



**Guess Who? John the Baptist- A voice in the wilderness  
Sermon Discussion Questions – June 18, 2023**

***Scripture Passages:***

Isaiah 40:3- “A voice of one calling: “In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God’.”

Luke 1: 13-17- “But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. 14 He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth,15 for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. 16 He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. 17 And he will go on before the Lord...to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

Matthew 3:8- “Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned from God.”

John 1:19-23- “...“Who are you?”20 He came right out and said, “I am not the Messiah.” 21 “Well then, who are you?” they asked. “Are you Elijah?” “No,” he replied. “Are you the Prophet we are expecting?” “No.” 22 “Then who are you? We need an answer for those who sent us.

What do you have to say about yourself?" 23 John replied in the words of the prophet Isaiah: "I am a voice shouting in the wilderness, 'Clear the way for the LORD's coming!'"

John 1:35-39- "As Jesus walked by, John looked at him and declared, "Look! There is the Lamb of God!" 37 When John's two disciples heard this, they followed Jesus. 38 Jesus looked around and saw them following. "What do you want?" he asked them. They replied, "Rabbi" (which means "Teacher"), "where are you staying?" 39 "Come and see," he said."

John 3:27-30- "No one can receive anything unless God gives it from heaven. 28 You yourselves know how plainly I told you, 'I am not the Messiah. I am only here to prepare the way for him.' 29 It is the bridegroom who marries the bride, and the bridegroom's friend is simply glad to stand with him and hear his vows. Therefore, I am filled with joy at his success. 30 He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less."

Luke 7: 22- "Then he told John's disciples, "Go back to John and tell him what you have seen and heard—the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor."

Luke 7: 27-28- "John is the man to whom the Scriptures refer when they say, 'Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, and he will prepare your way before you.' 28 I tell you, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John."

Hebrews 13:14-15- "For this world is not our permanent home; we are looking forward to a home yet to come. 15 Therefore, let us offer through Jesus a continual sacrifice of praise to God, proclaiming our allegiance to his name."

### ***Warm Up:***

It is Father's Day Weekend, so happy Father's Day to all the dads! What are some of your favorite memories of or with your dad? Or what are some of the ways you are thankful for your Heavenly Father?

### ***Discussion:***

1. Pastor Tori began to explain our new series and her experience of playing Guess Who growing up. How does the game Guess Who relate to your childhood memories and favorite games growing up?
2. Read Isaiah 40:3. How does the prophecy of Isaiah about John the Baptist's role as a voice in the wilderness connect with his mission to prepare the way for Jesus?

3. Read John 1:19-23. “The sole purpose of John’s life was to roll out the red carpet for Jesus and he didn’t seem to struggle with pride, arrogance, or bitterness.”- Pastor Tori. What can we learn from John's example in terms of overcoming pride, arrogance, and bitterness, especially when our efforts may not receive the same recognition as others?
4. “You know what takes us away from our true purpose in life? When we try to be Jesus.” -Pastor Tori. How does trying to be someone we're not hinder us from fulfilling our true purpose in life? What are some signs that indicate we may be trying to wear the crown and take control of our lives instead of surrendering to God?
5. “John the Baptist is one of my favorite people in scripture. He knew who he wasn't (I am not the Messiah) & he knew who he was (I am a voice in the wilderness). Every day I need to get clear in my soul who I am & who I am not. Otherwise, I find myself living a life God never called me to.” - Rich Villodas. How does the quote from Rich Villodas emphasize the significance of knowing who we are and who we are not in order to live a fulfilling life aligned with God's calling?
6. Read John 3:27-30. Why do you think John the Baptist was not concerned about people leaving him to follow Jesus? What can we learn from his response?
7. “During the dark days of our soul, I think we can all find ourselves being tempted to doubt, question, and wrestle with the truth we once so undoubtedly believed. Like John, we’ll be at the bottom of the pit asking, Jesus, is this all real?” -Pastor Tori. In times of doubt and discouragement, like John in prison, why is it common for us to question if Jesus is truly who He says He is? How can we find encouragement and strengthen our faith when we face dark days and wrestle with doubt about the truth of our beliefs?
8. “Why were we sent into the world? For one sole end, and for no other, to prepare for eternity. For this alone, we live. For this, and no other purpose, is our life either given or continued...Remember! You were born for nothing else. You live for nothing else. Your life is continued to you upon earth, for no other purpose than this, that you may know, love, and serve God on earth, and enjoy him to all eternity.” - John Wesley. According to John Wesley's quote, what is the ultimate purpose of our existence? How does this perspective shape our priorities and actions?

***Next Steps:***

Use the following questions to guide your reflection or conversation:

- Who are you living for?
- Who wears the crown?
- What might you need to surrender?
- What would it take for your life to point to Jesus?