

BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD

JOHN 1:29 • TV139A

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John 1:29

“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

My message today will be taken from the book of **John**. I am going to be reading a passage of Scripture found in the 1st chapter. If you will take your Bible and follow along with me, I think that you will appreciate the message and perhaps benefit more from it.

In the 1st chapter of **John, verse 29**, the Scripture says: *“the next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him and saith: behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”*

Now, my first thoughts when I read about the ministry and the message of John the Baptist were these: what a day of glory and grace and goodness this would be if every minister of the Gospel, if every preacher, pastor, evangelist, and missionary was a true minister of Christ in the mold of this man John.

Now, we have many preachers today, somebody said: “the woods are full of preachers and promoters and religious politicians” and what we call “religious cheerleaders” but there are not many prophets of God.

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John was a prophet of God. It says in John the 1st chapter **verse 6**: “*there was a man sent from God, a man sent from God whose name was John.*”

Let’s look at two things; there are two things that I think are especially important when we consider the ministry of John the Baptist:

First of all: The man whom God sent!

Secondly: The message that he delivered!

Now, these are the two important things that I think we will see in this 1st chapter of **John’s Gospel**: First, the man whom God sent, “*there was a man sent from God whose name was John.*” And then, we want to look at the message that this man delivered to those who heard him.

First of all: The man whom God sent! The true messenger of God (John was a true messenger of God), the true messenger of God must first of all see Christ for himself. John said in **verse 34**; will you look at **verse 34**? “*I saw, and bear record that this is the Son of God.*” John is saying, “I saw Him myself and I bear record that my heart is fully persuaded that this Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God.”

The apostle John, three times in his first epistle, in the first three verses makes this statement, “*That which we have seen and which we have heard and which our hands have handled of the Word of God we declare unto you.*”

Christ said, “*Abraham saw my day and Moses wrote of me.*” Our Lord Jesus Christ said: “*He that seeth the Son and believeth on him hath everlasting life.*”

Now, there is a sense in which salvation is by sight. I know that we walk not by sight but by faith. I know that salvation is by faith.

I’m not talking about a physical sight. There were many people who saw Christ physically who never saw Him spiritually. There were many people who looked upon His flesh and bones but who never looked upon Christ as the Son of God, as the Redeemer, as the Consolation of Israel, as the Messiah who was promised.

John said: “*I saw and I bear record this is the Son of God.*” So, faith really is by sight, “*he that seeth the Son,*” it’s by a spiritual sight. We see by faith who Christ is, we see by faith what Christ did and we see by faith where Christ is.

We know who He is. He said: “I bear a record. I saw this and I understood it in my heart; this is the Son of God and I bear record that Jesus Christ is the Redeemer; I saw him.”

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Now, the true minister of Christ, if he is going to preach the Gospel to you, he is going to have to have a heart experience himself of the grace of God. He is going to have to see Christ and understand who He is and what He did and where He is now, the Mediator at God's right hand.

Secondly: This true messenger of God; he must not only see Christ for himself but he must see the glory of Christ and his own unworthiness!

Look at **verse 27**; John says, *"I am not worthy to unloose his shoe latchet."* They said: *"Who are you?"* He said: *"I am a voice of one crying in the wilderness."* They said: *"Are you the Christ?"* He said: *"I'm not the Christ; I am sent to bear witness or record of the Christ. I am nothing."*

This true messenger of God, when he sees His glory, when he beholds the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus, his own glory and his own honor fades into nothing. He sees his unworthiness.

Paul is an example of this; Paul said: *"I am the least of the apostles. I am not meet or fit or worthy to be called an apostle of Jesus Christ because I persecuted the church of the Lord Jesus Christ."*

Isaiah said: *"When I saw the Lord, I said: woe is me; I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips."* *"When Isaiah saw his glory he spake of him."*

Isaiah didn't speak of himself. He didn't speak of his accomplishments. He didn't speak of his own honor and glory; he spoke of Christ's glory.

So, that is the second thing that is true of every minister of Christ; it is sent of God. He sees Christ for himself. He understands in his heart by the revelation of God's Spirit who Christ is.

When it comes into his heart the glory of Christ and the beauty of Christ, and the redemptive work of Christ, he fades into nothingness. He sees his own unworthiness. He sees his own guilt.

John said on the Isle of Patmos: *"when I saw him in the fullness of his glory, I fell at his feet as a dead man."* So, that is the second thing about a true messenger of God.

Thirdly: The true messenger of God calls upon men to follow Christ; he does not call upon men to follow him but to follow the Lord Jesus Christ!

Look if you will down at **John 1: 35-37**: *"the next day John stood with two of his disciples."* These were men who had heard John and who had followed John and listened to John and were benefited by his teaching and his ministry.

