

"The Forerunner of Jesus Christ"

John 1:6-8

Introduction: Let us begin tonight with a short review. Let me remind you again why John wrote this letter.

John 20:30-31

³⁰ *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:*

³¹ *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

Notice John 1:1-5

In the last two lessons we have been looking at the deity of Jesus Christ. In John 1:1-5 John tells us that Jesus had no beginning. He tells us that Jesus, and the Father are separate Persons and at the same time they are equally God. He tells us of their fellowship from before the world began. He tells us that all things were created by Jesus and there is nothing that is made that He did not make. Last week we looked at how Jesus has what all people need. John says that in Him was LIFE and LIGHT. He also tells us that the Light shined in the darkness, but the darkness did not comprehend it.

Jesus came into this world full of darkness and sin but the world which is in the darkness did not comprehend the Light. He came to offer what every person needs and that is life and light. Man needs life because we were all born spiritually dead and man needs light because man is deep into spiritual darkness. I need to pause here for a moment and just say that many have pushed away the answer to their greatest need because they despised the Light due to their love of their evil deeds.

John 3:19-21

¹⁹ *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

²⁰ *For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.*

²¹ But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

This rejection has driven man deeper into the darkness, and they do not even know it is happening.

Romans 1:18-26a

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

¹⁹ Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

²⁰ For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

²¹ Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

²² Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

²³ And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

²⁴ Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

²⁵ Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

²⁶ For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections:

This brings us to where we are tonight.

➤ **John the Baptist**

Notice John 1:6

As soon as I read this, I must ask the question, "Why did John go from talking about the deity of Jesus and now he tells us about John the Baptist?" I believe there are 2 reasons.

1. John is a witness.

2 Corinthians 13:1

This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

The Bible is very clear that one witness was not enough to establish the Truth, for there had to be two or three. In the first 5 verses of John 1 it is John alone that testifies of who Jesus is and now in verse 6 he calls upon another witness. He does this to establish the Truth of what he is writing.

Notice John 1:6-7

Here we see that John was a witness. Now let us consider the second reason why John tells us about John the Baptist.

2. God's desire for getting the Light to the world.

God could have used many different ways to have the Light spread across the world, but He only chose one way and that is by the voice of man. It is God's will and His plan to have the Light carried into the world by us.

Notice John 1:7a

John came for a witness. This is what we are called to be also. But what does a witness do? They testify of the Truth which they know. They do are not called to explain it and they are not called to make others believe it. They are called just to be a herald of the Truth. This helps us to understand what our responsibility is as believers.

Acts 1:6-8

⁶ *When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*

⁷ *And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.*

⁸ *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

The Apostles were called to be witnesses and now that responsibility has been passed on to each of us. We are called to herald the Truth. We cannot make people believe it and we are not called to do so. We are just called to tell them of the Truth that Jesus Christ came into the world to be the Savior of the world. Notice the words of an unnamed writer.

"John was "sent from God" and was an evangelist. An evangelist is a person authorized to proclaim the Gospel of Christ. God set in the church evangelists. Paul told Timothy to do the work of an evangelist. God still works through men to evangelize men! Beloved, you may not have the title "Evangelist so and so" but you can mark it down that you are God's man or woman on the scene of your job, your school, your community. In short you are God's evangelist wherever you are and are empowered with the dynamic Gospel and the Spirit enabled boldness to speak the message of Jesus to others. Are you availing yourself of your "once in a lifetime" privilege of proclaiming the Gospel to those in your sphere of influence, those who are dead in their trespasses and sins and are destined for eternal separation from God? Remember, you have access to individuals that no pastor will ever see in their service, so don't miss your opportunity!"

I need to give you another thought here. Some people claim that as believers we do not need to say much but just live the Christian life in front of people. But that is not what a witness does. He does not get on the stand in a court room and act out what has happened without saying a word. He tells what he knows to be true. This is what we also must do. It is important that we live in a way that others see the life of Jesus Christ in our lives but if we do not tell them of the Life within us, they will just label us as "good people" and they will not know of Jesus Christ. We must tell them Who changed our life and that He can change their lives also.

Romans 10:14, 17

¹⁴ *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*

¹⁷ *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

Notice John 1:7-8

John was sent from God to be a witness for Jesus Christ. In other words, it was for him to point others to Jesus. John had not come to the earth to steal the spotlight. He did not walk around drawing attention to himself. John was a very important man, but it was never

about him. John was the voice of God after 400 years of silence. He was the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy.

Isaiah 40:3-4

³ *The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*

⁴ *Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain:*

John was the fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy.

Malachi 3:1

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the LORD, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

Matthew confirms that John the Baptist was the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy.

Matthew 3:2-4

² *And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

³ **For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.**

⁴ *And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.*

Jesus tells us that there is none greater than John the Baptist.

Matthew 11:10-11

¹⁰ *For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.*

¹¹ **Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist:** notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

John had much to boast in if he desired but John understood that he was only an instrument in the hands of God to prepare people to know Jesus Christ.

Notice John 1:7 again.

It was through his witness that ALL men might believe.

John had a very important role in God's plan, but he always made his message about Jesus and not about himself.

John 3:29-30

²⁹ He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

³⁰ He must increase, but I must decrease.

Conclusion:

John was all about magnifying the Savior, for he said, "He must increase and I must decrease." John was very popular because he was used of God to break the 400 years of silence. But John wanted no glory. His desire was that people would see Jesus Christ and not John the Baptist.

This too should be our desire in life. We may be given a position of prominence but let us never take the glory for anything but let us be quick to deflect it all to our Lord because without Him we are nothing but dust.