

February 3, 2019am – Walking With Jesus (Gospel of John)

Pt. 5 – “Behold the Lamb – The Son of God”

Walking With Jesus through the Gospel of John



Today's passage of scripture is **John 1:19-34**. “With this passage John begins the narrative part of his gospel. In the Prologue (John 1:1-18) he has shown what he intends to do: he is writing a Gospel to demonstrate that Jesus is the very ‘logos’ (Word, mind & reason) of God come into the world in the form of a human person. Having set down this central thought, he begins the story of the life of Jesus” (Barclay: *Gospel of John*. P. 75)

YouTube Video 4:33 -7:46

The Gospel of John <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=47OkuvT5JFo&t=218s>

John 1:19-34

In this passage we see (1) **The Interrogation of John**; (2) **The Declaration by John**; (3) **The Revelation to John** – Jesus is the Son of God (Messiah, Lamb of God). We see also The Rejection by the religious leaders of this revelation. (4) **Demonstration from John** This passage sets the pattern for us Interrogate the Declaration & Revelation of John about Who Jesus is and then to make a decision. The Jewish leaders **REJECTED** Him. I will come back to this at the end, but the bottom line -Will you **REJECT** of **ACCEPT** Jesus?

I. The Interrogation of John

John 1:19-22... ¹⁹ *This was John's testimony when the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him, “Who are you?”* ²⁰ *He didn't deny it but confessed: “I am not the Messiah.”* ²¹ *“What then?” they asked him. “Are you Elijah?” “I am not,” he said. “Are you the Prophet?” “No,” he said.* ²² *“Who are you, then?” they asked. “We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What can you tell us about yourself?”*

John the Baptist was something of a celebrity, or at least a spectacle. He was an outstanding and flamboyant speaker. He drew great crowds, similar to what Billy Graham did in his time. John the Baptist (the Witness) was interrogated by the religious leaders of the area. The questioned him on two topics (1) **His Identity** (*John 1:19-22*) and (2) **His Activity** (*John 1:23-28*). Vs. 20 – He clearly confesses he is not the Messiah

Vs. 21 – Why Elijah? In Malachi 3:1; 4:5,6 there is a prediction that identifies Elijah as a divine messenger of preparation

Who is ‘the Prophet’ mentioned here. Many think they were talking about Moses. (Remember Moses and Elijah were the two who came and stood with Jesus in the Transfiguration narrative. Moses says this in **Deuteronomy 18:15...** *The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me among your own brothers.*

He denies all the ‘checklist’ of possibilities that the Jewish leaders wanted to know about. They then ask him point blank Who are you then?

He actually responds with who he is NOT, rather than who he IS.

II. The Declaration by John

John 1:23...²³ *He said, “I am a voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Make straight the way of the Lord—just as Isaiah the prophet said.”*

John then declares who he is. He uses a passage from one of the great prophets of the OT – **Isaiah 40:3-5**...³ *A voice of one crying out: Prepare the way of the LORD in the wilderness; make a straight Highway for our God in the desert.* ⁴ *Every valley will be lifted up, and every mountain and hill will be leveled; the uneven ground will become smooth and the rough places, a plain.* ⁵ *And the glory of the LORD will appear, and all humanity together will see it, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.*

- Isaiah sets the pattern out for the “Highway for our God”. John the Baptist echoes that and applies it to his own ministry. But it also gives a vivid description of what Jesus wants from us. He wants us to walk the straight path - Repent - if there is sin in your life then you need to “straighten out”.
- If you feel worthless, depressed or insignificant, if you feel like you are in a “Valley” - then look to God and He will ‘lift you up’
- If you are proud and self-satisfied then you need to “come down off your mountain ‘High Horse’ in order to find God. (*Stedman: God’s Living Word. P. 47*)

John 1:25-28... Then the question is asked “Why do you baptize then?” We may not catch the full intent of this question because we are so familiar with the idea of baptism. In those days it was not common to see people being baptized the way John the Baptist was. There were ‘baptism fonts or mikvahs’ in those days. They were used primarily for ceremonial cleansing for special events or festivals, but only non-Jews who wanted to convert to Judaism were baptized. The Jews felt they had a ‘privileged setting’ with God and thus were better than others in spiritual things. This prideful spirit is a major reason why the Jews had a difficult time realizing they were sinners and needed to repent. John was saying I am just preparing you for the real Messiah that is now among us.

