

Second Sunday of Advent – December 9/10, 2017 – Reflection

“I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the Kingdom of God is greater than he.” (Luke 7:28)

How many of you call yourselves “Baptists” or “John-ists” because you follow John the Baptist? John’s job by the waters of the Jordan River was not to gain a cult following (though he did that), was not to become a celebrity (though he was that). John’s job was to get people ready for the Messiah: to clear the soil, pull the weeds, plant the seed, call the people to grow in faith and goodness. He did that by pointing out their faults ... from kings and princes to priests and paupers. He railed at them, shamed them, challenged them, exhorted them to examine the lives they were leading and repent, change, fly straight. In the end, John the Baptist actually died for exposing the sins of the rich and famous.

In our day, so many rich and powerful men have been exposed as sinners; sinners who use their power, position, wealth to get their physical needs met by the vulnerable, by their charges in the workplace, by those seeking entrance to industry or the halls of government. These “Me Too” revelations have rightly destroyed reputations, killed careers, and, I fear, will actually cost some lives. Should we not, like John the Baptist, be about exposing the sins of others and calling for repentance and reparation? After all, Jesus called John the Baptist great – shouldn’t we follow in his footsteps?

Perhaps there might be another way for a Christian (not a "John-ist", not a "Baptist") to be. John died exposing the sins of others. Jesus died to actually PAY for the sins of others.

If John the Baptist is "great", but Jesus Christ is our model and Lord, maybe we should act as He did. What if we stopped, just for awhile, telling the world how bad their sin is, and instead, started sharing how good God our Father has always been, how good He has always been to me?!!