

John: The Word Became Flesh - John 1:19-34

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Preacher: Scott Liddell

[0 : 00] Concerning the message today, I had never watched the sitcom, nor do I am I promoting the sitcom from the stage here.

But there was a sitcom in the 70s called All in the Family, and the sitcom poked fun at Redneck blue collar bigots of America. And the chief bigot in the show, his name was called Archie Bunker.

And Archie Bunker one time had a, there was an episode, I read an article about it, never saw the episode myself. So that's how much I am not promoting the show.

But apparently there was an episode where he was wearing, or he saw, he longed to be on the bowling team in the local community. And he saw the team had these silk, yellow silk jerseys that they wore with red piping.

And on the back of the jersey was this huge cannon ball, or cannon shooting a ball at some pins, knocking down bowling pins. And that was the big image on the back of his uniform.

[1 : 05] And he said this to his wife, after seeing that shirt and coveting that shirt, being able to wear that shirt someday, longing to be on the bowling team, he said this to his wife, you know you got something.

You know when you have something like that on your back, Edith, who is his wife, you know you're somebody.

That show was satirizing a man who could gain a sense of identity and importance from being part of a bowling team and wearing some gaudy shirt.

But that sketch raises some questions for us to understand who are we? What is your source of identity? And how do you have a sense before who you are before a holy God?

And our text today illustrates that John understood who he was not, he understood who he was, and he understood who Jesus is.

[2 : 09] And so that's going to frame for us the pathway of our message today of who are we not, and where do we derive our identity, and who is, who are we, and who is Jesus Christ.

And so I look forward to this text with you journeying. And so if you have a Bible, if you can turn to John chapter one, and we will look at verse 19 together.

And the aim is to be an effective, effective at pointing others to Jesus. We need to be clear about who we are not.

Look at our text and John knows who he is not. And this is the testimony of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, who are you?

And he confessed and did not deny, but confess, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, well, what then? Are you Elijah? I said, I am not.

[3 : 12] And are you the prophet? And he answered, no. Let's put ourselves in John's sandals, John the Baptist sandals. God had called you to be a unique witness and a forerunner of the Messiah, to point others to Christ.

You have no formal theological training. And to be honest, you are a little different in the way you dress and the way you eat. Rather than a common linen tunic, you wear camel's hair with a leather belt and your dietary restrictions consist of locust and wild honey.

You don't quite blend into the mainstream of culture, not even the religious culture. You do not go to the capital of Jerusalem to launch your ministry, but you are out in the Tuleys, into the Judean desert and the wilderness.

Your message is not exactly user friendly, nor sensitive to others' feelings, because your opening line was, you brood of vipers who warned you to flee from the wrath to come.

Yet surprisingly, hundreds, if not thousands of people, are flocking out to the wilderness to see you. You are baptizing them, and you're encouraging them to repent and to prepare themselves for the coming of the Lord.

[4 : 37] And then a bunch of nicely dressed fellows from the religious big boys from Jerusalem arrive to check things out. And your message and your ministry is unauthorized by the religious leaders of Jerusalem.

And they approach you and they ask, who are you? And it's in that context I want us to read verse 19. And this is the testimony of John, John the Baptist, when the Jews were sent by the priests and the Levites from Jerusalem to ask, who are you?

And John is absolutely clear as to who he is not. He denies being the Christ, the Messiah. There is a messianic expectation that was running high in Israel as people longed for the deliverance from Roman rule, Roman rule and Roman oppression.

And based on these various promises in the Old Testament, Israel was expecting that one day God would send an especially great person, a mighty deliverer who would represent God in a unique way and usher in an age of righteousness and peace, including deliverance from any foreign rule.

And the question was, could John be him? Could he be the Messiah? And as if John the Gospel writer made sure that his readers understood that John the Baptist categorically denied that he was not the Christ, he says in verse 20, you could say it another way, I myself heard John the Gospel writer says, I myself heard him confess.

[6 : 20] He did not hesitate to deny. And this is what he confessed. He was not the Christ. I am not the Christ. And to continue on, then the question was asked by them.

