



We've been following the person and ministry of John the Baptist.

Jesus said of Him

*Truly I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist! Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.*

Mt 11:11.

John was the greatest of the O.T. dispensation but now in the Church Age, even the least of believers has a greater privilege.

Even to the point where we are the Bride of Christ and the O.T. believers will be the guests at the wedding, the Marriage of the Lamb.

**Jn 3:22** *After these things*

I always ask myself, What things?

Well,

In Jn 2, Jesus was at a wedding, and they ran out of wine so He turned some water into wine.

Then He went into Jerusalem for the Passover and chased out the money changers from the Temple courtyard.

Shortly after that He met with Nicodemus and explained to him, "he must be born again if he was to go into the kingdom of Heaven."

So,

**Jn 3:22** *After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He was spending time with them and baptizing.*

It is probable that Jesus was not doing any baptizing because in another instance, in

Jn 4:1 *Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John v.2 (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were),*

Here we have the overlap of the two ministries of John and Jesus:  
**v.23** *John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and people were coming and were being baptized—*

Ha!

Not that Aenon was such a holy place, there was just a lot of water there. That is very helpful when baptizing people.

Some of John's disciples came to him and told him that others were baptizing too and getting quite a following.

The humility of John is quite evident here. It is very freeing when a person knows their place in God's calling. When someone tries to usurp another position that God has not assigned, it never works out well.

You may know the contents of the Ark of the Covenant that the Jews carried with them wherever they went.

In the Ark were:

- A pot of manna-reminder of God's provision
- broken tablets of the 10 Commandments
- Aaron's rod that budded

The significance of the rod that budded:

While in the wilderness, this guy named Korah got a bunch of people together and conspired against Moses and Aaron as to "who made them boss."

God told Moses to get a rod from each of the leaders of the 12 tribes of Israel and put the rods in the Tent of Meeting (The Tabernacle). The next day, Aaron's rod sprouted buds, determining him and his tribe, Levi, to be the priests of Israel.

Num 17:12 *Then the sons of Israel spoke to Moses, saying, "Behold, we perish, we are dying, we are all dying!*  
v.13 *"Everyone who comes near, who comes near to the tabernacle of the LORD, must die. Are we to perish completely?"*

Not that they were literally dying but their guilt was making them

breathless before God and it was a warning that if they came near the Tabernacle they would be punished with death.

Point being;

They were not satisfied with their station in life but John the Baptist embraced his.

Wherever God places you in His service, we should be joyful just for the fact that we have been employed by Him.

*Ps 84:10 I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. KJV*

So John's disciples came to him and said that Jesus was drawing a larger crowd.

**v.27** *John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven.*

**v.28** *You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent ahead of Him.'*

John sees himself as the "Best Man" at the wedding.

**v.29** *He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made full.*

The Best Man is happy for his friend. He is not competing with him for his bride.

**v.30** John knows his mission is now complete.

*He must increase, but I must decrease.*

You see,

What made him the greatest born among women was his role as the Herald of the Messiah. He had an awesome responsibility to introduce Jesus to the world.

And now that Jesus has arrived, his purpose has been served.

**v.31** John exalts Jesus

*He who comes from above is above all, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.*

**v.35** John gives the Gospel

*The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand.*

**v.36** *"He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."*

in closing;

Let's note 3 things about John:

1. John was the subordinate to Jesus Christ.

We learn that whatever task God may assign to us, it is no small thing.

We are not in a role of competition with anyone else but in a role of service to Almighty God.

2. John said we can only receive what God gives:

If Jesus' followers were growing beyond John's, that was the doing of God. John had no resentment for he had accomplished what was given him to do. Attract people to Christ.

We learn that even pastors and congregations should rejoice in the growth of other ministries.

3. John called Jesus the Bridegroom and himself, the Friend of the Bride.

At the Jewish wedding the Friend of the Bridegroom had specific responsibilities:

- Arranged the wedding
- Prepared the invitations
- Presided over the wedding feast
- Brought the bride and groom together
- Guard the bridal chamber and let no false lover in
- Bring out the bride when he heard the bridegroom's voice coming
- His task was now completed!
- He then faded out of the picture.