

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN | John 1:19-34

19 And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" 20 He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." 21 And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." 22 So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" 23 He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said." 24 (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) 25 They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" 26 John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, 27 even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." 28 These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing. 29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.' 31 I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." 32 And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. 33 I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' 34 And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

John 1:19-34 ESV

John the Baptist

John the Baptist's ministry had a lot of influence. So much influence that people were wondering if he was Elijah or even the promised Messiah. Some of this speculation comes from the way John was conducting his baptisms.

It's interesting to see the way John answers their question of why he is baptizing. He doesn't even answer their question. The way he answers their question is similar to the way he lived his life. Instead of giving a reason why he has the authority to baptize, he talks about Jesus.

At the peak of John's ministry, the crescendo of all the influence and power that he accumulated, he gives it away. John is willingly giving away disciples. He gives away all that he accumulated in order to glorify Jesus

This is exactly what Jesus meant when he said the least among you will be the greatest. The greatest person amongst us in this room right now, is not the person that gets the most attention, it's not the person that everyone else is jealous of or wants to be, it's the person that most lives their life in a way that points to Jesus.

Behold the Lamb of God

There are two reasons John the Baptist lives his life to point to Jesus and it's summed up in phrase he used to announce Jesus, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.

The first reason is that Jesus is the only way to take away sin.

The goal of sinlessness is to unite us with God once again. The point of being sinless is to know God! You cannot separate holiness and intimacy with God. They are always sought together or not at all.

36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

John 3:36

3 And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. 4 Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, 5 but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected.

1 John 2:3-5

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We need to start seeing people pointing out sin in our lives as loving. It's loving for someone to point out ways where you are in sin because seeking holiness, not in ourselves but by the grace empowered obedience that comes from God, is the way to know God and love him more.

The second reason John the Baptist points to Jesus is because Jesus is glorious. John the Baptist points to Jesus because he knew that God and his glory is the answer to all that we seek.

4 Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Psalm 37:4

44 The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Matthew 13:44

The cross does not give us a minor shift or two with regard to a few or our ethical and moral and religious values. The cross radically disrupts the very center and citadel of your life from self to Christ and if the cross has not done that you are not a Christian.

Al Martin

There is a cost to following Jesus but it's not as though this cost is a way of purchasing Jesus. The reason the man who sold everything sold it with joy is because it was worth more than everything else he sold. Do you see

Jesus as being more valuable than anything else? If you don't see Jesus like this, you don't know him and you're not a child of God.

37 Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Matthew 10:37-39

If you find yourself this morning not sure if you are living the way the bible says someone who knows Jesus lives, the answer isn't to try and live like a Christian. The answer is to see Jesus. Jesus wants your heart. He's after your affections. You can change your actions while your heart still doesn't desire Jesus; but if you see Jesus, you will desire him, and your whole life will change.