

“I must become less”

John 3:22-36

“I must become less”

John 3:22-24

22 After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, and baptized. **23** Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were coming and being baptized. **24** (This was before John was put in prison.)

“I must become less”

**“The ministries of John the
Baptist and Jesus
overlapped.”**

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“I must become less”

John 3:25-26

25 An argument developed between some of John’s disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing. **26** They came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan — the one you testified about — look, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him.”

“I must become less”

“John the Baptist’s disciples were disturbed because people were following Jesus instead of John. It is too easy to grow jealous of the popularity of another person’s ministry. But we must remember to that our true mission is to influence people to follow Christ, not us.”

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“I must become less”

John 3:27-30

27 To this John replied, “A person can receive only what is given them from heaven. **28** You yourselves can testify that I said, ‘I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him.’

29 The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete.

30 He must become greater; I must become less.”

“I must become less”

“This proverb [In v.27] implies that God (heaven) sovereignly gives humans whatever they possess. And God has given John the Baptist a particular role in the history of redemption. Discontent over God’s wise gifts betray unbelief and idolatrous arrogance.”

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“I must become less”

“The most important man at the wedding, here [in v.29] referring to Jesus. ”The friend who attends the bridegroom” is there only to help him, which describes John the Baptist. [John’s joy was complete], not because he was on center stage but because the bridegroom was there. John’s joy was to hear of Jesus’ success.”

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“I must become less”

1 Corinthians 1:11-13

11 My brothers and sisters, some from Chloe’s household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. **12** What I mean is this: One of you says, “I follow Paul”; another, “I follow Apollos”; another, “I follow Cephas”; still another, “I follow Christ.” **13** Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul?

“I must become less”

John 3:31-33

31 The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. **32** He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. **33** Whoever has accepted it has certified that God is truthful.

“I must become less”

**“Jesus so completely says and
does only and all that God
says and does that to believe
Jesus is to believe God.**

**Conversely, not to believe
Jesus is to call God a liar.”**

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“I must become less”

John 3:34-36

34 For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit. **35** The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. **36** Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them.

“I must become less”

“God gives the Spirit without limit” as opposed to how God gave the only the measure of the Spirit required for His anointed servants to complete their tasks and earlier stages in redemptive history.”

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“I must become less”

“Eternal life is a present possession, not something the believer will only obtain later... [God’s wrath is] a strong expression, meaning that God is actively opposed to everything evil... No one who persists in rejecting the Son of God as Savior and Lord can expect God’s wrath eventually to fade away. God’s opposition to evil is both total and permanent.”

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“I must become less”

Five reasons for Christ’s
superiority to John:

1. Christ has a heavenly origin:
v.31

2. Christ knew what was true by
firsthand experience: v.32

3. Christ's testimony always agreed with God: v.33
4. Christ experienced the Holy Spirit in an unlimited manner: v.34
5. Christ was supreme because the Father sovereignly had granted that status to Him: v.35

Life Applications

Remember the:

- Supremacy of Christ
- Testimony of Christ
- Authority of Christ

Final Thoughts

“Are we too jealous to let Jesus take priority over certain things in our lives-jobs, children, school, or relationships?”

Final Thoughts

1 Corinthians 3:3-9

3 You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans? **4** For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not mere human beings? **5** What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe — as the Lord has assigned to each his task.

6 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it,
but God has been making it grow. **7** So
neither the one who plants nor the one
who waters is anything, but only God,
who makes things grow. **8** The one who
plants and the one who waters have one
purpose, and they will each be rewarded
according to their own labor. **9** For we
are co-workers in God's service; you are
God's field, God's building.

Final Thoughts

“John’s willingness to decrease in importance shows unusual humility. Pastors and other Christian leaders can be tempted to focus more on the success of their ministries than on Christ. Beware of those who put more emphasis on their own achievements than on God’s Kingdom.”

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Final Thoughts

Luke 17:10

10 “So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.’ ”

Final Thoughts

John 3:30 ESV

30 He must increase, but I
must decrease.”