They were standing one day with John and the Lord Jesus Christ came by and it says: *"looking upon Jesus John said; behold the Lamb of God."* These two disciples, followers of John, friends of John, and disciples of John, left him and followed Jesus. The men who heard John did not become followers of John or followers of a man but they followed the Lord Jesus Christ.

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Listen to Paul over in **1 Corinthians 1: 4-5**: *“my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom but my preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power that your faith, (that your confidence) should not stand in the wisdom of men (the logic of men or the doctrines of men or the traditions of men). We don’t want your faith to stand in us or in our wisdom or in our traditions or our systems of theology, but that your faith should stand in the power of God.*

My friend, do not follow men, follow Christ. This true messenger of Christ; this is his object and his goal, to point men to Christ that they should become followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As John stood and talked to these two men; they had been with them for a long time I’m sure; they had listened to him, they had learned from him. When he saw Christ he said to them: *“behold the Lamb of God.”* They left John and followed Christ.

You know, I see mothers sometime who just resent their sons growing up. They don’t want to have their hair cut and they don’t want to see them go to the barber shop. When they put on their first pair of long pants the mother cries. They don’t want them to become men. They don’t want them to grow up.

I fear that many preachers hold onto their followers and to their disciples. They hold onto them, and when something happens to the preacher their faith just falls apart. When something happens to the minister there, their confidence just falls apart.

I have seen people go to church and something happened in the church, there was a split or a division, a conflict, or trouble and people quit and they go home and they never go back again. They never hear the Gospel again. They just seem to lose their confidence in people.

Now, you can cure that by not putting your confidence in people. The Scripture says: *“Put no confidence in the flesh.”* John pointed to his disciples to Christ and they left John. They still loved John and appreciated John but they left John and thought of Christ.

We must not be followers of men. This is the thing that troubles me about so much religion today and so many denominations, churches, and organizations in the name of religion. They seem to be followers of men.

They take the names of men. Men put their pictures in the Bible. They autograph the Bible. They have their special Bibles that they produce themselves. They have their special literature and people become disciples of these men.

Now, there was a problem in the church at Corinth with this thing. Paul called them and he said: *“you are acting like carnal men. You are acting like natural men.”* He rebuked them.

He wrote to them and he says: *“I am troubled about you. Some of you say that I am of Paul and I am of Apollos and I am of Cephas.”* Somebody else says: *“Well, we are not of any of them, we are of Christ.”*

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He said: *“Who is Apollos, who is Paul, who is Cephas. Were we crucified for you? We are nothing but ministers by whom you have heard the word of God. We are nothing but ministers by whom you heard the gospel.”*

Don't follow men. I'm nothing, Apollos is nothing, Cephas is nothing, and Christ is everything. Be a follower of Christ.

So, these three things are true of every true messenger of God. As I said: the woods are full of preachers. We don't need any more preachers; we need some prophets.

The woods are full of promoters; we don't need any more promoters or religious hucksters or men to make merchandise of the souls of God's people.

We need some prophets, some men who have seen Christ, seen Him in His deity, seen Him in His glory, seen Him in His beauty, and seen Him in His redemptive work.

They have seen Christ Himself and they are seeing themselves in their sin and their unworthiness. They are undone and *“they dwell among a people of unclean lips.”*

They are exhorting people to follow Christ. Look to the Lamb of God, trust in the Lamb of God, walk with the Lamb of God, and believe in the Lamb of God.

Do not put your confidence in your flesh, my flesh, or anybody else's flesh. All of us are nothing but sinners saved by the grace of God. There's no good in our flesh and there's no good in us. The good is in Christ and the glory is in Christ and the grace is all in Christ.

Fourthly: You will recognize a true messenger of God by these characteristics: He does not seek nor does he expect nor does he demand honor from men or recognition from men!

He actually expects to decrease, to decrease, that's right! He doesn't expect to climb and to be promoted and to be honored by men and recognized by men. He expects to decrease.

He expects to become less; he expects to become nothing, and Christ to increase and Christ's glory to increase. Listen to John in **John chapter 3 verse 30**, *“He must increase and I must decrease.”* They came to him, some of his disciples, and he said: “Jesus to whom you pointed out two days ago down by the river Jordan and said: *“behold the Lamb of God.”*

Well, “He's out there preaching and everybody is following him. Everybody has gone to hear him.” John said: “That's fine; that's the way it is supposed to be.”

He said: *“The friend of the bridegroom rejoices, this my joy therefore is fulfilled (in the glory of Christ).” “He must increase, he must increase and I must decrease.”*

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This is one of the condemnations that our Lord brought against the Pharisees, the religious people of his day, the leaders. He said in **John 5:44**: “*You receive honor one of another and you do not seek the honor that comes from God only.*”

A true messenger of Christ is not seeking the honor of men; he is not seeking the praise of men. Actually, Paul said: “*If I seek the praise of men I’m not the servant of Christ.*” That’s one way you can recognize that a man is not the servant of Christ, if he seeks the praise and honor of men.

