

## **The Preacher and His Message**

Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1987

### **John 1: 6-7**

*“There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.”*

I’m reading this morning from the book of John, the first chapter, verses 6 and 7. This is the title of the message: “THE PREACHER AND HIS MESSAGE.”

I wish that I had in my audience this morning every preacher in the United States, for that matter, the whole world. I believe that I have something to say that we preachers need to hear.

I’m reading from John 1: verses 6 and 7: *“There was a man sent from God whose name was John. The same (this man John that was sent from God) came for a witness, to bear witness of that Light, (capital L-I-G-H-T). He was not that Light, but He was sent to bear witness of that Light that all men through Him, (that is through that Light, Christ) might believe.”*

John bears witness of Christ. It is clear from this Scripture, if you read it carefully enough, if you listened while I was reading; it is clear that John’s one mission and John’s sole purpose of existing was to preach Jesus Christ. I’m convinced of that beyond a shadow of a doubt.

You cannot account for John except by looking to Christ; there is no accounting for John. The one reason for John’s existence, the one reason for John’s office as a preacher, the one reason for John’s office as a forerunner, the one reason for John’s ministry was to bear witness of Jesus Christ.

*“There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This same John came for a witness.”* That is why God sent him and that is what he came to do. This was the soul purpose for his existence, his office and for his ministry.

I don’t quite know how to apply this to men (to all believers). I do know how to apply it to those who preach and to those who pastor. I’m saying this; *“We preach Christ and Him crucified.”* That is our mission and that is our objective. That is why God sent us.

Paul said that to the city of Corinth; he said, *“I am determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.”*

I know that there are nations to be governed; I am aware of that but I believe that God has given men gifts for that task (to govern nations). I know that there are laws to be made and to be enforced. I know that we have to have policeman. I know that we have to have firemen to put out fires.

I know there are children that need to be educated. We have to have school teachers. I know that there are sick people to be healed; we have to have doctors. I know that there are multitudes that need to be fed. Someone is going to have to grow some corn, cotton and potatoes.

I know that there are houses to be built and wars to be fought. God has given men gifts to care for these necessities. The business of those who preach is not to educate children and build houses and heal sick folks; it is to preach Christ.

Now, the business of those who preach and who pastor is to preach the Word of God. That is what Peter says in the book of Acts when they were having all that trouble between the widows of these different tribes and nations. The apostles were having their time taken up with the cares of these necessities.

He said, *“Why don’t you folks appoint seven faithful men, godly men and saved men and put them over this business and we will give ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the Word and not be taken up with this business.”* God has given other men to take care of this business. As a preacher of the Gospel, our business is Christ.

*“There was a man sent from God whose name was John;”* and he was sent to witness, to bear witness of the Light. I am saying, the one reason for the existence of a preacher or for his office as a pastor is to preach Christ.

The one reason for his ministry as an ambassador for Jesus Christ is to give Him, lock, stock and barrel, totally and completely, as the fisherman said, “Hook, line, and sinker,” to the preaching of the Gospel of the Son of God; that is his business.

When he tries to do anything else, he is an embarrassment to himself and to everyone else and is a shame to God. A prophet is a prophet and his business is to preach the prophet’s Lord.

In 2 Corinthians 5:18, Paul said; *“All things are of God who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.”* We are ambassadors of Jesus Christ.

We are not ambassadors of the government; we are not ambassadors of capitalism and we are not ambassadors of democracy; we are ambassadors of Jesus Christ. *“As though God did beseech you by us,”* God Himself speaks to you by us. Christ said, *“He that heareth you; heareth Me. He that despiseth you despiseth Me.”*

The Scripture does not say, “He that despiseth you over politics.” It is not He that despiseth you over your sectarian views. It is not He that despiseth you over your prophetic views. It is not He that despiseth you over your cantankerousness views. It is not He that despiseth you over your legalism but He that despiseth you over the Gospel of substitution, of God’s grace, of God’s mercy in Christ Jesus, *“He despises me.”*

Oh, that preacher’s today would *“be about their Father’s business.”* If they would only leave other people’s business alone and get busy with their Father’s business; I believe God would bless them.

I don’t believe that we would be in the famine that we are in. You might say, “We are in no famine.” We may not be in famine of bread and water but we are in the hearing of the Word of God.

It was five years before that great preacher and old soldier, Charles Spurgeon died. He was 53 years old. He had been pastor there since he was 18 or 19 years of age. He made the following statement at that great metropolitan tabernacle; he said, “Brethren; I desire to be like John the Baptist. I desire to have as my thought and my ministry and my experience; I desire to have as everything Jesus Christ and His Gospel. I desire to have my mind concentrated on Him, on His sacrifice, on His death, on His resurrection, on His mediatorial office and on His blessed return. During the little time that I may be allowed and spared to lift up my voice in this wilderness; I would bear witness to the Lamb of God. The years may be short in which I may preach to this congregation,” (there were just five of them left).

