

John 1:6–8

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[0 : 0 0] us this evening. Christmas is a time where Christians pause to commemorate an infinite God clothing himself in humanity, in the person of Jesus. It's when God became a man.

Interestingly, the four accounts that we have, the four biblical accounts from the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, they all lend different vantage points, different snapshots of when God became man. Not all of them record the Bethlehem manger. Not all of them give account of the wise men following the star from the east, bearing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Not all record the angelic hosts meeting the shepherds in the field at night. Not all record the angelic visitation Mary had announcing her pregnancy. However, this evening, in the next six minutes, give me six minutes, I want to introduce to you the one commonality they all had.

All four gospel accounts had. They all documented and recorded the account of Jesus' forerunner, a man that would pave the way and announce his arrival. And for our purposes, it might be helpful because these are the verses. I think they'll show up on the screen, and I will read these verses, and I will use those for our devotional this evening. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. And in him was life, and the life was the light of men.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. And these three verses, now there was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to bear witness about the light that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

[2 : 3 5] See, we find in our text this evening, there is a man named John. Not to be confused with Saint John, the writer of the gospel. This is John the Baptist. And the writers found it, the gospel writers found it of utmost importance to document his role in his preparatory ministry. The gospel writers didn't see a fit to all announce the angelic visit to Mary. They didn't see a fit to all tell of the angelic visit to the shepherds in the field. They didn't all see it fit to speak of the wise men. But they all saw it fit to let everyone know, you must know John. And why John? He was certainly an important figure. But more than the figure, the verses tell us it's what he was pointing everyone toward. That he was a signpost. He was a man sent by

God to bear witness and testify to the true light, namely Jesus. His life's work and objective was to serve as a sign or to follow the metaphor. He was to reflect the light that was coming from the true light, Jesus. Like the moon in the sky that reflects the light from the sun, John the Baptist would reflect Jesus, the source of all true light. He was to bear witness, to confirm or attest something on the basis of personal experience or knowledge. He would affirm Jesus' work in the world so that you and I, my belief. See, witnesses continue to be necessary in our world today. Witnesses are required in the court of law to condemn the guilty or to defend the innocent or acquit the innocent. Witnesses are required at weddings to verify the commitment two individuals are making to one another. Witnesses confirm what is true and dispel what is false. You will, and I will only have to read the remainder of the first chapter of John's gospel to read what John the Baptist was actually witnessing to. What was he asserting about Jesus? Well, it was John who saw Jesus at a distance, and I'm certain he screamed, behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. It was John who immersed Jesus in the water in his baptism. And in that moment heard a heavenly voice, and he would attest that this is

Jesus, the Son of God. See, John the Baptist would bear witness to Jesus, Jesus' delivering power, and his divine person. He would want us to know this. Jesus is the divine deliverer.

Jesus is the divine deliverer. And the emerging question then becomes, well, why is it necessary to have a divine deliverer? What do I need deliverance from? Well, in short, the Bible presents

humanity's inability to always do what is right and obedient to God's laws. There have certainly been good men and women, but none flawless and faultless until God sent his divine Son, one who would always do right in obedience to God. He would live a faultless and flawless life, the life that we could never live.

He would be born in a manger, moved from cradle to cross, and on the cross, he would die in our place for what our flaws and faults deserved. And then he would conduct this divine transaction.

[6 : 53] Jesus would exchange what his perfect life accomplished and exchange it with what our imperfect life deserved. He would deliver us from the wages of our disobedience to God, which is eternal death, and would grant us eternal life.

It is upon the cross that he takes away the sins of the world. Not to say that sins no longer happen. They certainly do. But he takes away the wages of our sins, which is eternal death. And this is what John is bearing witness to. He is attesting to the pervasive power of the light that emanates from Jesus to dispel darkness and to grant true spiritual and eternal life.

See, we are called then. We are summoned to look at the light, the person of Jesus, the divine Son of God, to believe in him and to receive him by faith. And this is why Christmas is jubilant and marvelous.

This is why angels sing and joy comes to the world. This is why the baby in a manger stirs up the whole world.

Because the baby is our divine deliverer. God rescuing us from our darkness and despair.

[8 : 28] The baby is God imparting light and life to all who would come to him. And this evening, my prayer, our prayer, is that you would hear this witness.

That there is a God who came to impart life, life abundantly, life eternally, life preciously for you and for me.