

He Must Increase; I Must Decrease

John 3:22-36

Introduction: If anyone could have fallen into the trap of pride, it would have been John the Baptist. Who else in human history (apart from Jesus Himself) could claim to have been filled with the Holy Spirit while still in his mother's womb (*Luke 1:15*)? No one else in human history had the prophetic role of being the forerunner of Jesus (*Luke 1:17, 76*). But the greatest compliment that could have caused pride, was that Jesus said that John was the greatest man in human history (*Matt. 11:11*). *Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist.* All these things could have fed the pride of this young prophet, barely in his thirties.

In *John 3:22-36*, John the Baptist shows us **how** to be humble and **why** we need to always remain humble. In his own words, John put it this way, "*He must increase, but I must decrease.*" (*John 3:30*)

John versus Jesus! Really? (vs. 22-30)

Humility is understanding that God is absolutely sovereign about what He gives and to whom He gives it (vs. 27).

Humility is understanding that Jesus is the Lord and that He should be the center of attention and worship (vs. 28-29).

Why must we live by the rule that we must decrease and Jesus must increase? (vs. 30-36)

1. **Our role in God's program is temporary.** (*vs. 24: For John had not yet been put in prison*)

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2. **Our earthly perspective is limited.** (*vs. 32: He who comes from above is above all. He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven is above all.*)

 3. **Our understanding of how God's plan works out is limited.** (*vs. 32-35: He bears witness to what he has seen and heard, yet no one receives his testimony.*)

 4. **Only God sets the way of salvation and final judgement.** (*vs. 36: Whoever believes in the Son **has** eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.*)

Conclusion: The only requirement that God has placed on His plan to give us this priceless gift, is faith in Jesus Christ. "*Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life.*"