, to follow Jesus and experience salvation.

## LUKE 3:1–20 (NLT)

It was now the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, the Roman emperor. Pontius Pilate was governor over Judea; Herod Antipas was ruler over Galilee; his brother Philip was ruler over Iturea and Traconitis; Lysanias was ruler over Abilene. <sup>2</sup> Annas and Caiaphas were the high priests. At this time a message from God came to John son of Zechariah, who was living in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup> Then John went from place to place on both sides of the Jordan River, preaching that people should be baptized to show that they had repented of their sins and turned to God to be forgiven. <sup>4</sup> Isaiah had spoken of John when he said,

"He is a voice shouting in the wilderness,

'Prepare the way for the Lord's coming!

Clear the road for him!

<sup>5</sup> The valleys will be filled,

and the mountains and hills made level.

The curves will be straightened,  
and the rough places made smooth.

<sup>6</sup> And then all people will see  
the salvation sent from God.”

<sup>7</sup> When the crowds came to John for baptism, he said, “You brood of snakes! Who warned you to flee the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup> Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God. Don’t just say to each other, ‘We’re safe, for we are descendants of Abraham.’ That means nothing, for I tell you, God can create children of Abraham from these very stones. <sup>9</sup> Even now the ax of God’s judgment is poised, ready to sever the roots of the trees. Yes, every tree that does not produce good fruit will be chopped down and thrown into the fire.”

<sup>10</sup> The crowds asked, “What should we do?”

<sup>11</sup> John replied, “If you have two shirts, give one to the poor. If you have food, share it with those who are hungry.”

<sup>12</sup> Even corrupt tax collectors came to be baptized and asked, “Teacher, what should we do?”

<sup>13</sup> He replied, “Collect no more taxes than the government requires.”

<sup>14</sup> “What should we do?” asked some soldiers.

John replied, “Don’t extort money or make false accusations. And be content with your pay.”

<sup>15</sup> Everyone was expecting the Messiah to come soon, and they were eager to know whether John might be the Messiah. <sup>16</sup> John answered their questions by saying, “I baptize you with water; but someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I’m not even worthy to be his slave and untie the straps of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. <sup>17</sup> He is ready to separate the chaff from the wheat with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, gathering the wheat into his barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire.” <sup>18</sup> John used many such warnings as he announced the Good News to the people.

<sup>19</sup> John also publicly criticized Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee, for marrying Herodias, his brother’s wife, and for many other wrongs he had done. <sup>20</sup> So Herod put John in prison, adding this sin to his many others.

- What do you appreciate about this content?
- What makes you wonder? What do you disagree with?
- Who are the different communities John is confronting, and how does John want each of them to respond? Why do you think John is calling for this in preparation of Jesus (verse 4)?
- John is traveling from place to place and telling people that they “should be baptized to show that they had repented of their sins and turned to God to be forgiven” (verse 3). How would you define true “repentance” based on just this passage? How do you see repentance evident in John’s life?

### NEXT STEPS (5 MINUTES)

Which next step will you take this week based on our discussion today? Choose one.

**Perspective:** Consider that following God in your vocation includes practical, tangible changes in behavior and daily habits. This means taking risks and acting boldly in ways that express and embody what you think and believe. Ponder how this aspect of a Christian worldview seems true or untrue from your perspective

**Engagement:** Examine your field of study and think of 1–2 aspects you think John might have challenged your community to change in response to his message. What would true “repentance” look like for your field in those areas? Make a plan and consider what it would look like to take steps toward that change personally.

**Investment:** John calls his listeners to economic change that reflects their faith in God. Gather a few people from your field of study and discuss economic and other practical pressures that affect your field. In what ways are repentance needed? Commit together to growing your understanding of those needs and seeking to learn more.