In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene—during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the desert. He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.
As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: “A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And all people will see God’s salvation.’” John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.
And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

“What should we do then?” the crowd asked. John answered, “The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same.”
Tax collectors also came to be baptized. “Teacher,” they asked, “what should we do?”

“Don’t collect any more than you are required to,” he told them.

Then some soldiers asked him, “And what should we do?” He replied, “Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely—be content with your pay.”
The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Christ. John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” And with many other words John exhorted the people and proclaimed the good news to them.
Verses 1-2

Two observations

1. Christianity is a faith rooted in history.
Two observations

1. Christianity is a faith rooted in history.
2. Christianity is faith founded upon God’s sovereign promises.
Daniel 9: 25

(week of years = 7 years)

$69 \times 7 = 483$ years from issue of decree to Messiah, the Prince!

Ezra 7:11 - decree in 457 B.C.

483 years

26 A.D.

* What’s so special about 26 A.D.?
John the Baptist preached 3 essential spiritual needs for all men & women:

1. A New Life (vs. 3-6)
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1. A New Life (vs. 3-6)

   There must be a change in your heart (repentance = a change in course).
John the Baptist preached 3 essential spiritual needs for all men & women:

2. A New Lifestyle (vs. 7-14)
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2. A New Lifestyle (vs. 7-14)

   Genuine repentance is evidenced by “fruit”- a life that is increasingly lived in harmony with God.
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2. A New Lifestyle (vs. 7-14)

   Genuine repentance is evidenced by “fruit” - a life that is increasingly lived in harmony with God.

   James 2:26, “Faith without works is dead.”
WHERE'S THE BEEF?
John the Baptist preached 3 essential spiritual needs for all men & women:

3. A New Life-Giver (vs. 15-18)
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Through Jesus we receive the Holy Spirit who empowers us to experience new life!
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Through Jesus we receive the Holy Spirit who empowers us to experience new life!

John 10:10; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 1:18-19
“No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” John 15:4-5
For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:8-10