Matthew 3:13-17

Cover Page.

Communion Meditation

Topic: Too Look Within.

Proposition: Earnest and honest selfexamination of one's inner self
coupled with a comparison to the
introspection of John the Baptist
and of Jesus is valuable in improving
ones character and pointing the way toward God.

Date written: January 6, 1962

Dates & Places Used:: Montrose, Colo., 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m., Jan. 7, 1962.

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no frat bold to Land orie: low por within "Toe menni a' eno lo moitanina e .50a Bras 0010., 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m., This Scripture begins with an account of John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea. The gist of his message was "Repent, for

the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
He would baptise those who did gepent
and tell them that he indeed ba ptise
with water, but one should follow
him who would baptise them with the

Holy Spirit.

During most of this ministry of John's, Jesus had been in whe wilderness, too, undergoing the great temptations which the Bible writer says the devil placed before him. Jesus had successfully resisted these temptations. Feeling the need of strength and purification after his trying ordeal, Jesus somehow heard of John's preaching, and came

to be baptised by him.
However, John tried to prevent

Jesus from being baptised. He said to Jesus, "I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." So

John baptised Jesus. Immediately, writes Matthew, the spirit of God zame down like a dove, and lighting

in of medical control is at lower ." . I woo ed bearing the ed by a mese tempte tours. Tealing the need is triing order, Jesus so show serve of John's whosebing, and came to he heattest of old health .bestines pries no i acust 60 F.ssensroethnin Ha III III . Teta bemil . suga, beafinad mio. on Jesus.xxid A voice said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased. Immediately after that Jesus was led by the spirit to go into the wilderness for 40 days of self-examination, which Matthew describes as wrestling with the devil.

We are interested in John's reply to Jesus when Jesus asked him to baptise him: "I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?" John's question reveals that John constantly examined himself, or practiced introspection, trying to be realistic about the inner man that he really was. He was a successful prophet, attracting crowds. preaching a message which was getting people to turn to God. In spite of this, he was able to keep a balance so that he readily recognized himself as inferior to Jesus. He was an honest man, evidently, who did not put himself on too high a pedestal, partly because he kept constantly aware of his real inner self.

Jesus, too, practied introspection. This first recorded instance, immediately after his baptism, when he went into the wilderness, is an illustration of it. Here he examined the temptations of power, riches,

on designation a votes said, This almios ni beteenguni era s bised by you, and do you come to me John's crestion reveals that John hat he really was. To was a succe to stine ut . to lot rend of studen spirite lor to Jecus. Lis res on tion. Lits Tist recorded instance ustraction of it. Laero wa eram temptations of corres, miches

andadulation. He turned them all down. The reasons for rejection of them was, I'm sure, the realization that he would become too self-satisfied, too proud, too egocentric. He realized that he needed to look beyond himself. These words, spoken by him to Satan, indicate his awareness of the need of constant self-examination and recognition of ones inner motives: "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve."

The difference between Jesus and John, as they practiced introspection and honesty with self, was that John came out recognizing his inferiority and need to be under authority to another earthly being, Jesus; while Jesus recognized only God as being worthy of his complete obedience and

respect.

In both examples are suggestions for us. We live day by day in wildernesses of various kinds, in our jobs, in our society, where we are tempted. Often, to be honest, we give in to much of the temptation that besets us. When we turn to introspection to try to determines why we did what we did, we find that undue pride, false confidence,

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over-estimating our spiritual, mental, physical abilities, was at fault.

It may be that in our work we have to come to grips with the fact that we are not as dependent as we wish we were; that we must take orders from someone elese. If we can do this without resentment and bisterness, certainly life is more

can do this without resentment and bieterness, certainly life is more pleasent, and the probability is that we'll do the job better. Few of us are absolute masters of our own timek and efforts. Somewhere along the line most of us are subject to the desires and winders of others. The trick that introspection can help bring about here is to let us realize the necessity and justice in this, so that we react as willing and loving servants; not as slaves driven by whips.

In \*\*Example 10.000.

which we ranked see expressed in
the various prayer periods and period
of departure from the crowds, there
is the element of seeking to bring
ones own personality into more complete harmony with God. Whenever
any one of us does this, compares
what he is with what he believes
God wants taxxtoxxoxx him to be, he

comes up short, realizing how in which

orders from someone elese. Il To vel . resided do let ob 11'es mak and a for is. Comenters alon .areido io ancomo bas aerizeb ini heaseymme ese filma en lelum deve barmony with God. Whenever

God's will.

he really is. Jesus did not want to be arrested and tried, and prayed God that this cup might spared him. But he also added, "Not my will, but Thine be done." That is the shining example of the value of instrospection which we can learn fro the life and teachings of Jesus: to try to bring ourselves in every way into harmony with God, regardless of the cost. Harmony with God does not always bring peace and prosperity not by any means, as Jesus' life illustrated. But to look to God for guidance is important Hinb-The value of a Communion service

is lessened greatly unless we use
the quiet periods of this service
for honest self-examination, for
instospection. As we partake of the
Communion we can think of christ at
the last supper, there realizing
that he might not eat again with
these men he wed. We can realize
the struggle he must have been going
through, all the while wishing he
didn't have to do what he must, but
determining to do it anyway. We can
determine that we, too, will seek

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- According to Thy gracious word,
  In meek humility,
  This will I do, my dying Lord,
  I will remember Thee.
  - Thy body, broken for my sake,
    My bread from heaven shall be;
    Thy testamental cup I take,
    And thus remember Thee,

Remember Thee, and all Thy pains, And all Thy love to me; Yea, while a breath, a pulse remains, Will I remember Thee!

And when these failing lips grow dumb,

And mind and memory flee,
When Thou shalt in Thy kingdom come,
then, Lord, remember me!

Amen.

(No. 410, The Methodist Hymnal, by James Montgomery, 1771-1856.)

According to Tay greeions word, in meet anniis, ,
This will I do, my dying hord,
I wall remember line.

Ity body, broken for my sale, to be addition leaven shall be; Thy bestemental out I tale, and into remainer The.

Romanber Thee, and all Try oains, And all Thy Love to me; Yea, while a cranth, a pulse remai

And wind and memory flee, brome And wind and memory flee, we come, then, lord, remember me!

(No. 410, Nie vehiceds: Hymnel, by James Monteconsin, 1771-1856.)