John the Baptist “wants to make sure no one confuses him with Jesus. He doesn’t draw attention to himself but directs it to Jesus. He says in essence, “I’m not the one you need to know about. I’m just a lowly servant - unworthy to even untie his sandal strap. Jesus is the one you need to know” (*Carter & Wredberg. Christ-Centered Exposition of John. P. 30*)

“The great goal of the church is to point the world to Jesus” (*Ibid. p. 31*)

“In the brief interchange we see that the Jewish authorities (in John 1:19-28), believe they are capable of passing judgment on religious claims, and presumably on Scripture. But when the Baptist quotes from actual Scripture to identify himself (vs. 23,25) they ignore it completely. Despite their desire to be loyal to God, they lack an openness to God and His Scripture”. (Rodney Whitacre. IVP Commentary on John. P. 65).

This lack of openness is paired with an obvious lack of personal desire. It is interesting to note that the top leadership of the Jews did not have the time or desire to actually come themselves, but they sent their subordinates. Then these subordinates act if they are not really interested in John and his ministry, they appear to just be ‘doing their assigned task’.

“So even when they ask what seems to be an open question (vs. 22) they do so with a closed attitude of indifference” (*Whitacre, p. 65*)

We see here that ‘closed attitude’ causes **A Rejection** by the religious authorities

This encounter here between the Jewish ‘interrogation team’ and John the Baptist/Witness calls us to consider this poignant question “do we have the inner openness and deep desire necessary to receive God’s revelations”? (*Ibid.* p. 67)

III. The Revelation to John

John 1:29-30...²⁹ *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”* ³⁰ *This is the One I told you about: ‘After me comes a Man who ranks ahead of me, because He existed before me.’*

The next day after the interchange with the Jewish leaders we find Jesus returning again to the same spot where He was baptized. (Remember Jesus was baptized, then went into the desert for 40 days, then He returned here and makes this **REVELATION**

John 1:29...*“Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world”*

Jesus is described using the Old Testament description of the Lamb. Lambs were daily sacrificed to atone for sin in the Old Testament time. But Jesus as the true “Lamb of God” has come to one and for all take away our sin. (This He did on the cross).

- The Lamb Provides a Sacrifice
- The Lamb Provides a Substitute
- The Lamb Provides Satisfaction (satisfies the demands of justice)

Through the sacrifice of Jesus our sin has been forever removed”. (*Carter & Wredberg. P. 34*)

“On a Sunday morning a visitor in London went to hear a great preacher. When he came out of the church he exclaimed, My what a preacher.” That night he heard the matchless Charles Spurgeon preach, and as he came out of that church he said, “My, what a Savior!” A striking difference. Our task is to present Christ even as John the Baptist did; then we are to fade out of the limelight. John used all his talent to Draw men to Christ. So what was the result of his preaching? At first he had great crowds and many converts. Then he lost them; and they left to follow Jesus. John was one of the only men who ever lost his crowds because they believed what he said”. (*W. Herschel Ford: Simple Sermons From The Gospel of John. P. 522,53.*)

John 1:31-34...³¹ *I didn’t know Him, but I came baptizing with water so He might be revealed to Israel.”* ³² *And John testified, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He rested on Him.”* ³³ *I didn’t know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The One you see the Spirit descending and resting on—He is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’* ³⁴ *I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.”*

Vs. 31,32— John is not saying he did not WHO Jesus was. But that he did not know WHAT Jesus was. (the Messiah, Son of God. (Barclay. p. 82). God made a divine revelation to John to open his eyes to who and what Jesus really is. The Spirit of God is made a central element of this revelation concept.

Vs. 32 – The Spirit: (1) Illumines (2) Strengthens (3) Purifies

CONCLUSION:

The encounter between the Jewish ‘interrogation team’ and John the Baptist/Witness calls us to re-consider this poignant question

“Do we have the inner openness and deep desire necessary to receive God’s revelations”?

(Whitacre. p. 67)

“We also see the Baptist as a significant model of humility, openness & obedience” *(Ibid. p. 69)*

So what about you? How do you compare with him in the areas of humility, openness and obedience!

The Interrogation is over. It’s time to decide on who Jesus is for you will you ...

ACCEPT OR REJECT