

The Gospel of John

The Gospel of John

Lesson #7

The Journey

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The Gospel of John

- John 1:6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.
- John was the only prophet in Israel and in fact the only prophet in Israel in 400 years.

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The Gospel of John

- The Baptist grew up as an obscure figure and as an adult spent his time in the Judean wilderness wearing the clothes of a prophet.
- His diet too was unusual – locusts and honey.
- And all the while, all through his childhood and early adult years this Spirit-filled prophet of God was being prepared for battle.

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The Gospel of John

- A prophet in Israel was a man who was **from God and spoke for God** with authority.
- We saw two lessons ago that John the Baptist was filled with the Spirit when he was in Elizabeth's womb.
- He lived a lot of years on his own in the desert completely separated from the religious system.

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- He was not only separate from Judaism, but he opposed Judaism in its 1st century form.
- In the gospels when the word "Jews" is used think, "religious leaders" and not just anyone who was Jewish by birth.
- John the Baptist called out the Jews as snakes and condemns them – this did not endear him to them. 😊

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The Gospel of John

- John the Baptizer is the perfect witness to Christ – he is not part of the old system, the old wineskin.
- Mark 2:22 "And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins—and the wine is destroyed, and so are the skins. But new wine is for fresh wineskins."
- Jesus didn't come to REFORM the old covenant, he came to REPLACE it!

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The Gospel of John

- John wasn't a prophet because that is what he aspired to be – he was a prophet because that is what God ordained him to be.
- If you were looking for someone to be a credible witness to the Christ, John the Baptizer was the man.
- Unlike the Jewish leaders John had no concerns for how he looked, what he lived in, or what he made – he wasn't looking for money or power.

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- John wasn't "selling" a new religion, he was announcing the coming of Messiah.
- He would tell the truth about Messiah and those who heard him could make up their own mind.
- He didn't play "Just as I am" 14 times and beg people to say the magic prayer – he was as direct as he was distinct from all other prophets.

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- John the Baptizer was the "Elijah" of his day and when he spoke the Holy Spirit accompanied his words.
- When John said, "**Repent, the kingdom of God is at hand**" people either trembled and believed or they turned away.
- He was a Spirit-filled, take no prisoners, 1st century evangelist who meant what he said and said what he meant.

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- Luke 7:28 “I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” Jesus of Nazareth
- It is better to **participate in the kingdom** of God, than it is to **announce it**.
- John was the greatest OT prophet because he saw Messiah, but was not as advantaged as we who have seen his finished work!

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- John 1:7 He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him.
- The “through him” phrase points to John, not Jesus – no doubt our witness is intended for the same end.
- The purpose of his testimony was to produce faith in Jesus Christ – John’s testimony became, “Messiah has come and we now know his name”.

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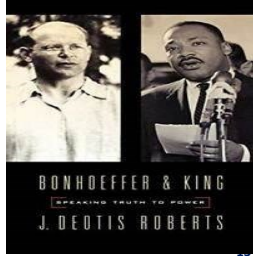
- John was fearless in his approach – he boldly confronted sin and told the truth.
- Matthew 12:34 You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil?
- You may also recall John called out King Herod’s sin in stealing his brother’s wife and that led to his decapitation in prison.

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- For all the talk we hear about speaking truth to power few actually do.
- It's needed in the corporate world, in our political world, and even in the church.



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If John the Baptizer had a church today, I think his sermons would be full of repentance from sin, being clothed in Christ's righteousness, and of judgment to come. I seriously doubt there would be any "easy believism" tolerated.

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- John 1:8 He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.
- John's ministry, his purpose in life, was this one thing – to point as many as possible to Messiah.
- Is it not patently obvious from scripture that our purpose in life is the same as John's?

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The Gospel of John

- The Baptist was to reflect Jesus who was the true light – it is amazing how special reflected light can be in a room.
- It simplifies our role – we need not feel the burden of being something we are not, “**the light**”. (Matthew 5:14)
- We just need to be close enough to **the light** that he reflects off us!

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- Indeed, what does it say that John the Baptizer had to point out Jesus, the Light.
- The only people who need someone to point them to light are the blind.
- 2nd Cor 4:4 In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

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2nd Cor 4:5 For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.

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- We are not John the Baptizer and our gifts, talents, and abilities are different – but our mission is the same.
- Let’s evaluate what God has given us both in natural and spiritual gifts, talents, and abilities. (to whom much is given, much is required)
- Next, ask, “**what am I doing with what I’ve been given**” – we are accountable.

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- John 1:9 The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.
- Now we are back to the incarnation – Jesus not only gives light to all men, but he became man.
- How similar to the 1st Adam’s decision to become like Eve to keep her - Jesus became like us to save us.

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- Every person has been given enough light to know to look for God – “he is not far from any of us”.
- Acts 17:26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, 27 that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us. 28 for “In him we live and move and have our being”.

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The consequences of unbelief are enormous. Those who reject the light often think God is like them – easily manipulated and fickle to the point they think he can't possibly mean what he says about lostness. The Bible says they are dead in their sins, blinded by the enemy, and oh how great and how long their darkness will be.

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Next week we will come to John 1:11, "He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him."

But what if they had?

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Questions?

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