



# SPORTS IN FOCUS

JOHN THE BAPTIST PREPARES THE WAY

Matthew 3:1-12 • Lesson Two

# ZOOM!

## READY

- Imagine being there in first-century Palestine when Jesus first came on the scene. If you had to choose three words to describe or characterize his ministry, what would they be?

## SET

### Context of Matthew 3:1-12

In Chapter 2, Christ's kingship is shown by the circumstances surrounding His birth — by the homage of the magi, the murderous hatred of Herod, and God's miraculous protection of the young Jesus. In chapter 3, Matthew shows more evidence through a God-appointed forerunner named John, who heralded the King's arrival.

### Keys to Text

*Herald:* A Herald in ancient times was a common way to precede the arrival of the monarch, to announce his coming, and to prepare for his safe and proper travel. The herald would make sure that the roadway was as smooth and uncluttered as possible. Holes would be filled, rocks and debris would be removed, and unsightly litter would be burned or hidden. As the group traveled along and worked, the herald would proclaim the king's coming to everyone he encountered. His duty was to proclaim and to prepare.

## GO

### Read Matthew 3:1-12

1. How is John the Baptist described in Matthew's gospel?
2. What happened at the baptism of Christ?
3. What features marked the beginning of Christ's ministry?
4. Why was John so harsh with the Pharisees and Sadducees?
5. Both John and Jesus preached a simple message: "Repent!" What does this term mean? What happens when you repent?
6. Why was it necessary for Jesus to be baptized? What was the significance of this act?
7. What is a winnowing fork or shovel?
8. In what specific ways are you challenged by Matthew 3:1-12? What actions do you need to change?

## SPORTS IN FOCUS

The Husker Tunnel Walk, which began in 1994, has become an integral part of Memorial Stadium's game-day experience. It was created as a way for fans to share in the excitement of the team emerging from the locker room, something only a few could do before HuskerVision's cameras and big screens came to Memorial Stadium. The sounds of the Alan Parsons Project's "Sirius" and the roar of the 85,000 frenzied fans rock the stadium as the Huskers burst through the locker room doors and into the tunnel on their way to the Memorial Stadium FieldTurf. While any Husker fan should celebrate the arrival of their beloved team, how much more should believers rejoice that our King has arrived with the way being prepared by John Baptist.