Well then in verse 21, are you Elijah? Concerning Elijah, that was a good guess. When we look at the description of Elijah, both were rugged, shared the same diet.

They had the same fiery type message of judgment. And in Malachi, the last Old Testament prophet, about 400 years before John the Baptist shows up on the scene, he states in Malachi 4-5 that before a great and terrible day of the Lord, he would send Elijah a prophet to restore the hearts of fathers to their children and to the children to their fathers.

And so they guess, well, are you Elijah? And John emphatically says, no, I'm not Elijah. I am not the Christ.

And so then they come to in verse 21b, the option, well, are you the prophet? And this is coming from Deuteronomy 18, 15 likely. And where it says this, the Lord your God will raise up a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, and you shall listen to him.

[7 : 40] But what these individuals don't understand is that prophet that Deuteronomy, or that Moses is talking about in Deuteronomy. And this one here are one and the same as the Messiah.

And so John's answer is getting increasingly short. He just simply says, are you the prophet? No, I'm not the Messiah. I'm not the Christ. I'm not Elijah.

And I am not the prophet. What is an application before we move off of this? Many false religions have been started because people have convinced others that they are someone they are not.

In years past, there were people who convinced others that they are something. And today, unfortunately, even large members of people are following people because they convinced many, many of someone they are not.

You know I don't do this very often, but Joseph Smith was a false prophet, not a prophet of God. And sadly today, millions follow his writings and they are convinced that he was something he was never.

[8 : 53] Muhammad in the fifth century is not a prophet of God. Yet today, his writings and followers have hundreds of millions and many are deceived that he was something that he was never.

Before Joanna and Chip Gaines put a mark in Waco, Texas, there was a gentleman whose name was David Koresh.

And in 1993, he had a group of followers and all of them committed suicide together. And he was able to convince people that he was a prophet of God, if not the Messiah, and all of them died with the branched Davidians there in Waco, Texas.

What am I saying? It is absolutely important for you to know who you are not and who others are not in order for you to stay safe. Let me say it this way.

A lot of false religions and cult followings are populated by sincere church going people who are now deceived.

[10 : 00] How did that happen? Because sincere church going people estimated someone is something when they are not. And John the Baptist, what I love about him is he's clear.

I am not the Christ. No, I am not Elijah, nor am I the prophet that you're looking for. So then who is he? And that's exactly the question they ask in verse 22.

These folks sent from Jerusalem. So they said to him, well, who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?

So if you're not all of these things, these people, well, then who are you? I want us to see something in answering this question.

Who is John? Notice in verse 19, these Jews were sent in verse 19. And the Jews sent the priests and the Levites look with me in verse 22.

[11 : 00] So they, who are you? We have to give an answer to those whom we who sent us and then look down in verse 24. And now they had been sent from the Pharisees.

Well, who is John? He also is a sent one. And so I want us to look in verse six. There was a man of chapter one, verse six.

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. Who was John the Baptist? He was a sent one with a message of deliverance.

And so look with me in verse 23. And he said to them in answering, who are you? This is how John answers.

I am the one. I am the voice of the one crying out in the wilderness. Take straight the way of the Lord, as the prophet Isaiah said.

[11 : 55] So who is, we have to be clear who we are not. We also have to be clear who we are. And John, like John, we are sent ones with a message of, or a voice of deliverance.

Look with me. What is he saying in verse 23? I am the voice of the one crying in the wilderness. In the context where that found in Isaiah chapter 40, it is the return of the Jews from exile because of the sin of the people.

God sent Babylon to destroy Judah and take the people captive. In Isaiah 40, he is promising to deliver them from their slavery in Babylon.

And the voice is crying at the road that needs to be made for the exiles to return home, if you will. The steep grades God is going to deliver his people.

The steep grades need to be, the potholes need to be filled in. Everything needed to be made smooth because the Lord is coming and the voice and his deliverance is coming.

[12 : 55] So the voice is in essence saying, prepare yourself for God's deliverance or prepare yourself for God's salvation. That was John's role.

John's role as the voice was to prepare God's people for salvation that would come through Jesus Christ. John called people to repent, turn from their sin, believe in Jesus as their deliverer.

