



SPORTS IN FOCUS

Christ's Ministry Begins
Luke 3:1-4:44 • Lesson Two

READY

- As Jesus began His ministry, He faced spiritual opposition. Think about a long-term project you've undertaken (home renovation, diet/exercise, etc.) What problems did you encounter? What character qualities helped see it through?

SET

Context of Luke 3:1-4:44

Luke heralds the beginning of Jesus' kingdom work by introducing John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ. In those days, monarchs traveling in the wilderness would have crews of workmen go ahead of them to make sure the road was clear of debris, obstructions, potholes, and other hazards that might make their journey difficult. In a spiritual sense, John paved the way for Christ, calling the people of Israel to prepare their hearts for the coming of the Messiah.

Keys to Text

Baptize: This word comes from the Greek baptizo, which means "to dip" or "to immerse." People came to John the Baptist to be immersed by him in the Jordan River. John called both Jews and Gentiles to be baptized publicly to renounce their old way of life. It also symbolized the preparation of their hearts for the coming Messiah.

GO

Read Luke 3:1-4:44

- Describe the ministry of John the Baptist—the messenger himself, the content of his message, his style.
- What sorts of people came to hear John preach? What was their response to him?
- Summarize the things that took place when Christ was baptized.
- What does Luke 4:1 say about the Spirit's role in Christ's temptation?
- What happened when Jesus presented Himself as Israel's Messiah in his hometown of Nazareth (4:16-29)?
- What was the demonic consensus about the identity of Christ (4:34, 41)?
- In the temptation account, Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 8:3 (4:4), then Deuteronomy 6:13 (v. 8). After Satan quotes Psalm 91:11-12 (vv. 10-11), Christ quotes Deut. 6:16. What does this teach about temptation, the devil and knowing the Scripture?
- If you had been a first-person witness to these events, what would you have concluded about Jesus' identity and message?

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ESPN crowned North Platte's Danny Woodhead as this year's "cult hero." North Platte fans no doubt watched the New England Patriots lose yesterday's playoff game to their rival the NY Jets. Patriots 5-foot-7 running back Danny Woodhead who is from North Platte has become a cult hero not just in Nebraska but in the NFL this year. Danny has been a key component in the Bill Belichick offense by running and receiving nearly 1,000 combined yards and six touchdowns. He totaled 98 yards in their loss to the Jets. Danny remains close to his family and as ESPN reports his mother texts Scriptures to Danny before every Patriots game. His parents also call him and pray together before each game. For sure, Danny's pre-game included studying game film and knowing the Jet's defenses. Just as important for the Christian athlete is knowing and applying God's Word. Jesus was able to reply to the Satan's half-truths and lies with the absolute, undeniable truth of God's Word. Jesus answered him, "It is written (in Deut. 8:3). Make sure your preparation includes studying God's Word.