

## **Desert Doctrine**

### **John 3:22-36**

**Intro:** John the Baptist is known for several key descriptive phrases when referring to Jesus; for example, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” In John 3, the Baptist gives us another memorable poignant statement: “He must increase, but I must decrease.” This latter phrase is couched in the midst of imagery that both explains the phrase more clearly and takes us “above” to gain additional insight into the Messiah’s ministry.

#### **I. The geographical setting of Jesus’ and John’s ministry.**

- A. From Jerusalem to the Judean desert (cf. John 2:23ff)
- B. From private meetings to public baptisms (cf. John 3:1ff)

#### **II. Two baptismal services yet one purpose.**

- A. Debating disciples (vs. 22-26)
- B. The importance of purification (vs. 25)
- C. John supplies one answer with several images
  - 1. First, theological answers come from above (heaven) (vs. 27, 31)
  - 2. Second, theological answers can be illustrated by a wedding:
    - a. Bride (vs. 29)
    - b. Bridegroom (vs. 29)
    - c. Best man (vs. 29)
    - d. Rejoicing...having a good time! (vs. 29)
    - e. Matter of importance: increasing/decreasing (vs. 30)
  - 3. Third, being a good witness
    - a. What is seen (vs. 32)
    - b. What is heard (vs. 32)
    - c. What is witnessed (vs. 33-36)
      - 1. He who...
      - 2. ...received the witness has set a seal: God is true!
      - 3. ...speaks the words of God
      - 4. ...gives the Spirit without measure
      - 5. ...is loved by the Father
      - 6. ...receives the message or suffers God’s wrath!