When Paul departed from the elders in **Acts chapter 20**, he was going to Jerusalem and he knew that he would not see them again. Before he left them, he said this to them, “*Now remember; I kept back nothing profitable unto you. I have not shunned to declare unto you all the council of God. I am leaving you and you will see my face no more.*”

But, he said: “*Brethren; I commend you to God and I commend you to the word of his grace that is able to build you up and able to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified.*”

“I’m not seeking your honor and your praise and your recognition. I commend you to God. You are God’s children; you are God’s servant and I commend you to him and to his work.”

My friends, these are the four marks of a true messenger of Christ. There are many characteristics and there are many more marks of a true servant of God but these are four of them:

First of all: He’s seen the Lord; he’s seen the Lord in his glory and in His beauty!

Secondly: He has seen the Lord in His redemptive work and he has seen himself in his unworthiness!

“*I’m not worthy to be an apostle. I’m not fit to be a disciple of Christ.*” Paul said: “*I am less than the least of all the saints but I am what I am by the grace of God.*” “I sat where you sat. I’m dug out of the same pit and hewn out of the same rock and redeemed by the same blood.”

Thirdly: And another thing; he exhorts his disciples to follow Christ. Don’t follow men, follow Christ!

Fourthly: He knows this; he must decrease because all the glory and honor and praise is to Christ alone!

All right, now let’s look at his message; that’s the true messenger. A messenger has a message to deliver. A messenger has no message if he doesn’t have something to say.

There was a man sent from God whose name was John and he was sent to preach something. He was sent to declare a message. Well, let’s listen to his message. Look at **John 1: verse 29**; he says and this is his message and he said it twice in the 1st chapter!

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“Behold the Lamb of God; that taketh away the sin of the world.” The first word that arrests my attention in this message from God’s true messenger is the word **Lamb, the Lamb**. He called Christ the **Lamb**.

Now, a lamb in the Scripture always signifies a sacrifice. We meet with the lamb first of all in **Genesis 4:1**. That is when we meet with the lamb.

Now, back in **Genesis 3:21**, the Lord slew an animal and clothed Adam and Eve and covered their nakedness. That might have been a lamb, probably was a lamb.

But, I do know in **Genesis 4:1** that Abel brought a lamb; he brought a lamb without spot or blemish and he sacrificed that lamb before God as a sin-offering. That is the law of first mention in the word, we meet with a lamb and the lamb is associated with blood, with a sin-offering, with an altar before the Lord, and with a sacrifice.

Then Abraham was taking his son Isaac to Mount Moriah to offer him according to the command of God as a sin-offering. They started up the mountain. The boy Isaac turned to his father and said:

“My father; here is the wood, here is the fire, my father, where is the Lamb?” This boy knew that a man could not approach a holy God without a sin-offering, and without a sacrifice. That sin-offering and sacrifice was a Lamb.

Then, in **Exodus chapter 12**, when God delivered Israel from Egypt, he said to Moses: *“Every house, and if the house is not big enough for a lamb, then put two houses together. Every house is to sacrifice a lamb and take the blood of that lamb and put it on the doorposts and the lintel and when I see the blood I will pass over you.”*

So, when John the Baptist said: *“behold the Lamb of God”* he is talking about the sin-offering. He is talking about the sacrifice. He’s talking about the atonement. There is the atonement; there is the sacrifice; there is the sin-offering: *“behold the Lamb.”*

But, this says: *“he is the Lamb of God.”* This is the all-important point right here in his message. He is telling the people to *“behold the Lamb,”* the sin-offering, the sacrifice, the atonement, the way to God that goes all the way back through the Scriptures, all the way back to the Garden of Eden.

All the way back to the first death and the first blood, to the first innocent victim that was slain because of man’s sin to cover his shame and guilt He says: *“this is the Lamb of God.”*

All of the lambs that are mentioned in the Bible, all of the lambs that have been sacrificed and slain, all of the lambs that have been brought to altars were but pictures and types. We know, according to **Hebrews 10:4**, *“that the blood of bulls, and goats, and bullocks, cannot take away sin.”*

The blood of an animal cannot atone for the sin of a man. But, these lambs of the Old Testament were pictures; they were types of the Lord Jesus Christ. He says: *“This is the Lamb of God; this is the Lamb of God.”*

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He's the Lamb of God slain before the foundation of the world in God's purpose. Back before the world began God in His purpose and in His sovereign plan designated and ordained and appointed the Lord Jesus Christ to be His Lamb, the one sacrifice for sin, His one sin-offering, His one atonement, the Lamb slain in the purpose of God before the world began.

