

Week of March 9, 2025



Icebreaker



- What's a time you thought you were in trouble but ended up getting out of it?
- If you had to eat something wild (like John the Baptist's locusts), what would you try?



Discussion Questions



- How does John the Baptist's boldness in Matthew 3:7-12 challenge your view of faith conversations?
- Why do you think Jesus spoke about hell more than anyone else in Scripture?
- The sermon highlighted two common views of hell—eternal conscious punishment and annihilationism. Which one have you heard before, and how does it shape your perspective?
- What does it mean to "produce fruit in keeping with repentance" (Matthew 3:8)? What does that look like practically?
- How does understanding God's justice change the way you see His love?
- How would you explain the necessity of hell to someone struggling with the idea of a loving God allowing people to go there?
- In what ways do you think people misunderstand hell today?
- Some people use hell as a fear tactic, while others ignore it completely. Where do you see the balance in talking about it?
- If Jesus bore the full weight of hell's punishment on the cross, how should that impact the way we live our lives today?
- How does the idea of God's final judgment influence the urgency of sharing the Gospel with others?
- John the Baptist rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees for their self-righteousness. What are ways we might fall into similar traps today?



Thought for the Group



John the Baptist didn't hold back when he saw the religious leaders coming to be baptized. He called them a "brood of vipers" and warned them that just claiming religious heritage wasn't enough—they needed real repentance.

John also described Jesus as the One who would separate the wheat from the chaff. The wheat—those who truly follow Him—would be gathered into His kingdom, while the chaff—those who reject Him—would be burned in unquenchable fire. This passage makes it clear: hell is real, judgment is coming, and repentance matters.

Many people struggle with the idea of hell. If God is loving, how could He allow people to go there? But love without justice isn't real love. If sin has no consequence, then the cross was unnecessary. Hell exists because God is holy and just—He won't ignore evil. The reality of hell shouldn't just be a theological debate; it should stir urgency in us. Jesus didn't talk about hell to scare us—He warned us so that we would turn to Him. The good news is that because of the cross, we don't have to fear hell. Jesus took our punishment, offering us the free gift of salvation.

So, the real question isn't just "What do I believe about hell?" but "What will I do with Jesus?" If you've placed your trust in Him, live with gratitude and urgency. And if you haven't yet—don't wait. The time to respond is now.



Next Steps



- Take 10-15 minutes this week to pray and ask God to reveal any areas of your life that need true repentance. Then take an intentional step to change—whether it's confessing sin, making a tough decision, or seeking accountability.
- Identify one person in your life who may not know Jesus. Pray specifically for them every day this week, and look for an opportunity to share your faith