



Three Years That Changed the World

Two People, Two Messages, One Truth – John 1:19-37



Two People Two Messages One Truth

John 1:19-37

Introducing - John the Baptist and his ministry

“Now this was **John’s testimony** when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was.” (John 1:19)

- John had been living in the desert (“***And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he lived in the wilderness until he appeared publicly to Israel***”, **Luke 1:80**) and would have been about 29 or 30 years old about the time he started preaching.

“During the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the country around the Jordan, **preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins**” (Luke 3:2-3)

Introducing - John the Baptist and his ministry

“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the Prophets: “Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You. ”The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; Make His paths straight.’ ”John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.” (Mark 1:1-5)

“Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel. “See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction.” (Malachi 4:4-5)

Noteworthy Items

- John the Baptist's message was quite clear, and his words were the same as what Jesus will teach the disciples:
 - ✓ **Repent, seek God's forgiveness for sins**, and **produce fruit** worthy of a godly life (something they should have been doing all along). (Luke 3)
 - ✓ **Give to those in need**; "Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same." (Luke 3:11)
 - ✓ To the tax collectors - **be fair in your dealings**; "Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them" (Luke 3:13)
 - ✓ To the soldiers; "**Don't extort money** and **don't accuse people falsely**—be content with your pay." (Luke 3:14)

Noteworthy Items

- Because of John's preaching some even thought he might be the promised Messiah; ***"The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah"*** (Luke 3:15)
- John fully understood what his role was which was to **point the way to Jesus** who was yet fully revealed to all; ***"I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."*** (Luke 3:16)
- John the Baptist had been stirring things up even among the religious leaders; ***"But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?"*** (Matthew 3:8)

The Testimony of John the Baptist

Now this was **John's testimony** when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "**I am not the Messiah.**" They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "**Are you the Prophet?**" **He answered, "No"**. Finally, they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us.

What do you say about yourself?" **John replied** in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "**I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness**, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'" Now the Pharisees who had been sent questioned him, "**Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?**" "I baptize with water," John replied, "**but among you stands one you do not know. He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.**" This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing. (John 1:19-28)

Noteworthy Items

- Because John the Baptist had been causing quite a commotion, it caused the “Jewish leaders” to send a delegation to inquire who he was. The first group that came to him were the Priests and the Levites:
 - ✓ The primary role of the Priest was to act as an intermediary between God and man, officiate religious ceremonies and provide understanding in the things of God. Some of the Priests were Pharisees.
 - ✓ The primary role of the Levites were to help the priests perform temple rituals and provide basic security protections to the priests.
 - ✓ Both groups were dispatched by the religious leaders (probably the Sanhedrin) to find out more about this John the Baptist.

John's response to the question – who are you?

- Those who questioned John might have implied that he was the Messiah:
 - ✓ To that he replied; “**I am not the Messiah**” (some translations say “**I am not the Christ**” which is the Greek word for Messiah)
 - ✓ He wanted to make it clear that he was not the Messiah and thus “**confessed**” **he was not.**
- Next, they asked **if he was Elijah** (This would have been based on their understanding of Malachi 3:1, 4:5) to which he replied – **I am not!**
 - ✓ *“I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the Lord Almighty.” (Malachi 3:1)*
 - ✓ *“See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes.” (Malachi 4:5)*

John's response to the question – who are you?

- Based upon the prophecies of Isaiah and Malachi – the Jews expectation was that Elijah would appear (in bodily form) prior to the Messiah coming to establish his earthly kingdom
- John's appearance was uniquely similar to that of Elijah
 - ✓ *“John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey” (Mark 1:6)*
 - ✓ *“They replied, “He had a garment of hair and had a leather belt around his waist.” The king said, “That was Elijah the Tishbite” (II Kings 1:8)*
- John's warning of coming judgement was also similar to Elijah's message

John's response to the question – who are you?

- John the Baptist was not Elijah in the “literal sense” which is why he emphatically said, “**I am not**”.
- John understood their question to mean they were trying to determine if he was the same Elijah that was take from earth to heaven in a whirlwind.
 - ✓ *“As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind” (II Kings 2:11)*
 - ✓ John was “**Elijah like**” as described by Luke in his Gospel account; *“And he will go on before the Lord, **in the spirit and power of Elijah**, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (Luke 1:17)*

John's response to the question – who are you?

- As to the question; “are you the prophet”?
 - ✓ To that he replied; “**No**”
 - ✓ This question might be in relation to the prophetic words of Moses; *“The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him. For this is what you asked of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, “Let us not hear the voice of the Lord our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die.” The Lord said to me: “What they say is good. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him”* (Deuteronomy 18:15-18)
- John was not “that” prophet – but Jesus is (see next slide)

John's response to the question – who are you?

- The delegation of Priests and Levites seemed unsatisfied with John's replies and just got to the point:
 - ✓ *Finally, they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"*
 - ✓ *Perhaps they were trying to trick John into claiming to be someone he wasn't or determine if he was a threat to the Jewish leaders or even Rome.*
- John had nothing to hide, and his only threat was that he spoke the truth:
"John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'" (John 1:23)

John's response to the question – who are you?

- John shifts the focus:
 - ✓ John chose not to defend his actions (baptizing others who acknowledge their forgiveness of sins) but instead **directed their attention to Christ**.
 - ✓ John had limitations in that his authority was the ability to “baptize in water” but the “One” to which he bore witness had no such limitations
- This spiritual cleansing might have been a fulfillment of the words of Ezekiel; *“For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols.”* (Ezekiel 36:24-25)
- John's message – Prepare your hearts, because the Messiah is here!