Then, our Lord Jesus Christ was the Lamb slain not only in the purpose of God before the world began but He was the Lamb slain in the Old Testament in type and picture. Every time a lamb was brought to an altar in the Old Testament it was saying: Christ will come; Christ will suffer; Christ will shed His blood; and Christ will die.

He is coming. God's promised Him and God's prophesied. Here is the picture of what He will do. When Jesus Christ came, the Lamb slain in person on the cross, He was fulfilling all of that Scripture. He was fulfilling every picture and every promise.

He said: *"This is done that the Scripture might be fulfilled."* He said: *"I thirst that the Scripture might be fulfilled."* His hands were pierced so that the Scripture might be fulfilled. He died for our sins and was buried and rose again according to the Scriptures.

Where is he now? He's on the throne. He's on the right hand of the Father but He's the Lamb slain. Listen to this Scripture in Revelations, I believe, **chapter 5** it says:

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing. I saw as it were a Lamb in the midst of the throne, a Lamb that was slain."

So, my friend, in this thing of redemption; this is the message of a true messenger of God. The true message is not that God wants you to be healthy and God wants you to be wealthy and God wants you to be prosperous and God wants this, that, and the other.

The true message is *"behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."* Not the Old Testament lamb, (the four-legged lamb, the animal lamb) but God's Lamb of which all of these were types.

God's Lamb before the foundation of the world that was slain in the purpose of God and God's Lamb that was pictured in every sacrifice and sin-offering in the Old Testament, and God's Lamb that came in person, born of a woman, and died upon that cross and God's Lamb that right now is on the throne in the midst of the throne. *"I saw as it were a Lamb that was slain."*

It is all about Him, the thousands upon thousands upon thousands cried: *"worthy is the Lamb that was slain for he hath redeemed us to God by his blood out of every kindred, nation, and tribe, and tongue, under heaven."*

We have a Lamb. We do have a Lamb. We don't come before God without a Lamb; we dare not. It's God's Lamb that we have.

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Our sacrifice, our sin-offering, our atonement is God's Lamb. God says to us just like he said to Israel in type: *"when I see the blood I will pass over you."*

Now, watch the second part of this message. That is the key to this message. That is the significant part: *"behold the Lamb of God."*

We point to Christ and we don't point men to the Christ of Bethlehem's manger. The babe can't save; it's the Christ of the cross that saves. We point men to the Christ of the cross, the Lamb that was slain.

All right, now watch this; he said: *"the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."* We preach an effectual sacrifice, a sufficient sacrifice. He takes away sin. Do you know what the word there is; He taketh them away or He beareth away our sins.

In **Hebrews 9** there is a three-fold picture of Christ in three appearances. It says: *"Christ hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."* Then it says: *"Christ hath appeared in heaven to intercede for us, to make intercession for us."*

Then it says unto them that look for him, *"will he appear, will he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation."* He took it away just like the scapegoat of old; He bore our sins away and in Christ there is no sin, in Christ there is no condemnation.

"There is therefore, now, no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." The Lord said, *"Though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow. Though they be red like crimson; they shall be like wool."*

"With his spotless garments on I am as holy as God's Son." *"Bearing away the sin of the world"* not the Jews only but believers of *"every tribe, kindred, nation and tongue, under heaven."* He's the sufficient Saviour for any sinner. *"He beareth away the sin of the world."*

Thirdly: He tells us to *"behold the Lamb of God,"* in other words look to the Lamb of God!

Men are not just saved by reading about the Lamb. They are not just saved by hearing about the Lamb. *"Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God"* but a man is not saved just by reading or hearing or considering. He is saved by actually looking to Christ.

In **Romans 10** it says this: *"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus to be Lord and believe in thine heart God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. With the mouth confession is made unto salvation."*

Paul says in **2 Timothy 1** about knowing who He is, *"being persuaded he is able to do what he says and committing himself to Christ."* *"Behold the Lamb of God."*

"Would you be free?
From your burden of sin

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Look the Lamb of God.”

Would you be sanctified? Would you receive a perfect righteousness imputed unto you, charged to your account: look to the Lamb of God? Would you learn the grace of God to walk before Him in holiness, in beauty, and in truth?

Learn to love by looking to Christ. Learn to forgive by looking to Christ. Learn humility by looking to Christ. Learn to give by looking to Christ.

Would you have assurance, confidence of your interest in Christ? “*Behold the Lamb of God.*” Don’t look within; look to Him.

Would you be raised in His likeness? One day we shall see Him and we shall be just like Him when we behold Him in His glory; we are going to be changed into His image: “*Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world!*”