

Martyrdom of John the Baptist + Mark 6:14-29

John's father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,
"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people
and has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,
as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
that we should be saved from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us;
to show the mercy promised to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant,
the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us
that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,
might serve him without fear,
in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
to give knowledge of salvation to his people
in the forgiveness of their sins,
because of the tender mercy of our God,
whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace."

And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

God said concerning John the Baptist, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'"

John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

All the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey.

John preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

John said concerning Jesus, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.' I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

John knew that he must decrease that Jesus would increase.

Following John baptizing Jesus, John was arrested. It is at this time that Jesus said of John, "Among those born of woman there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist."

John was the forerunner of Jesus, which meant he must go before Jesus, suffering and dying for Jesus.

While John was in prison, Jesus sent comfort to him saying, "The blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them."

Profession of Faith at Confirmation

Do you hold all the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures to be the inspired Word of God?

Response: I do.

Do you confess the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, drawn from the Scriptures, as you have learned to know it from the Small Catechism, to be faithful and true?

Response: I do

Do you intend to hear the Word of God and receive the Lord's Supper faithfully?

Response: I do, by the grace of God.

Do you intend to live according to the Word of God, and in faith, word, and deed to remain true to God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, even to death?

Response: I do, by the grace of God.

Do you intend to continue steadfast in this confession and Church and to suffer all, even death, rather than fall away from it?

Response: I do, by the grace of God.