And the deliverer was not Rome. He was not going to deliver them necessarily from Rome, but from sin. And that is John's role. So he says, I am that voice in the wilderness crying out.

In verse 25, they have a question. Okay, John, well, if you're that voice in the wilderness crying out, then tell us in verse 25, why then are you baptizing?

If you are neither the Christ nor Elijah or the prophet. So John, why if you're none of these people and you are that voice in the wilderness, what gives you the right to baptize?

[14 : 00] What are you doing? And answer that question, I tire of answering questions when I've already answered them.

And John has just done that. He's already answered why he's baptizing, but they are not listening. His role was to prepare the people of Israel for salvation and coming to Jesus Christ.

John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. Baptism was a visible sign of repentance of one had turned from their sin and awaited by faith the promised Messiah.

His authority to baptize was simply an extension of his role as the voice crying out in the wilderness, prepare the way Jesus is coming.

He's already answered the question. He's already answered the question. And I want us to see how he answers this with great humility.

[15 : 09] And so John answered them in verse 26, I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know.

Even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie. And these things took place at Bethany across from the Jordan where John was baptizing.

I love that John knows who he is not. I love that John knows who he is. He is a sent one with a message or a voice of deliverance.

And secondly, he proclaims Christ with such great humility in his response. The tone of the religious leaders questions that they come from Jerusalem with is condescending and it's arrogant.

But John's response is one graced with humility. If I had been John and it's great, we're all grateful that I was not, because I would have been tempted to say, I will tell you now who I am.

[16 : 17] I am the last of the Old Testament prophets. My birth was declared to my father by an angel as he was serving in the temple. The Holy Spirit empowered me for this mission when I was still in Yudro in my mother's womb.

And the Son of God called me the greatest of all men who walk the face of the earth. Now who are you? But thankfully John is a whole lot more humble than I would have been.

And John answers very kindly in verses 26, 7 and 8, which I just read.

What is the application? Do you see yourself through the proper lens in God's economy?

What are you on earth for? To make a name for yourself? Oh, how much of our cultural wins encourage us to do just that?

[17 : 17] Make a name for yourself. Make it all about you. How much money do you make? Pursuing the American dream? How many followers or likes can you get on social media?

But none of those things are who you are. None of those things are who I am in God's economy. Who am I? I'm a sent one with a message of deliverance.

One who proclaims Christ with great humility. Believe in Christ for the forgiveness of sin. That is who you are as a believer in Christ.

We are not a victim to our circumstances, but we are a victim to sin whom Christ atoned for through His death on the cross for all who believe.

By the way, we lead our average weekly lives. Is it obvious to everyone that your role in God's economy is one as a sent one with the message and a voice of deliverance as one who proclaims Christ with great humility?

[18 : 30] Is that who you are? I'm grateful for John's example. He knows who he is not. He also knows who he is.

And then thirdly, the thing that John also knows is who Jesus is. In verse 29, evening passes, next morning arises, and the next day we're told in verse 29, he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

What does he know about Christ? What does John know about Christ? He knows who he isn't. He knows who he is, but he also knows who Jesus is and he declares, Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world upon seeing Christ coming toward him.

In this verse, it may be familiar to us and it may not shock us, but may I propose it should. That is a radical thing for John to say about Jesus, this young Galilean carpenter.

John said this to a bunch of Jewish people who for centuries had offered sacrificial lambs in the temple, especially during the Passover and the day of atonement.

[19 : 59] John is communicating this man Jesus is the one, the Messiah, who God has sent to be what all these thousands of lambs over a thousands of years have symbolized.

And he is not just the Lamb of God sent on behalf of Israel, but he is the Lamb of God sent for the whole world, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world for every nation, every tribe, every tongue.

His sacrifice takes away the sins of the world. Jesus took the full punishment that was deserving of our sin and substituted himself in our place.

God's anger and wrath toward sin was satisfied in his son's sacrifice on the cross. He died in our place. He became sin that we might receive the righteousness of God.

He died that we may live. And Peter, drawing from Isaiah 53 says it this way, he himself bore our sins in his body on the tree so that having died to sin, we might live for righteousness by his wounds.

