

Series: Life to the Full; Sermon: **Whoever Believes**

Delivered by: **Dr. Josh Moody**, senior pastor; Date: **November 5, 2017**

**Bible text explored: John 3:22–36**

<sup>22</sup>After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he remained there with them and was baptizing. <sup>23</sup>John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized <sup>24</sup>(for John had not yet been put in prison).

<sup>25</sup>Now a discussion arose between some of John’s disciples and a Jew over purification. <sup>26</sup>And they came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, he who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you bore witness—look, he is baptizing, and all are going to him.” <sup>27</sup>John answered, “A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven. <sup>28</sup>You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, ‘I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him.’ <sup>29</sup>The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete. <sup>30</sup>He must increase, but I must decrease.”

<sup>31</sup>He who comes from above is above all. He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven is above all. <sup>32</sup>He bears witness to what he has seen and heard, yet no one receives his testimony. <sup>33</sup>Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true. <sup>34</sup>For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. <sup>35</sup>The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. <sup>36</sup>Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. [ESV]

**Review and application:**

*Many Jews were coming to Aenon (meaning springs) near the Jordan River (vv. 22-24) to be ritually washed. Both John the Baptist and Jesus’ disciples were baptizing in that area.*

1. Was the concern of John’s disciples (vv. 25-26) more about how the ceremonial cleansing was performed or which rabbi was attracting more followers?
2. The theology of John’s response, Pastor Moody said, defeated his disciples’ jealousy. What (v. 27) has to be the source of any spiritual accomplishment?  
How (v. 28) had John previously introduced the one his disciples now felt threatened by? (See *John 1:26*.)
3. Instead of jealousy, what did John’s “best man” illustration about the unveiling of the Messiah (v. 29) show to whom the focus should be directed?  
And what should be the overriding emotion?
4. Why (v. 30) did John welcome Jesus taking center stage as he moved to the sidelines?  
To what extent is our satisfaction based on the recognition we receive from others?  
What is the solid foundation for great, eternal joy?
5. In what way (v. 31) does the assertion of John’s Gospel that Jesus “comes from above” make him unique?  
Why, in spite of his origins, (v. 32) have people by and large rejected his teaching?
6. How (in vv. 33-35) is the one God presented as three persons?  
Why can we confidently affirm Jesus’ testimony as being the very words of God?
7. Is eternal life for all who believe (v. 36) a promise to be fulfilled in the future or a *present* but ongoing intimate experience?  
What is the alternative for all who reject God’s Son?  
Are we bearing witness to the “life to the max” we have in Christ? (See *Acts 4:20*.)