

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JANUARY 28TH – 29TH, 2023 // GOSPEL OF JOHN

CRYING OUT (JOHN 1:19–28)

“WHO ARE YOU?”

John the Baptist was a rugged prophet who wore animal skins, ate locusts and honey, and stormed around the desert outside Jerusalem proclaiming the Messiah (Savior) was coming.

- Priests who represent the legal system and Levites who guarded the integrity of Temple worship were sent to investigate.

“I AM NOT THE MESSIAH”

Christ is the Greek equivalent to the Hebrew **Messiah**. Both words mean **savior** and **anointed**. John wanted the Sanhedrin (Jewish leaders) to know he was not the Messiah.

- They also ask if he is Elijah or “the Prophet,” meaning Moses. To which he also says he is not.

DID THEY BELIEVE IN REINCARNATION?

Asking if John was Elijah or Moses didn't mean they believed in reincarnation. Malachi (OT prophet) had foretold of someone coming with the same prophetic voice as Elijah.

- “I am a voice crying out in the wilderness” is from Isaiah 40 and actually proves that John was the “Elijah” prophesied in Malachi 4.

NOT YOUR CONVENTIONAL TEACHER OR LEADER

In comes the Pharisees: the Jewish religious leaders depicted in the NT as the antagonists of Jesus and His disciples. They question John because he **doesn't look the part or have the proper credentials to baptize**.

- John is an example that **it's not about the approval of man but the approval of God**.

PAVING THE PATH

When John said he “baptize[s] in water,” this meant he immersed his disciples in water as a sign of **repentance for sins and anticipation and preparation for the coming Savior**.

- This is why we baptize: to make a **public proclamation that we've turned from sin in anticipation of the coming of Jesus**.

THE LAMB (JOHN 1:29–34)

SEEING GOD WALKING AROUND

The day after the Pharisees' investigation, John saw “Jesus coming toward him and said, ‘Look, **the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world!**’”

- John was Jesus' cousin and knew He was righteous, but it appears he was unaware that Jesus was the Savior until His baptism.

THE IMAGERY OF THE LAMB

Lamb imagery starts in Genesis 22 and goes through the entire Bible. It alludes to **innocence, sacrifice, obedience, and forgiveness**. There's also imagery of the Passover Lamb (Exodus 12) that provided **protection and power**.

- **These traits are perfected in Jesus, the Lamb of God.**

WHEN DID JOHN FULLY KNOW JESUS' IDENTITY?

John was reluctant to baptize Jesus because he either knew He was God or thought Jesus was a more righteous follower than he was.

- When Jesus was baptized, the “heavens... opened” (Matthew 3), John heard God's voice, and he saw “the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove” as it “rested on [Jesus].”

WHY JESUS GOT BAPTIZED

Jesus didn't need baptism because He had no sin, but He did it to reveal “**the way for us to fulfill all righteousness**” (Matthew 3:15) and be obedient to God.

- **Jesus not only tells us how to live, He models it.** This was to be the new method by which we're adopted into God's family.

THE LAMB WHO BAPTIZES WITH THE SPIRIT

It is interesting that the first recognition of Jesus is not in decadent splendor or political power, but as a sacrificial Lamb.

- The sacrifice of Jesus will also baptize the obedient Believer in the Holy Spirit. This means we're filled, immersed, and empowered by God.

IT BEGINS (JOHN 1:35–42)

THE BEGINNING OF JESUS' MINISTRY

John's Gospel doesn't tell us a lot about the calling of the 12 disciples, but we do get introduced to several of them in chapter 1.

- After hearing John the Baptist proclaim that Jesus was “the Lamb of God” again, two of John's followers began following Jesus instead.

ANDREW AND PETER

Andrew was one of the two disciples of John who asked Jesus, “where are you staying?” and spent the evening with Jesus. He was the brother of Simon and went to tell him that they had “found the Messiah.”

- Try to imagine this! These men had met the promised Savior, God in flesh!

A PURSUIT AND AN INEVITABLE CHANGE

Andrew and Peter were righteous men who were open to the things of God. In other words, they were looking for answers.

- **When we genuinely pursue truth, we eventually find it (Matthew 7:7). When we find truth, we must choose to live it out. In that choice, we will see positive change.**

SEEING SOMETHING WE DON'T

When Peter met Jesus, He did something shocking. He changed Simon's name to Cephas (Peter in Greek), which means “rock.”

- We will learn Peter is in no way a “rock” until after the resurrection of Jesus. But **Jesus saw potential in Peter that he didn't see himself. This is the case with all of us!**

GREATER THINGS (JOHN 1:43–51)

PHILIP AND NATHANIAL

Philip was called by Jesus, and he went and told his friend Nathaniel (Bartholomew) that he had “found the one Moses wrote about... Jesus the son of Joseph, from Nazareth.”

- Nazareth was a town of 100–400 people, hence Nate's question, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”

“COME AND SEE”

As Phil brings Nate to Jesus, Jesus sees Nate and compliments his integrity. Nate then asks, “How do you know me?” and Jesus tells him, “Before Philip called you, when **under the fig tree, I saw you.**”

- “Under the fig tree” was slang rabbis used to describe meditating on the Law (Word).

YOUR PURSUIT WILL YIELD GREAT INSIGHT

Nate realized who Jesus was because Jesus could miraculously see into his life. Jesus was then quick to say, “**You will see greater things than this.**”

- **If we will take the time to look for and meditate on the things of God, we will see God work in miraculous ways!**

THIS LADDER SEEMS FAMILIAR

Nate must have been reading Genesis 28 when Jesus saw him because Jesus uses an analogy that sounds just like Jacob's ladder.

- This prophecy had two purposes:
 1. **Jesus will be the “ladder” by which mankind will be touched by Heaven.**
 2. Nate is going to be a witness to it!

THE SEARCH

- In this lesson, we talked about five people who were looking for the truth. Jesus Himself said in Matthew 7:7 that **if we sincerely look, we will find the answers**.
- This then begs the question: **Are we seeking, praying, reading, listening, and willing to receive the truth?**

WHO ARE THE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?

- As we have seen and will see more, there is **diversity** amongst Christ-followers. **It is not the standard of man that determines potential, but the standard of God.**
- There must also be a hunger for holiness and truth. **We must want to be more like Jesus regardless of personal preference.**
- As followers, we must be **obedient** to the commands and principles of God's Word.
- True followers of Jesus reject pride and selfishness and strive to remain **humble**.
- We know that we are **not perfect**, but instead of using imperfection as an excuse, we rely on God's grace and help.

SEEING HEAVEN COME TO EARTH

- If we truly follow Jesus, we will see God work in our lives! We can experience **peace, contentment, genuine love, and fulfillment**.
- We will also see relational restoration (God and others) and spiritual healing (maybe even mental and physical). **A relationship with Jesus yields miraculous change.**

BEING A WITNESS TO OUR WORLD

- The discovery of Jesus isn't simply for our consumption, but for the advancement of the truth to others who need it. **Through the Church (Jesus' followers), light and life are introduced to dark and dying people!**
- Though difficult, **we must decide to take the light out into OUR world.**