[21 : 27] You have been healed. No one else is perfect. No one else is without sin who could satisfy God's wrath and be the perfect sacrifice.

Jesus alone did this and he meets the qualifications to die for sin. And so we read in John 10. No one takes it from me. Speaking of Jesus's life, no one takes it from me.

Jesus speaking, but I lay it down on my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it up again.

Jesus willingly died for sin. Salvation is found and no one else. He is the way, the truth and the life. No one goes to the father except through him.

To be an effective witness of Christ, that's what this is all about. We need to be clear about who Jesus is and Jesus is the sacrificial lamb who alone can atone for sin.

[22 : 27] One of someone who I've appreciated from afar is Charles Spurgeon. He is one of 17 children. Nine of his siblings died in infancy.

He was, because of the economic hardship in England at the time, his family asked the grandfather to raise him.

He had, and his grandfather was a godly man. There was no formal education. He never went to college. However, though he read much and he read much from the Puritans.

He, at the age of 19 years old, imagine, Fourth Memorial Church has a new pastor, 19 years old. Well, that 19-year-old took a famed church in London, the New Park Street Chapel, and it experienced incredible growth.

Thousands and thousands and thousands of people came to faith in Christ. He served there in that church for 38 years.

[23 : 34] But he was saved at the age of 15, assumed the pastorate at 19, got saved when he was 15 years old. At 15 years of age on a snowy day in Colchester, England, on his way to somewhere else, because of the snow getting, the storm getting too bad, he turned into an attend a church, a small Methodist chapel.

In the church that day, it was only 12 to 15 people. Because of the snowstorm, the pastor couldn't make it. And so a layperson ascended the pulpit and began to preach God's word.

And this is what the man who preached that day that Charles Spurgeon was saved. He said to, in the middle of the sermon, he pointed Charles Spurgeon out, sitting in the congregation, one of only 12 to 15.

And he said, young man, you look miserable. And you will always be miserable, miserable in life and miserable in death if you do not obey this text.

But you need to obey the words of Christ and be saved from your sins. And the congregation, the preacher continued and said, young man, look to Jesus, who alone died for your sin and believe in him.

[25 : 00] Now, I don't think any of us would forget that sermon. And that day, Charles Spurgeon placed his faith in Christ for the forgiveness of sin.

And today's salvation is offered in the same way. Jesus is the sacrificial lamb who takes away the sins of the world to all who believe in his person, his work on the cross.

It is likely the most important text that we have for today, that verse, verse 29. And it would be one that we all could memorize just this week.

And the next day, he saw Jesus coming toward him and he said, behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Let us commit that to memory this week.

In addition to knowing who Jesus is, the sacrificial lamb who alone can atone for one's sin, what else does John know about Jesus?

[26 : 03] Jesus is the greatest of men because he is the eternal God. Look with me in verses 30 and 31. This is he who said, of whom I said, after me comes a man who ranks before me because he is before me.

I myself did not know him, but for this person I came baptizing with water that he might be revealed to Israel. Notice or in Matthew 11, 11, Jesus says of John the Baptist.

And I don't have a slide for this, but Matthew 11, 11, I want you to listen to the words that Jesus said of John the Baptist. He said, truly I say to you, among those born of women, there has arisen no greater, no one greater than John the Baptist.

This esteemed John the Baptist as no one greater born of women than anyone than John the Baptist. And yet this man, John the Baptist says of Christ in verse 30, after me comes a man who ranks before me because he was before me.

What is he saying? Comes a man who ranks before me because he was before me. This commends John the Baptist as being no greater than John.

[27 : 27] I'm sorry, Jesus commends John the Baptist. No one is greater than John the Baptist. Yet John says, after me comes a man, meaning John was born prior to Jesus, who ranks before him.

John the Baptist's fame was to supersede the fame of Jesus. John's priority stems from the pre-existence, the eternal God, the who is Jesus, when he says he is before me.

And I will share with you later as far as, let me stop. Let me say it this way.

When John the Baptist says he is before me, he is alluding to, if you will, from last week everything in the box. All of creation is in the box. Remember Jesus is the one who created all things.

