

## Matthew 3:1-17

1 In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." 3 For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'"

4 Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, 6 and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. 9 And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. 10 Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

11 "I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. 14 John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" 15 But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. 16 And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; 17 and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

**Also read:**

Community Group Study 9 May 2010

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### Introduction

Repentance is a change of mind and attitude toward God that changes our lives and actions. Only when we have seen that Jesus is the only hope for our lives can we experience true repentance.

Repentance is also personal. You cannot receive its effects from anyone else. It is a decision made by the individual.

We are God's children. We are chosen by Him. It is not a chance event but a deliberate action for God to choose and pay the price to make us His children.

We can be secure in Him. Jesus is at the right hand of the Father and our status as children of God therefore has no expiration – it is permanent.

Because of our status, we have full and free access to God.

### Discussion

>>What do we count on to make our lives better?  
>>In terms of faith, what are the struggles and advantages of being a child from a Christian family?  
>>What does it mean to be able to call God "father"?

### Explanation

>>What is the fruit of repentance?  
>>How does Jesus' work on the cross make us God's children?  
>>How does God let us know that He loves us?

### Application

>>How do we translate the knowledge we have of God's grace and fatherhood into life-changing reality?  
>>How can we cut away everything that prevents us from clinging to Jesus as our ONLY hope?  
>>What shall we do with our special relationship with God?