

THE PRAYERS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

“Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.” (Luke 11:1)

John the Baptist obviously had a wonderful prayer life. When Jesus finished praying, one of His disciples wanted Jesus to teach them to pray as John taught his disciples. This is quite remarkable for the Scriptures teach explicitly that **“John never performed a miraculous sign” (John 10:41)**. Since Jesus performed many miraculous signs, you would expect His disciples to say: “Lord teach us to pray like YOU pray”. It is significant that they didn’t say this!

Numerous Scriptures reveal that the ministries of both Jesus and John the Baptist were predicted centuries before either of them was born. In addition, please consider:

- Both Jesus and John the Baptist had supernatural births.
- However, they grew up differently. Jesus grew up under the care of His parents (Lk. 2:51) and John the Baptist grew up in the desert (Lk. 1:50).
- They apparently received the Holy Spirit at different times. The Spirit of God descended upon Jesus at His baptism (Matt. 3:16) when He was about 30 years old (Lk. 3:23). John the Baptist, however, was filled with the Holy Spirit from his birth (Lk. 1:15).
- John the Baptist excelled spiritually for among those “born of women” there was no greater prophet than John the Baptist (Matt. 11:11).
- Malachi predicted that God would send the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the Lord (Mal. 4:5). Jesus said, if you are willing to accept it, John the Baptist was the Elijah which was to come (Matt. 11:15).
- Isaiah also predicted that John the Baptist would be a voice crying out in the wilderness, preparing the way for the Lord (Lk. 3:4 - 6).
- The ministry of Jesus, of course, was much greater than that of John the Baptist.
 - Jesus was more powerful than John (Matt. 3:11).
 - Jesus had the Spirit of God without limit (Jn. 3:34).
 - John baptized with water, but Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit, and with fire (Lk. 3:16).
 - John said he was not worthy to unloose the thongs of Jesus’ sandals (Lk. 3:16).
 - John realized that the ministry of Jesus was destined to grow greater, and his ministry was destined to become less (John 3:30).
- For some reason, however, the disciples of Jesus still wanted to learn to pray like John the Baptist prayed! Let’s ponder why?

PERHAPS UNDERSTANDING THIS WORLD AND THAT WORLD WILL HELP

- John the Baptist preached the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 3:2). He understood that the kingdoms of this world will pass away, but the Kingdom of that world will never pass away.
- John’s advice to give away clothing, be honest in business, and not to abuse authority for earthly wealth, also focused on the importance of “that” future kingdom (Lk. 3:10 - 14).
- John deliberately diminished his own influence in order to exalt Christ (Jn. 3:25 - 36).
- Based on these facts, it is safe to assume that the prayers of John involved eternal matters for whoever was great in “that” Kingdom would be greater than John (Matt. 11:11).
- It is quite possible that John never prayed for earthly miracles, only eternal things, and also gladly accepted his calling of hardship and adversity, including his death as a martyr.
- If this is true, perhaps we too should learn to pray as John taught his disciples to pray!