

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JANUARY 29TH, 2023 // GOSPEL OF JOHN

THE COMING OF THE LAMB (JOHN 1:19-28)

"WHO ARE YOU?"

John the Baptizer did not want any attention on himself and only wanted to fulfill his purpose of pointing people to the Messiah.

- He could have offered his resume and list of accomplishments to those asking about his identity, but his identity was not wrapped up in those things. **He knew people needed to know about Christ and not himself.**

JEWISH PRIESTS AND LEVITES

At this point of the story about John the Baptizer (JB), we are introduced to a couple of **important groups sent to investigate the news about the coming of the Messiah.**

- The priests were most likely members of the **Sanhedrin**, a court to oversee matters of Jewish law. The **Levites** were the ones who were tasked with protecting Temple worship.

"ARE YOU ELIJAH?"

Malachi, the OT prophet, said God would send **"the prophet Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes"** (Malachi 4:5-6).

- Though JB was not the prophet Elijah, **he did come in "the spirit and power of Elijah"** (Luke 1:17) **and fulfill the prophecy of Malachi 4:5-6.**

"ARE YOU THE PROPHET?"

Moses promised in Deuteronomy 18:15 that **"The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him."**

- JB confirmed that the prophet spoken of by Moses was not him. **The NT plainly tells us that Jesus is the prophet described by Moses** (Acts 3:19-26; 7:37).

"WE NEED TO GIVE AN ANSWER..."

When the priests and Levites pressed JB to tell them who he was, he responded by quoting their prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 40:3).

- This group of Jewish leaders sent to investigate this "wild man" and his claims would have been shocked to hear him use the words of the prophet Isaiah to describe himself.

THE MEN BEHIND THE CURTAIN

We find out a group of men known as the Pharisees sent the priests and Levites.

- With a few exceptions (Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea) are the antagonist of the gospel narrative. **The Pharisees were religious leaders who treated their traditions as equal to God's Word and were typically self-righteous in their adherence to the law.**

QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS BAPTIZING

They asked JB why he baptized people if he was not the Messiah, Elijah, or the Prophet.

- He responded that his baptisms were of water, meaning **they provided a cleansing with no means to stay clean.** However, someone is coming who will provide the means to be permanently cleansed. JB claimed **he was unworthy of the lowest chores for Jesus.**

THE ARRIVAL OF THE LAMB (JOHN 1:29-42)

"LOOK THE LAMB OF GOD..."

In the text, Jesus is referred to by the title Lamb of God. The title was a reminder of His purpose: to sacrifice himself on the cross for the sins of mankind as spoken of in Isaiah 53:1-5.

- The first time we see a sacrificial lamb is in Genesis 22, with Abraham and his son Isaac. Then we see the Passover Lamb in Exodus 12:21-27.

NOT JUST A BAPTIZER BUT A WITNESS

JB admits he did not know with certainty that Jesus was the Messiah until he witnessed the Holy Spirit descending on Him at His baptism.

- God, who sent JB to testify about the coming Messiah, told him this is how he would know, and **he confidently testified that Jesus is the Son of God.**

WHOSE DISCIPLES?

The day after Jesus' baptism, JB was standing with his disciples, and as Jesus approached, he acknowledged Him as the Lamb of God. Upon hearing this, they left JB and followed Jesus.

- JB knew he was not gathering followers to himself, but **he was preparing the way for people to follow Christ.**

THE CALL AND ANSWER

Jesus invited John (the author) and Andrew to **"come and see."**

- By calling Him "Rabbi," they showed great respect as well as a willingness to sit under Jesus and learn. **Jesus invited both John and Andrew to be disciplined by Him through doing life with Him.** This gives us a great model of discipleship.

THE CALL SPREADS

The first thing Andrew did was tell his brother, Simon Peter, **"We have found the Messiah' and he brought Simon to Jesus."** When Jesus saw Simon, he gave him a new name: Cephas (Peter), which means "rock."

- **Our response to receiving Christ should be to tell someone and bring them to Him so they can be known by a new name.**

FOLLOWING THE LAMB (JOHN 1:43-51)

ANOTHER CALL AND RESPONSE

Though Philip is mentioned eight times in the NT, we do not know much about him, except he was from Bethsaida and was called to Jesus by Him saying, **"Follow me,"** and he did.

- His first response was to find his friend Nathanael and tell him, **"We have found the one Moses wrote about in the law: Jesus the son of Joseph, from Nazareth."**

NATE IS SKEPTICAL AT FIRST

The Gospel of John mentions Nathanael, where other texts mention Bartholomew. Most likely, Bart is a name that derives from a person's father, so it's possible that this is the same person.

- When Philip approaches Nate, he is skeptical of Philip's claims and exclaims a common sentiment of the time, **"Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?"**

CHRIST'S OMNISCIENCE

Philip is not shaken nor swayed by his friend's skepticism and urges Nate to **"come and see."**

- When Jesus saw Nate approaching, He said about him, **"Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit...Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."**

- **We can't lose Jesus' omniscience in debating the meaning of these verses.**

NOT GETTING CAUGHT IN THE WEEDS

"Under the fig tree" was a phrase used by rabbis to describe studying and meditating on the scriptures.

- Was Nate literally under a fig tree, or was he spending time with the Lord, poring over the scriptures? Either way, **Jesus displayed His omniscience by saying, when your friend called you, "I saw you there."**

IS THERE A CONNECTION?

Verse 51 has caused a lot of debate as to what exactly Jesus was saying when He told Nate he would see even greater things.

- Most likely, the verse saying, **"heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man"** and Jesus referring to Nate as an **"Israelite in whom there is no deceit"** are connected.

JACOB, A MAN OF DECEIT, HAD A DREAM

In Genesis 28:12, we see the dream of Jacob, where he saw a ladder from earth to Heaven and the angels ascending and descending on it.

- This could have been the very scripture Nate was pouring over. Whatever the case, Nate knew exactly what Jesus was communicating: **Jesus is the ladder, the connection between God and Man!**

WE ARE DISCIPLES OF JESUS

- **Being a witness (Evangelizing) and disciplining others is everyone's responsibility who claims to be a Christ follower.**
- **We are not the focus of the witness. We are to create followers of Christ, not followers of us.**
- **We are not the light. The reason we do not create followers of ourselves is because we are unable to heal, change a life, and save: He alone is able!**
- **We proclaim belief in Jesus. We must unashamedly profess Christ, starting in our homes, then in our community.**