

# JESUS

through the eyes of the unlikely

## Week of January 8 – The Wildman<sup>1</sup>

### **Overview:**

Who do *you* see when you look at Jesus? Teacher? Miracle worker? Divine Son of God? All of these? Our view of Jesus is shaped by our own perspective, our church history, and our study of scripture. Over the next several weeks, we will view Jesus from Luke's perspective, through the eyes of some unlikely characters he met while on earth. We'll discover themes like identity, power, surrender, forgiveness, redemption, and many more. We pray that as you see Jesus in fresh ways, you are drawn to follow Jesus more closely and become more like him every day.<sup>2</sup>

### **Group Objectives:**

#### ***Relationships and Life Transformation are the primary purpose of community groups***

- Reflect on this past Sunday's message and other devotional reading.
- Pray together and provide encouragement for other group members.
- Consider how the life of John the Baptist can help us better know and follow Jesus.

### **DNA statement(s) tie-in:**

- *We are all for Jesus*—Jesus saves us from our past, remakes us to be like him, heals our broken places, and is coming back as our king.

### **Conversation Starters:**

- If you made a New Year's resolution, what is it and how is it going?
  - If you did not, why not?

### **Listening to God**

- Where did you see God at work last week? How were you able to join him?

### **Learning from God's Word: Bible Study Discussion**

- ***Read Luke 1:5-25, 57-66; 3:1-20***
  - According to these passages, how would you describe John the Baptist?
    - What was his background? What was his ministry/mission?
    - In what ways do you think the circumstances of his birth affected him as an adult?
  - Summarize John's teaching.
  - What did he tell people to do, or not to do? What was his focus?

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<sup>1</sup> This week's lesson was written by Rachel Vaughn and edited by Dawn Gentry.

<sup>2</sup> For a monthly reading and devotional guide to accompany this series in Luke, go to [cccomaha.info](http://cccomaha.info).

- **Read Luke 7:18-35**

- *At this point, John is in prison, unsure what his future will be. What question did John have for Jesus? Why do you think he asked this question?*
- *How does Jesus respond to John's doubt? What does his response tell you?*
- *What does Jesus say to the crowd after John's messengers leave? What message do you think he wanted to convey, both about John and about what it means to follow Jesus?*
- *Dig Deeper: For more on John the Baptist, see Matthew 3, 11:1-19, 14:1-12; Mark 1:1-14, 6:14-29; John 1:19-24, 3:22-36, 5:31-36. For Old Testament references relating to his ministry, see Malachi 3:1, 4:5-6; 1 Kings 17-19; Isaiah 29:17-21, 35:4-10, 40:1-5; Psalm 140*

### **Leaning into Obedience:**

- Why was John the Baptist an unlikely prophet? How would he compare to our modern pastors/teachers/influencers? What should this teach us about how we choose our teachers?
- Why do you think God allowed John to be arrested and later killed by Herod? What does this tell us about the nature of God's blessing?
- *John the Baptist had a stellar spiritual resume: miraculous birth, anointed with the Spirit from the womb, from the priestly line of Aaron, called as a prophet, baptized the Son of God, heard God claim Jesus as his son. And yet, from prison, he doubted. But he took the doubt to Jesus, who answered him with respect and grace.*
  - How does Jesus' response encourage you to bring him your doubts? Are there doubts or questions you have been afraid to voice?
- How do you sense God calling you to respond to this passage?
  - Is there an example to follow? A command to obey?
- How can the group encourage you this week as you respond?

### **Prayer Prompts:**

- Invite members of the group to share personal prayer requests.
- Allow time for silent reflection on the following questions.  
*What question do I need to bring to Jesus?*  
*Do I trust him to hear me and answer me with grace?*
- Option: Read Ephesians 3:14-21 over your group as a benediction:

*For this reason, I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.*

*And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*