But Spurgeon said, “Around the cross shall be to me the place of green pastures. And from the sacrifice of my Lord shall flow the still waters. Now, many others in our day are involved in other things. I leave them to do their best or their worst, but at least one determines to be separated unto the Gospel of God. I know no salvation except by substitution, and I know no substitute except Jesus Christ.”

That is my message and that is the sum of my ministry. That is what the Scripture is all about. This is what the Word of God is all about. Do you want me to give you just briefly, a shortcut to some comprehension or understanding of this great Book, this great Bible containing 66 Books of the Old Testament and the New Testament?

Let me tell you what it is all about. I am not being facetious. I am being honest with you. Let me tell you what it is all about: The Old Testament, the 39 Books in the Old Testament, say; “someone is coming.”

The four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, say; “somebody has come.” That is what they are saying, “somebody has come.”

The epistles of Paul, Peter and all the rest of them, say; “someone is coming again.” That is what they are saying; did you hear that? The Old Testament says, “somebody is coming; He’s coming.”

It is said in promise, in prophecy, in picture and in type. It is said in symbol in every way, “somebody is coming.” The four Gospels say, “someone has already come.” He is here! The Epistles tell me that “someone is coming again.”

I want you to look at those three things:

First of all: Look at the Old Testament. The Old Testament says, “somebody is coming.” Acts 10:43 says, “*To Him give all the prophets witness,*” to that One who is coming. I’m talking about Moses who wrote the first five Books. I’m talking about Job whenever he wrote and David when he wrote the Psalms. I’m talking about the major and minor Prophets, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah and all of these prophets. They give witness to Him who is coming.

God created man and put him in the Garden of Eden and made a Covenant of works and man broke it. Man broke it, man fell and man sinned. Right after he fell, God began to reveal His purpose to save sinners. I don’t know how long afterwards, but shortly after man fell, God began to speak concerning a Redeemer, to speak concerning a Saviour, to speak concerning a Messiah.

God Almighty began to reveal His purpose to save men by His free grace through a coming Redeemer. He is called in the Scripture, “*The Branch; the Elect, the Christ, the Messiah, the Kinsmen Redeemer, that Prophet, that Priest, the King of Salem*” and He is called all of these different names.

Ever since man fell, God has been saying; “*He’s coming.*” For four thousand years He said, “*He’s coming;*” someone is coming to lift us out of our darkness. Someone is coming to lift us out of our spiritual deadness. Someone is coming to restore what we lost in the fall.

We lost *“the way, the truth and the life.”* Someone is coming that will be to us the *“the way, the truth and the life.”* God was pleased to set forth His coming in promise, in prophecy and in picture throughout the whole Old Testament.

God said this in His very first promise in Genesis 3:15; *“The seed of woman”* He is the One who is coming. You see; the Bible tailors a garment that will fit one man. If you want to find out who the Messiah is, who the Christ is; you take the Old Testament and you study that garment; it is tailored to fit one man.

One man will fit every dimension, every prophecy, every picture and every type. I’m talking about one man and only one. God said first of all, *“He will be born of a woman,”* not just any woman, not an ordinary woman; *“a virgin.”* That’s right! In Genesis 3:15, this Messiah, this one who is coming, is going to be *“the seed of woman,”* not the seed of man but the *“seed of woman.”* *“He will bruise the serpent’s head.”*

He said in Isaiah 7:14, *“The Lord Himself will give you a sign; a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a Son.”* In Isaiah 9:6 He says, *“Unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given. The government shall be on His shoulders and His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.”* So, He will be born of a woman.

Actually, when Eve had the first man-child, when Cain was born, she said; *“I’ve gotten a man from the Lord.”* Many people thought that she said, *“I’ve gotten the Man.”* She didn’t have *“the Man,”* she had a murderer on her hands. He was nothing but a sinner like his fallen daddy. She thought she had *“the Man.”*

Eve knew *“the Man”* was coming. God said that He was coming; He is coming. Not only will He be born of woman but *“He will be born of Abraham’s seed.”* He will be the seed of Abraham.

Not only that, but God said; *“He will be of the tribe of Judah. The scepter shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh comes.”* He is coming; Shiloh is coming. He will be of the family of Jesse and He will be of the house of David.

God said, *“I will tell you where He will be born; He will be born in Bethlehem of Judea.”* You see, all of this is about *“the Man.”* Someone is coming.

