

# John introduces Jesus



John 3 : 23; 26-36

*John's followers complained to him that the Lord Jesus was also baptizing people and had many disciples. But John explained to them that Jesus is the true Master. The Lord Jesus had received the gift from God to baptize with the Holy Spirit. John further taught his disciples: "He must increase, but I must decrease. God loves his Son and has given all things into his hand. He who believes in the Son, has everlasting life. And he who believes not in him, shall draw the wrath of God upon himself and shall not receive eternal life in God."*

The children recognize that the Lord Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus knows God's will.

**S**ome time has elapsed since John baptized the Lord Jesus. John has not been idle in the meantime. On the contrary! Now that he knows that the Redeemer lives, he preaches even more zealously. He has gathered some friends around him who help him with this great task. Ben has become one of his untiring workers. In order to bring the important message to all the people, they have moved further along the banks of the river with John. They preach: "The kingdom of God is at hand. Prepare yourselves! Change your lives!" Daily more people come to listen and many are baptized by John. Ben admires him: How well John gets on with the people! He is not in the least afraid to tell them some very unpleasant truths. Ben is proud of John.

One day a group of people come up to Ben. He can see that they have been travelling for some time. He wants to take them to John immediately, but one young woman says: "We have not come to hear John. We would only like to cool and refresh our feet in the water. We still have a long journey ahead of us. We want to go and listen to the greatest prophet." Ben is disappointed. Suspiciously he asks: "What kind of prophet is that?" An old man answers him: "His name is Jesus. The people say that he performs great miracles. He

baptizes, and preaches even more powerfully than John." Ben stomps off furiously. He thinks: "John baptized this Jesus some time ago and has only spoken of him since. Now this Jesus, of all people, is also baptizing! Surely that can't be true!" Ben discusses everything he has heard with some of John's followers. They decide to go and speak to John.

John is surprised when he listens to their complaints. "Jesus, the one whom you baptized some time ago now baptizes too. Many people flock to him. They say he is an even greater prophet than you are. And to think that you supported him! How can he now baptize others?"

1

John answers them patiently: "I have always told you that I am not the Redeemer. The Lord Jesus is the one for whom we have been waiting. God has baptized him with his Spirit. I witnessed this happening. I have prayed daily for the Redeemer and prepared the people. I am only his unworthy servant. Now his time has come. The people will flock to him. He will gain more and more followers and my following will become smaller and smaller. I will be forgotten. But I am not sad about it. I am a human being, living on this earth. I can only speak of things relating to the earth. Jesus Christ, however, has been sent to us by God. He is the Son of God. He came to us from heaven. He is the king for whom we have all waited so long. He shall proclaim the word of God,

## Jesus Christ is the Son of God

but the people will find it difficult to understand what he wishes to tell them. Those who open their heart to him, who listen with their heart, will recognize God's greatness and how dearly he loves his Son."

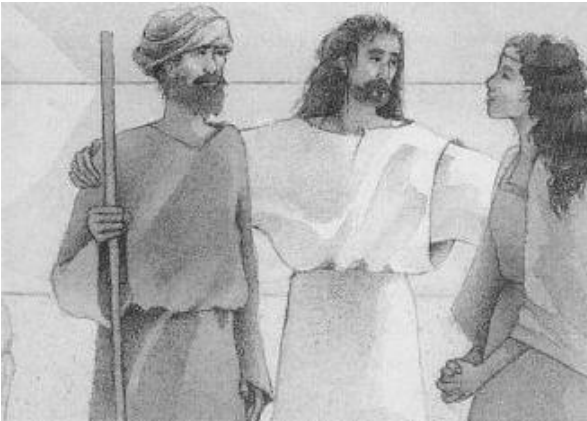
John speaks with conviction, devoid of any bitterness, but Ben does not understand. He cannot accept a stranger putting his friend and master down. He grumbles: "Why must this Jesus also baptize?"

"Do you think the Lord Jesus finds our work unsatisfactory? You are mistaken! If the people flock to Jesus, we have done

our work well. We have baptized them with water, but the Lord Jesus baptizes them with God's Spirit. His Father has given him the power to grant eternal life to all those who believe in him."

Ben no longer looks grim. Has he finally understood what John is trying to tell him?

2/3



*More and more people wanted to hear the word of God from the Lord Jesus. John said: "The Lord Jesus must increase, but I must decrease."*

- 1** What will John's answer to Ben be? Why? (Short review of the last two lessons.)
- 2** What is going on in Ben's head? We discuss several possibilities. Have the Sunday-school children understood what John wants to say?
- 3** What happens to people who do not believe in the Lord Jesus, who reject him? (God is not happy with them and the Lord Jesus cannot grant them eternal life. By sending his only Son to the earth, God has given mankind a great gift. He wants people to acknowledge this, however, and believe in his Son.)