So put everything that's created in the box. We have the sun, the moon, people, mountains, fireflies, and eaters. Put them all in here. And then we close the box.

[28 : 29] Everything that's been created is now in the box. Nothing exists outside the box except for God. And so John the Baptist is saying, before I was, he existed.

Before time, Jesus as the Son of God has always existed, and I am here, John sees his role to say, I want to testify to him who existed before me.

He is, Jesus is the greatest of men because he is the eternal God. Look with me in verse 30, 32.

What else did John know of Jesus? Jesus was filled with and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Verse 32. It was at Jesus's, when we read in 32, and John bore witness, I saw the Spirit descended from heaven like a dove and it remained on him.

It is at Jesus's baptism that one witnesses the Trinity, the members of the Godhead, Father, Son, Holy Spirit. And not in this passage, but in Matthew, we read that as the Spirit of God is coming down on Jesus, we hear from heaven the words saying, this is my Son and whom I am well pleased.

[29 : 50] So you hear a voice from the Father. You see the Holy Spirit descending like a dove on the Son of God. It's one of the places in the New Testament where you can see all three members of the Godhead at Jesus's baptism present.

Then of the Messiah in Isaiah, I want us to look here. What is this event? How important is it for the Spirit of God to descend upon the Son of God?

Read with me here in Isaiah. What is this an indication of from the Old Testament perspective as a Jewish person would have been familiar with this text? We read, the Spirit of Lord will rest on him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel, the strength and the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of God.

When the Spirit comes, it will indicate he is the Messiah and the Holy Spirit will come upon him to empower him for ministry. Secondly, we read this in Isaiah, behold my servant whom I uphold my chosen one, the Messiah, in whom my soul delights.

I have put my Spirit upon him. He will bring forth justice to the nations. When you see the Spirit come upon this person, he it is an indication, he is my son, I am his God, he is the Messiah.

[31 : 11] This event that the Spirit filled and empowered Jesus for ministry is crucial. For the furtherance of the Christ as being the Messiah, evidence of that is the one sent by God.

To be clear, Jesus was not destitute or absent of the Holy Spirit before his baptism, but the revelation of the Spirit coming on Jesus and the voice from heaven affirming that Jesus is the Son of God, the beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased was the revelation of the Trinity at the outset of Jesus' ministry.

John's statement that the Spirit remained upon him in verse 32 shows us that this was not a temporary arrangement, but that Jesus' entire ministry would be characterized by the fullness of the Spirit by living as a man dependent upon the fullness of God's Spirit.

In this way, Jesus showed us how to live when we are commanded to be filled with the Spirit. In verse 33, we see also who John, he knows that who he is not, he knows who he is, he also knows who Jesus is, and of Jesus he testifies that Jesus is the one who baptizes with the Spirit.

We see this in verse 33. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is the one who baptizes you with the Holy Spirit.

[32 : 51] So John is saying, Hey, I'm just baptizing with water. That one who you saw the Holy Spirit descend upon, that is the one who's going to baptize you with the Holy Spirit.

So he's making a distinction. John's baptizing in water, which is symbolic, contrasted, Jesus' baptism with the Holy Spirit in a very real way.

Jesus promised his disciples that it was to their advantage that he go away so that he could send the Holy Spirit to them to dwell upon them.

Secondly, the promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples and empowered them to bear witness to the risen Christ.

And this is a fulfillment of the Old Testament. There is a debate among Christians as to whether all believers receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit at conversion or should we seek a second blessing?

[33 : 52] And this is often in charismatic and Pentecostal circles. I like J.C. Ryle when he argues that baptism of the Spirit refers to the Spirit imparting new life at the moment of regeneration.

And I agree with him. Ryle told the carnal Christians in 1 Corinthians 12, 13 that by the one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greek, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

When God saves, he imparts new life through the Spirit and he comes to dwell in us. Then pictures a total identification with Christ and an abundant supply of the Spirit for every need.

So I believe it is incorrect to teach that believers are to seek out a baptism, to seek to be baptized in the Spirit.

But I would also be wrong if we do not continually seek the Spirit's fullness and greater measure. The baptism of the Spirit is once a for all event at conversion when he imparts new life to us for all who believe in his name and he comes to dwell in us.

