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THE JOHN THE BAPTIST CALL

The timing of God is always perfect. We learn much from the story of John the Baptist. He was born to Elizabeth and Zechariah in their old age. Like Abraham and Sarah, they were beyond the years of conception, and there was no hope. Yet, God had a plan for them, but it happened in his timing.

John was about six months older than his cousin Jesus. We learn this from Luke 1:39-48, which tells the story of Mary visiting her cousin Elizabeth. Baby Jesus was in the womb and when Mary approached Elizabeth, John leaped in her womb at the sound of Mary's voice. Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months, so it is possible she was there at the birth of John. (Luke 1:56.)

There is no record that John or Jesus saw each other during their childhood. Nothing is said about John until he comes on the scene in Luke chapter 3 preaching repentance. He was the first prophet in several hundred years to visit Israel. People were eager to hear what he had to say, and many repented of their sin and were baptized. This was not salvation, but a state of cleansing and repentance under the Old Testament covenant.

John didn't miss his words. He made a stand for truth and did not hesitate to confront both Herod and the religious leaders, condemning their sin, and speaking repentance to them. John confronted Herod about taking his brother's wife and it caused him to be put in prison. Then, Herod's evil stepdaughter called for his head and John was executed.

So, what is a John the Baptist call? Someone that has this calling will be called to be a prophet from the womb. As they mature and move into the office of the prophet, they will call for repentance, and it will cost them to take a stand against sin. The message these prophets will bring is a message of repentance as a warning to get right before the Lord's return. These people will not sugar coat prophetic words, for they are not people pleasers. Their fear of God is greater than their seeking the approval of the people they minister to. It will cost many to be mocked, scorned, ridiculed, and even receiving a death sentence for their stand. It will be a very lonely and often isolated life. Yet, they accept the call, knowing their reward is an eternal reward.

In these last days, the message before the Lord's return is repentance just as it was before Jesus came on the scene in the days of John the Baptist. God wants people to turn away from their sin and come with a heart of repentance to him and he will forgive them. If you have this call on your life, I pray you surrender to it and be empowered to be what God has called you to be.