Believers and
Seven Sermons from the Bacchae
John Tipton
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A man planted a vineyard and put a fence around it, dug a pit for a press, and built a platform. And he leased the vineyard to some tenants to tend and went abroad.

And in time he sent a servant to the tenants to collect his returns from the vineyard.

And they seized his servant and beat him and sent him away empty-handed.

And again the man sent another servant.

And they struck him on the head and abused him. And he sent another and they killed him. And many others whom they beat and whom they killed.

He had one left—his own son. He sent him last to the tenants saying: They will respect my son.

But the tenants said to each other: This is his heir. If we kill him then we gain the inheritance.
And they took him and killed him and threw his body out of the vineyard.

What will the master of the vineyard do? He will go and he will destroy the tenants and he will give the vineyard to others.
It is clearly written in the prophet Isaiah:

Look—I send a messenger to you,
a voice calling in the wilds,
*Prepare the way of the Lord,*
*make his path straight.*

I am the son of God
—Dionysus—whom Cadmus’s daughter Semele delivered
in a flash of blinding fire.
I’ve changed my form to human.
Here by Dirce and the Ismenus
I see mother’s monument of thunder—
the ruins of the house there.
Zeus’s bright fire alive, still smoking—
Hera’s lasting insult to my mother.
Well done, Cadmus—you’ve made this
a sacred preserve for your daughter.
I’ve enclosed it in abundant vines.

John the Baptist was in the wilds preaching baptism of change for release from error.
And the entire region of Judea went out to him and all of Jerusalem and were baptized by him in the River Jordan, admitting their errors.

And John wore camel hair with a hide belt at his hips and he ate locusts and wild honey.

And he preached saying: Someone stronger than I follows me for whom I’m unfit to stoop and loosen the strap of his sandals.

I baptize you with water but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.

I’ve travelled the fields of Lydia, Phrygia, the high plains of Persia Bactrian towns and the harsh country of the Medes, crossing rich Arabia—all Asia by the ocean where Greeks and barbarians live in common in the many wealthy, high-towered cities. And now I come to Greece. The East already dances and observes my rites, sees me as God.

And in those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John.