

## Your Kingdom Come on Earth

Luke sets the preaching of John the Baptist clearly in the midst of the political and religious environment of his day. We are told the names of the emperor, governor, and other political rulers of the day. They are the ones who are supposed to care for the welfare of the citizens of their territories. Although John gave his message while he was in the wilderness, it was intended to have its impact in the farms, villages, and cities where the ordinary and the powerful live out their daily lives. John is not satisfied with the way things are, and his words help prepare us for the coming of one who will turn the world upside down. John's words tell us to examine our own lives and the world around us. We should not be complacent in the face of injustice, but instead seek forgiveness and strive for lives that bear fruit according to God's vision for the world.

We all have the potential to "over-spiritualize" the Bible and our faith, so that they become disconnected from the real needs of the world around us. This potential can be even greater in the days around Christmas, as we may seek to justify over-spending on gifts, excessive eating and drinking, or simply desire to escape from the difficulties of ordinary life for a time. John provides a warning about ignoring the truth about our sinfulness and the brokenness in the world. But John also repeats the promise that God ultimately will not settle for the way things are in the world, and that God's salvation will be made known in the one who is to come: Jesus.

