

GOSPEL OF JOHN: MARKS OF A RADICAL WITNESS: Lessons from John the Baptist

11.21.10 Creekside Jn 1:19-34 Know who you are, why u exist, what to proclaim 35 Min

INTRODUCTION:

Attn: My time in Ohio, then into Ryan and Emir - Emphasize Ryan's passion to share JC Theme: We've looked at Who Christ is, now let's look at a man who could help bt preach Relev: All have a decision today - do we see JC as Lamb? Not an option to witness if so.

SUMMARY OF THE SERIES: John 1:1-18 explained who Christ is: Word, Light, Tent.

Struct: John the Baptist was a man we has been mentioned but now expanded on...

BACKGROUND ON JOHN THE BAPTIZER

- John had remarkable parents, Elizabeth and Zechariah, both of the tribe of Levi
Zechariah was a high priest had would serve the offering of incense, considered one of the highest priestly duties. One day while doing this great joy filled his heart.
Gabriel visited him, it had been more than 400 hears since last angelic appearance
The records reveal that b/c Zechariah did not believe Gabriel's words, he was made unable to speak. A stunned man left the temple that day, but couldn't talk.
During the 5th mo of Elizabeth's pregnancy when Gabriel appeared to Mary
In Luke we read Zechariah's voice being given back to him and the benedictus that he said about what John would be doing in 1:76 - go and read, dramatize.
He was a Nazarite from the time he was born: he never cut his hair, never touched a dead body, and never drank the fruit of the vine. He lived a pure and uncontaminated life. He was filled with the Holy Spirit since before his birth.

In John 1, J the B had been preaching Repent for 1 yr and caused great confusion.

A GREAT, PROTRUDING ROOT (BY JOHN PIPER)

- John the Baptist appears at the beginning of John's Gospel (& other Gospels), then falls to the background because he is a bridge between the OT and NT.
He is prominent at the beginning of the Gospel because he is part of the roots of the Gospel. Roots of Jesus go to eternity (Jn 1:1); J the B's roots go to OT.

John is like one of those great tree roots that protrude above the ground a few feet out from the trunk of the tree. But is saying, "look up at the tree! It is greater!"

Jesus doesn't appear on the scene of history without historical preparation.

God had been at work in Israel for 2000 years, and even before that, putting in place a historical backdrop that would make Jesus' life and ministry more intelligible.

John the Baptist is a root partly under ground in the OT and partly exposed in the NT. He has a foot in both worlds—a prophet something like Elijah (but not Elijah reincarnate, 1:21) and voice crying that the long-expected Messiah has come.

MARK #1: KNOW WHO YOU ARE (vv. 19-23)

One of the purposes of John the Baptist's ministry is to make sure he is not confused with Jesus—and to make sure that Jesus is seen as utterly amazing. John got a running start in verses 6-8 and verse 15, but now in verses 19 and following; displays 3 marks of a witness.

[19] And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" My friend Scott - "Why are you alive?"

[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."

- Notice that the word 'Confessed' is used 2x to be clear, "he was not the Christ!"
Then they asked him, are you Elijah? Fair Q b/c he looked like Elijah.
Then when asked, are you a prophet he said, "No!" - No, No, No! Not Mel

crazy that John said "I am not christ!" they didn't even ask if he was the messiah - were not even thinking of their great need.

- He was not going to have a savior complex. God give us this humility to boast in only J. What humility! He could have taken credit, but he didn't. Matt 11:11 says that J the B was 'the greatest of men to ever live.' Really? Why? b/c he proclaimed Christ!

[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."

- He reached back 700 year prior to Is. 40:3-5 (read), "I am just a voice..." He was not the substance of God's message (the Word), he was just the communicator of it.
In Isaiah "the LORD" (all caps in the ESV) refers to Yahweh, Jehovah, the God who is the Creator and Ruler of the world, and Covenant God of Israel.
Now John the Baptist is saying that he is that voice crying in the wilderness, and the Lord whose way he is preparing is Jesus Christ. The man coming after me is more than anyone ever dreamed. He is the God of the OT, and now he is man as well
Know who you are - and know why you exist: My Obituary written in 2007

MARK #2: KNOW WHY YOU EXIST (vv. 24-28)

[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?"

- If there was ever a man who had the temptation to exalt himself, it was he.
In Luke 3:30 he said, "He must become greater; I must become less." - A witness never obtrudes himself into the picture of the one whom he is witnessing.
Paul set this truth down for all time in 2 Cor 4:5, "For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord." The servant of Christ does not promote himself, but JC!

[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."

- Again he moved the emphasis off of himself and turned the conversation to JC
Jesus Is Superior - They ask why he is baptizing, and he answers simply by saying the one I am preparing for is so superior to me that I am not worthy to untie his sandals. My baptizing is not about me. It's about Jesus, and he is infinitely superior to me.
Jesus is so infinitely superior to him that John isn't worthy to untie his sandals.

[28] These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing. - Some Scholars believe this is where Joshua lead ppl across Jrdn to prms land

MARK #3: KNOW WHAT YOU PROCLAIM (vv. 29-34)

[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.'

- In one sentence we have the essence of the Christian message - Lamb of God
Agnus Dei Picture - Understand the power of the Law being fulfilled. Lev 4.
Jesus Ranks Before - Verse 30 repeats verse 15: "This is he of whom I said, 'after me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.'" The point is that John is emphasizing Jesus' rank. He is absolutely before John. Jesus is from eternity.
John wants to underline what it takes for Jesus to be "the Lamb of God:"
No ordinary human being can be "the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world." - French! There is Nothing you can do to save yourself!
Jesus is the Lord God of Isaiah 40:5. Story of Ben Pascut

Conclusion: Know who you are, why you exist, what to proclaim - This week!