He said, *“He will be a prophet like Moses.”* Moses wrote and said to the people; *“One of these days God will raise up from among the people that Prophet like unto Me; Him ye*

*shall hear.” That is what our Heavenly Father said of His Son; “This is My Son; hear Him. Him ye shall hear.”*

*“He will be a prophet like Moses.” He said, “He will be a Priest like Melchisedek, having no beginning of days or end of days. No mother or father, no lineage, no heritage like unto the Son of God.” Yes sir; “He will be a Priest like Melchisedek.”*

Aaron is a type of Christ. There was Aaron’s priesthood and the sons of Levi who went about the tabernacle offering sacrifices. They are not a real good type of Christ but just a pretty good type. Melchisedek is a good type of Christ. Study about Melchisedek; he will be a *“Prophet like Moses, a Priest like Melchisedek, and a King like David.”*

Do you know something? Nobody in the Old Testament ever held those three offices. We had prophets, we had priests and we had kings. We never had a prophet, priest and king in one. We’ve got one; the Lord Jesus Christ. God said, *“He will be a Prophet, Priest and King.”*

Not only that; He will fulfill every Old Testament type. When they put the blood on the doorpost in Egypt and called it the *“Passover, Christ is our Passover.”* Whoever this Messiah is, whoever this Christ is, whoever this one is who is coming, will be our *“Passover.”*

The *“Rock in the wilderness;”* that Rock is Christ. The Rock was smitten and gave forth water. He was smitten on the cross and gave forth life, the living water. *“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so, must the Son of Man be lifted up; and whosoever believeth on Him should never perish but have everlasting life.”*

He was the Manna, the Bread from heaven. He said, *“Moses gave you that bread”* but you had to gather some the next day, the next day and the next day.” He said, *“I’m the living bread; he that eats of this bread will never hunger again.”* There’s just one feast.

He is the tabernacle; *“A body hast Thou prepared me; He tabernacled among us.”* Moses wrote of Him. *“Abraham saw His day.”* All the believers of the Old Testament looked to Him, who was coming.

They died in faith, *“Not having received the promise,”* not having seen His coming, but believing that He would. They were saved, each of them, by looking to Christ. That is what the Old Testament says; it says it in prophecy, it says it in promise, it says it in picture and type. It is said in the Passover, the tabernacle, the scapegoat, the atonement, the priesthood, the prophetic office, in the kingly reign of David and the wise men.

The scripture says, "Someone is coming," who will be all these things in one. All of our needs will be met in one offering. He will satisfy all of almighty God's Law, justice and honor by His obedience. "He is coming; somebody is coming." You can watch old Abel go to his altar and put the blood on the mercy seat and he's saying, "Somebody is coming."

We turn to the four Gospels and what do they say? They declare that "someone has come." Old John the Baptist was the last of the Old Testament prophets. He pointed out Christ and said, "*Behold the Lamb of God. I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God.*" John bare record, saying, "*I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.*" John identified the Lord Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah.

John had a short, brief, ministry before he was put in prison. While he was languishing down there in prison he had his doubts. His mind began to doubt. Perhaps he was thinking, "This is just not working out like old human logic thinks it ought to work out." So, he sent two of his disciples down to where Jesus Christ was and they asked Him, "*Are you He that should come?*" The whole Scripture says, "Someone is coming. Are you that someone?" "*Are you He that should come or do we look for another?*"

Well John, lift up your ears; let the angels of God answer that question; "*Are you He that should come, are you the Messiah, are you that someone?*"

The angels came to Mary and whispered in her ear and said, "*You are going to have a Son.*" She said, "*I don't know a man.*" They said, "*You are going to have a Son without the aid of a man; the Holy Ghost will come upon you; the power of God will overshadow you and that Holy Thing born of you shall be called the Son of God.*"

That same angel went over to Joseph and said, "*Don't be afraid to marry Mary; she is with child of the Holy Ghost and you will call His name, Jesus; He is Emmanuel, God with us.*" The angels went out to the hillside and spoke to the shepherds. They said, "*Go down there to Bethlehem; unto you is born this day in the city of David, the Saviour, Christ the Lord.*"

Let the Father Himself answer you John. The Father spoke from Heaven on two occasions and said; "*This is My Beloved Son.*" This is someone; this is He that should come. Let the works that He does answer you John. "*The blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, the dead are raised. Be not faithless but believe.*"

Let the Scripture answer you; *“He died for our sins according to the Scriptures. He was buried and rose again according to the Scriptures.”* If those witnesses are not enough John, let nature answer you.

The wind stopped at His command. He stood out there on the bow of that little ship while the wind was howling and dashing against that ship. The waves were lifted five, six to eight feet high. He said, *“You be still.”* That wind lay down at his feet like a shepherd dog, obediently. The water held Him up when He walked on it.

