

Bible Study Lesson — Luke 3:7–14 (NIV) 5/14/2026

“Repentance That Produces Fruit”

45-Minute Interactive Bible Study

Main Lesson Objective

To understand that genuine repentance is not merely emotional sorrow or religious activity, but a transformed life that produces visible spiritual fruit.

Primary Text

Luke 3:7–14 (NIV)

7 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?”

8 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.

9 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.”

10 “What should we do then?” the crowd asked.

11 John answered, “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.”

12 Even tax collectors came to be baptized. “Teacher,” they asked, “what should we do?”

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

14 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.”

Suggested Lesson Flow (45 Minutes)

Segment	Time
Opening / Introduction	5 min
Reading the Text	5 min
Point I — Honest Confrontation	10 min
Point II — Fruit of Repentance	10 min
Point III — Everyday Transformation	10 min
Closing Challenge & Prayer	5 min

Opening Introduction (5 Minutes)

Many people want the benefits of salvation without the demands of transformation.

They want forgiveness without surrender.

They want heaven without holiness.

They want comfort without conviction.

John the Baptist appeared before Jesus began His public ministry with a powerful assignment:

Prepare the hearts of the people.

John understood something important:

Religious activity without repentance produces deception.

People were coming to be baptized, but John looked beyond the crowd and confronted the condition of their hearts.

This study forces us to ask:

Is there visible evidence that God is changing me?

Read the Passage Together (5 Minutes)

Luke 3:7–14 (NIV)

Suggested approach:

- Have multiple people read portions of the passage.

- Encourage listeners to identify repeated themes.
- Ask the class:

“What words or phrases stand out to you immediately?”

Possible responses:

- “Produce fruit”
 - “What should we do?”
 - “The ax is already at the root”
 - “Share”
 - “Be content”
-

I. Repentance Begins with Honest Confrontation (vv. 7–9)

(10 Minutes)

“You brood of vipers!”

John’s introduction was not soft.

He confronted the crowd directly because repentance cannot happen where denial exists.

Key Truth

Nobody changes until they stop pretending.

John exposed three false securities.

A. Religious Activity Cannot Save You

The people were coming to baptism.

Outwardly, they appeared spiritual.

But John understood:

Participation in religious activity does not automatically equal transformation.

Application:

- Church attendance alone cannot save us.
- Christian language alone cannot save us.

- Religious tradition alone cannot save us.

God examines the heart.

Discussion Question

- What are some ways people hide behind religious activity today?
-

B. Spiritual Heritage Cannot Save You

“We have Abraham as our father.”

The Jews trusted their ancestry instead of personal repentance.

John shattered that confidence.

Application

- God has no grandchildren.
 - Every believer must personally surrender to God.
 - Family faith cannot replace personal faith.
-

C. Judgment Was Closer Than They Thought

“The ax is already at the root...”

This is a picture of urgency.

The axe is not being sharpened.

The axe is already positioned.

John wanted them to understand:

Repentance cannot be postponed forever.

Teaching Emphasis

God’s patience should never be mistaken for God’s approval.

II. Genuine Repentance Produces Fruit (vv. 8–11)

(10 Minutes)

“Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.”

John taught that repentance must become visible.

Fruit is external evidence of an internal change.

If repentance is real, eventually it shows up in:

- attitudes
 - priorities
 - speech
 - generosity
 - relationships
 - integrity
 - compassion
-

The Crowd Asked:

“What should we do then?”

This is the right response to conviction.

True conviction produces a desire for obedience.

Not:

- defensiveness
- excuses
- blame
- delay

But:

“Lord, what needs to change?”

A. Repentance Produces Generosity

“Anyone who has two shirts should share...”

John immediately connected repentance with compassion.

Repentant hearts stop living selfishly.

Key Principle

Transformation changes how we treat people.

John did not tell them to become impressive.

He told them to become generous.

Application Questions

- Does my faith affect how I respond to people in need?
 - Am I generous or self-protective?
 - Do I hold tightly to resources God may want me to share?
-

III. Repentance Changes Everyday Behavior (vv. 12–14)

(10 Minutes)

Three different groups asked the same question:

“What should we do?”

John’s answers were deeply practical.

Repentance was not theoretical.

It affected everyday life.

A. The Tax Collectors — Integrity

“Don’t collect any more than you are required to.”

Tax collectors were known for greed and corruption.

John did not tell them to abandon their jobs.

He told them to stop their dishonesty.

Key Truth

God cares about integrity in everyday business.

Modern Application

- dishonest business practices

- manipulation
- taking advantage of people
- unethical gain
- cutting moral corners

Repentance changes character.

B. The Soldiers — Power, Speech, and Contentment

“Don’t extort money...”

These soldiers abused authority and intimidated people.

John addressed three issues:

1. Abuse of Power

Repentant people stop using strength to oppress others.

2. False Accusations

Repentance changes speech.

A transformed heart stops:

- lying
- slander
- manipulation
- destructive accusations

3. Discontentment

“Be content with your pay.”

Discontentment often becomes the root of compromise.

People who are never satisfied become vulnerable to:

- greed
- envy
- dishonesty

- resentment

Key Principle

Contentment protects integrity.

Major Lesson Truths

1. Repentance is more than emotion.

Feeling sorry is not enough.

Repentance produces change.

2. God looks for fruit.

God is not impressed by appearances alone.

3. Conviction should lead to action.

The proper response to truth is obedience.

4. Spiritual transformation affects daily living.

Faith must become visible in everyday behavior.

5. Repentance touches every area of life.

Money.

Speech.

Relationships.

Integrity.

Attitudes.

Generosity.

Contentment.

Group Discussion Questions

1. Why do people often resist genuine repentance?
2. What does “fruit in keeping with repentance” look like practically today?
3. Which of John’s instructions challenges modern believers the most?
4. Why is contentment so important to spiritual maturity?

5. What visible evidence should exist in the life of a growing believer?

Closing Challenge (5 Minutes)

John's message was uncomfortable because it was honest.

He understood that preparation for Christ required more than outward religion. It required transformation.

The question for believers today is not merely:

“Did I attend church?”

The deeper question is:

“Is there evidence that God is changing me?”

Can people see:

- generosity?
- humility?
- integrity?
- compassion?
- honesty?
- contentment?

The evidence of repentance is not merely what we say during worship. It is revealed by how we live every day.

Suggested Closing Prayer

“Father, help us move beyond outward religion into genuine transformation. Search our hearts and expose anything that does not honor You. Produce fruit in us that reflects true repentance. Teach us to live with integrity, generosity, humility, honesty, and contentment. Let our lives visibly reflect the work of Jesus within us. In Jesus' name, Amen.”