Introducing – Jesus The Lamb of God

“The next day **John saw Jesus coming toward him** and said, “Look, **the Lamb of God**, who **takes away the sin of the world!** This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’ **I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.**” Then John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. And **I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’** I have seen and I testify that **this is God’s Chosen One**” (John 1:29-34)

Noteworthy Items

- The phrase; “the next day” is a part of a series of days (one week in total) leading up to the miracle at Cana in which Jesus will turn water into wine (John 2:1-11)
 - ✓ Day 1 – was the meeting with the delegation of Priests and Levites from Jerusalem.
 - ✓ Day 2 – would be the day John witnessed the events in which the “Spirit descended as a dove out of heaven” and remained on Jesus.
- John testifies; “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world”

Noteworthy Items

- Jesus would later be known by many titles:
 - ✓ Rabbi (John 1:38,49)
 - ✓ Messiah (John 1:41)
 - ✓ Son of God (John 1:34, 49)
 - ✓ King of Israel (John 1:49)
 - ✓ Son of Man (John 1:51)
 - ✓ “Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote” (John 1:45)
- The use of the title “Lamb of God” was no accident and although the Jews were probably looking for a conqueror, God sent them a Lamb; ***“He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.”*** (Isaiah 53:7)

Noteworthy Items

“Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.” Since you call on a Father who judges each person’s work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear. **For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed** from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with **the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect**. He was chosen before the creation of the world but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God” (I Peter 1:13-21)

Noteworthy Items

- John testimony; “***Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world***” had **significance beyond the title** – “the Lamb of God” but **it was the purpose the Lamb of God came for** that had equal importance – **to take away the sin of the world.**
- ✓ This was a foreshadowing of Jesus’ ultimate sacrifice on the cross for the sins of the world.
- ✓ It was why Jesus came – to do for mankind what no “temporary sacrifice” could do; “The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?”

- Sin is what separates us from God and needs to be dealt with if we ever want to spend time in His presence:
- ✓ As it is written: “**There is none righteous, no, not one**; There is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one” (Romans 3:10-12)
 - ✓ “For **the wages of sin is death**, but **the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord**” (Romans 6:23)
 - ✓ “But **God demonstrates His own love toward us**, in that **while we were still sinners, Christ died for us**” (Romans 5:8)
 - ✓ “That if you **confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus** and **believe in your heart that **God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved****. For with the heart, one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:9-10)

John's subordinate role to Jesus

- This is the one I meant when I said, “***A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me***”
 - ✓ John was created and held a lower ranking to Jesus
 - ✓ Jesus was infinite and existed before John even though John was physically born six months prior to Jesus being born of a virgin. (see John 1:1-3)
- Ironically, John (though a cousin to Jesus) didn't recognize Jesus until he baptized Him; “**I myself did not know him**, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel” (John 1:31)

The revelation of Jesus to John and the world

- Then John gave this testimony: ***“I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’ I have seen and I testify that this is God’s Chosen One”***
- ✓ This was supernatural proof that Jesus was the promised Messiah
- ✓ John recognized Jesus as the Messiah because it was revealed to him
- ✓ “Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And **John tried to prevent Him**, saying, “I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?” But Jesus answered and said to him, “**Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.**” Then he allowed Him” (Matthew 3:13-15)

Transitioning from John to Jesus

➤ ***“And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God”*** (John 1:34 NKJV)

- ✓ Jesus is the Messiah
- ✓ Jesus is the Savior
- ✓ Jesus is the ultimate sacrificial Lamb for the sins of the world
- ✓ Jesus is the Son of God

“It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, **“You are My beloved Son,** in whom I am well pleased”. (Mark 1:9-11)

Transitioning from John to Jesus

- **“Again, the next day**, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, “Behold the Lamb of God!” The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus” (John 1:35-37)
- ✓ The first day was the encounter between John the Baptist and the delegation of Priests and Levites
- ✓ The second day was John’s encounter with Jesus in which he recognizes him as the Lamb of God who comes to take away the sins of the world and subsequently baptizes him.
- ✓ This is now the **third day** in sequence and this third group of people consists of **John the Baptist, two of his disciples (John, the author of the gospel and Andrew)** and **Jesus**

Transitioning from John to Jesus

- “**Again, the next day**, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, “Behold the Lamb of God!” The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus” (John 1:35-37)
- ✓ John and Andrew (disciples of John the Baptist) recognized the same thing that John the Baptist recognized – Jesus is the Messiah
- ✓ John will pretty much fade away and the remainder of the Gospel of John will focus on Jesus

*“John answered and said, “A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven. You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, ‘**I am not the Christ,**’ but, ‘**I have been sent before Him.**’ He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore, this joy of mine is fulfilled. **He must increase, but I must decrease**” (John 3:27-30)*

Concluding Thoughts

- **“Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, “Behold the Lamb of God!” **The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus**” (John 1:35-37)**
 - ✓ Their only proper response would be for them to follow Jesus – although **they will fully follow Jesus at a later time.** This will be the topic of next weeks lesson – **“Come Follow Me”**

“Now after John was put in prison, **Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God**, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then Jesus said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” They immediately left their nets and followed Him” (Mark 1:14-18)