The fish brought a coin to pay his taxes; I like that! Our Lord was going to pay His taxes and He told one of the disciples to go down and pull a fish out of the sea. He told them that it would have a coin in its mouth and said, *“Go and pay My taxes.”* That fish had kept that coin for our Lord’s taxes.

He touched the bread and it multiplied and He fed five thousand people with five loaves and two fish.

The sun refused to shine when He hung on that cross. When He died, the rocks shook and the earth shook. The graves opened, even His grave opened. Death and the grave could not hold Him:

From the grave He arose  
With a mighty triumph for His foes.  
He arose a victor over the dark domain  
And He lives forever with His saints to reign.

He arose! Let Simeon answer you John. Simeon said, *“I’ve seen Thy salvation.”* Let Thomas answer you John and all the doubting Thomas’s’ of many years, *“My Lord and My God.”* Tell it here and tell it there or wherever God gives you an ear; *“Someone has come,”* who meets every jot and tittle of those prophecies, promises and types which say, *“Someone is coming.”*

I will tell you this, whatever Messiah you follow, whatever Messiah you worship, whatever Messiah which you trust, he better fulfill every testimony, every prophecy and every picture.

Our Lord was talking to the woman at the well and she finally broke down. She couldn’t handle the things that He dealt with and with the things that He asked her. Finally, she just broke down and said, *“Well; the Messiah is coming and when He comes, He will tell us all things.”* Our Lord looked at her and said, *“I that speak to thee am He; I am.”*

He said on another occasion, *“If you believe not that I am He; you will die in your sins.”* My friends; that is my message; *“Someone is coming.”* That is what the whole Old Testament says, what it is taken up with and that is what it is all about, *“Someone is coming.”* The four Gospels say, *“He has come.”*

All right, let me close this message with this; the epistles declare that someone will come again. After our Lord died on that cross and was buried and rose again, He gathered His disciples about Him and He blessed them. As they watched Him, He was taken up into Heaven, ascending back to the Father.

While He went up into heaven, they stood their looking and gazing, those men in white apparel stood beside them; they were angels of God. They said, *“Ye men of Galilee; why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus who is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go.”*

He said that to them before He was crucified. He said, *“Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me. I am God. He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; I and My Father are one. I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you; I will come again and receive you unto Myself that where I am you may be also.”*

In Hebrews 9, it speaks of three appearances of Christ to believers. It says in verse 26, the three appearances; *“Once in the end of the world hath He appeared,”* in the flesh as a man, tempted in all points, under the law and all of these things, *“to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”* He appeared on the earth, in the flesh to *“put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”*

Verse 24: *“Christ is now entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us”* as our Forerunner, as our Representative, as our Surety, as our Mediator, as our Advocate. *“There is one Advocate between God and men.”*

Verse 28: *“Christ was once offered to bear the sin of many. Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”* He is coming back!

Our Lord came the first time as the Lamb. Both of these comings are taught in the Old Testament. That is how the Jews got them mixed up. They got mixed up when there was the talk of Him coming as a Lamb, coming as a Lion, coming as a Servant and Him coming as a King. They had seen Him come the first time. They kept getting confused about it.

He came the first time as a Lamb to put away sin. He will return to this earth as a Lion. I can't tell you when He is coming. A man would be a fool to try to do that, only that He will. I can't tell you the events surrounding His coming; I do not know.

I do know this, I do know that when He comes, time will end. I do know that when He comes the dead will be raised. *"We which are alive and remain shall be changed immediately. We shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed."*

*"There will be a new heaven and a new earth."* I know that; *"Wherein dwelleth Righteousness."* I know that Christ will reign forever and we will reign with Him.

I know that the wicked are going to be judged and they are going to be put where they can do no more harm. Our Lord Jesus Christ must reign until *"He puts every enemy under His feet; and the last enemy shall be destroyed is death,"* in any and every form.

*"There is going to be a new heaven and a new earth."* I do know this much; I know that God Almighty decreed that who He said would come, and that someone who did come, and that someone who is coming again, *"shall have all preeminence."*

One day in heaven, earth and under the earth, (if that means hell), but in heaven, earth, or under the earth, *"every knee (of angels, men and demons), will bow and every tongue will confess that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father."*

That is my message to you. My friends; I hear preachers say, "Why don't you make Jesus Christ your Lord?" I'm not going to say that to you; He is already your Lord. God beat you to it. He is every man's Lord. *"He is the Lord of the dead and the living."*

Here is the question: The question is not if you will make Him Lord, if you will crown Him Lord, if you will bow to Him as Lord, but the question is when? You will do it either now in submission, in faith and surrender in receiving Him. You will bow wherever, in heaven or hell; every knee is going to bow. He is Lord!