[35 : 08] But the filling of the Spirit is a not for once for all deal, is not a once for all deal. We need to repeatedly be filled with the Spirit to resist temptation, to grow in godliness, to be full of the Spirit and to bear witness of Christ.

John MacArthur once was asked why he needed to be filled with the Spirit over and over and over again and he responded, because I leak.

Enough said. Last we need to be clear who we are not and who others are not. We need to be clear who we are and who we are in Christ and we need to be clear who Jesus is.

And the last thing that we read here in verse 34 is Jesus is the Son of God. When verse 40 34 we read and I have seen and I have borne witness that this is the Son of God.

Jesus is the Son of God or the chosen one of God. Is the eternal Son of God always existing as a Son of God? Some false religious systems don't agree that Jesus is the as the Son of God has always existed as the eternal Son of God.

[36 : 43] I want to be a little more clear here. There are individuals who will walk in neighborhoods and knock on doors and they will talk about the Son of God on your doorstep.

And in their understanding of who Jesus is they will say the name Jesus Christ, they will say the name Jesus and they will even say he is the Son of God and they will agree with you on that. However, what they mean when they say the Son of God, they are having their mind that he is a progeny of God.

That is God the Father had relations with someone somehow and born to that or as an offspring or progeny of that union was the Son of God.

So they don't believe that Jesus is co-equal with the Father and is God, eternally existed as God. That's not what they believe, but you're using the same language and I want us to be clear what John is saying when he says he is the Son of God.

We will get to this in a bit, but the Jews recognize that Jesus when he called the Father God and his own Father, they understood that Jesus was equating himself as God because we read in John 5.18 this.

[38 : 12] This is why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him. Why? Because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, speaking of Jesus, but he was calling God his own Father, making himself equal to God.

They understood the religious leaders of the first century. They understood when he said that is my Father, he is making himself equal to the Father and that was an anathema to them and they were going to kill him for it.

And so when we read from John and says he is the Son of God, he's not just saying he's a progeny of God. He is co-equal with the Father, he is God and he wants, John the Baptist wants everyone that's receiving baptism who saw this one amazing offense where the Holy Spirit descended on the Son and he says he is the Son of God.

He is not saying he's a progeny of God, he's saying he is God and he's worthy of living for and your life and I'm telling you repent and that's John's message.

And it's the same message for us today and it's the same thing we can consent as to who Jesus is. He is a sacrificial lamb who alone can atone for one sin.

[39 : 29] Jesus is the greatest of men because he is the eternal God. Jesus was filled with and empowered by the Holy Spirit. He is the one who baptized with the Spirit and he is the Son of God and may those things we know about Christ as well.

And you say okay Scott, well why is this so important? What's the relevance of this? Not to steal from whoever preaches a passage later in the book of John, but we will find that John the Baptist, this greatest of all men who lived, wavered in his faith.

He found himself imprisoned and they began to question some things. Here's this man who declares he knows who Christ is and yet there's a crisis of faith that John will have at a later time.

And so why is it so important to know who we are not? Why is it so important to understand who we are in the economy of God? And why is it so important to know who Jesus is?

Because there's a time in our lives where we may have a crisis of faith and we will have to go back and remind ourselves, oh Scott, but don't forget who died for your sin.

[40 : 47] Don't forget who alone could do that for you. Don't forget in whom you stand righteous before God because of what he has done for you, not of your own works. Don't forget that he has chosen you.

Don't forget that he is the Son of God, the co-eternal with God. Don't forget you and I need to be reminded of those things because crises, suffering, times of difficulties come and sometimes we can question these things and it's good to be reminded.

Let's pray. And we thank you that you are the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Lord, I look forward to now singing songs that declare these things that are true of you and we get to remind ourselves of that which is true of you.

I'm grateful to read the text today and be reminded of that which is true. We know times come where perhaps our faith waivers.

Thank you for the reminder today. Who we are not, who we are in your economy and who you are and we desire to live for you.

[42 : 07] Thank you Lord for being the Lamb of God who has taken away the sins of the world to all who believe. Amen.