

The Last Prophet's Cry

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[0 : 00] Please remain standing for the reading of God's Word. We're preaching through the Gospel of John, verse by verse. And today we continue in John chapter 1, beginning at verse 14.

It's John 1, 14 through 37. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son, from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John bore witness about Him and cried, This was He of whom I said, He who comes after me ranks before me, because He was before me.

For from His fullness we have all received grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

No one has ever seen God. The only God who is at the Father's side, He has made Him known. Verse 19.

[1 : 08] And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask Him, Who are you? He confessed and did not deny, but confessed, I am not the Christ.

And they asked Him, What then, are you Elijah? He said, I am not. Are you the prophet? And He answered, No. So they said to Him, Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us.

What do you say about yourself? He said, I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, As the prophet Isaiah said.

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked Him, Then why are you baptizing, If you are neither the Christ, Nor Elijah, nor the prophet? John answered them, 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.

These things took place in Bethany, Across the Jordan, Where John was baptizing. Verse 29, The next day, He saw Jesus coming toward him and said, Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world.

[2 : 31] This is He of whom I said, After me comes a man who ranks before me, Because he was before me. I myself did not know Him, But for this purpose I came baptizing with water, That He might be revealed to Israel.

And John bore witness, I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, And it remained on Him. I myself did not know Him, But He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, He on whom you see my Spirit descend and remain, This is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.

And I have seen and have borne witness That this is the Son of God. Verse 35, The next day again, John was standing with two of his disciples, And he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, Behold the Lamb of God.

The two disciples heard him say this, And they followed Jesus. Let's pray. Father, thank you for how you have revealed yourself to us, The Son of God, The light of life.

Lord, we are blind by nature. Cause us today to lift our gaze, To behold Jesus in His glory, Full of grace and truth.

[4 : 06] And help us to see Him today, Lord, As the Lamb of God, Who takes away our sin. Father, we need Your grace upon grace.

And we ask that You will dispense Your grace, Even now, Through the preaching of Your Word. So that You will be glorified among this dear congregation.

And that the name of Jesus will be exalted here and to all the nations. We rely on Your help with every breath, O Spirit of God.

We pray. Amen. Amen. The last prophet's crime. I want to talk to you today about this last Old Covenant prophet, John the Baptizer, And what he was crying out.

Now, the first 18 verses of John chapter 1, including last week, Verses 1 through 18, It's what is considered the prologue. It's setting up the themes of the entire gospel of John.

[5 : 10] And we read last week, Verses 6 and 7. Take a look there. 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.

And now skip down to verse 15. We're told, John bore witness about him and cried out, This is he of whom I said, He comes after me, But he ranks before me because he was before me.

And then the glorious promise, From his fullness, The fullness of Jesus Christ, We have received grace upon grace. How could that be? Look at verse 17.

Because God is Spirit, And no one has seen God, Except the only God. Jesus Christ himself is God. Who is at the Father's side, The Father's bosom, The Father's intimate counsel, At his right hand.

And he has come to earth to make him known. So the last prophet, John the Baptist, As we read here, He bore witness that Jesus is God, Sent to reveal the Father.

[6 : 19] And what does he reveal about the Father? That God is full of grace and truth, Shown to you in Jesus. And that from the fullness of Christ, As the Lamb of God, We receive grace upon grace.

That's why John the Baptist cried out, Behold, Look at verse 29, Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world. And look again at verse 35, John was standing with two disciples, And Jesus walked by, And it just bubbled out of him, Couldn't hold it in his lips, When he saw the Lord, He said, Behold, The Lamb of God.

John the Baptist was smitten, With Jesus Christ. And I believe that, The Lamb of God, Is the unique insight, The unique and special contribution, Of the gospel of John, The witness of John the baptizer.

And what John the Baptist cried out, Stuck with the apostle John, For the rest of his life and ministry. The reason I've come to this conclusion, Is because the phrase, The Lamb of God, Is very rare, Surprisingly rare.

It's only used in three different stories, In the Old Testament. The first one is Genesis 22, God promises to provide, A lamb. I will provide, The lamb, As a substitute, For Abraham and Isaac.

[7 : 46] And then we see, One reference in the book of, First Chronicles, When King Josiah is bringing, Reformation. And God is reviving, The faith of the nation, Under King Josiah, Who feared God.

And then finally, There's a cluster of three references, In Ezra, When God is again, Bringing reformation, To the nation of Israel. They're beholding, The glory of God once again, They are confessing sin.

And in each of those cases, We're told that, Hundreds and thousands, Of Passover lambs, Were brought, For the worship of a true God, As substitutionary, Sacrifices.

Their blood would be spilled, So that the Israelites, Through repentance, Would live. In the New Testament, The phrase, Lamb of God, Is used a total, Of eleven times, But only by one, Biblical author.

And that's John, The apostle John himself. Two of those eleven times, Are right here, We just read them. The other nine times, Are all in the book, Of Revelation, Also by John. Isn't that interesting?

[8 : 50] Nowhere else is that phrase, Used in this way. So that's what I want to talk to you, About today. The last prophets cry. And I hope that by, The time we're finished, You will see, What was the meaning, Of behold, The lamb of God.

And what that means, That you, Can now receive grace, Upon grace. Don't you need, Grace, Afresh today. If you're like me, You need it in your own heart, Before God, I need grace, Upon grace.

See the gospel, Of the lamb of God, And his blood, To wash away sins, It's for Christians too. It goes out to the whole world, As both an invitation, And a command, Behold the lamb of God.

Do you need, Grace upon grace, Flowing from the lamb of God, Do you need that, For your own soul, For your conscience, Before a holy God? You need it in your marriage, Your relationship, With your parents perhaps, With your brother, Or your sister.

We need grace, Upon grace, As a congregation, With one another, Don't we? So who was, This last prophet? Who was John the baptizer?

[10:05] Well, We know, From the broader context, Of the gospels, That John, Was from, The Judean elite. Yes, John were told, In Luke 1, Was born to the priestly tribe, His father was a high priest, So he's from the tribe of Levi, And he was, God fearing parents, Zachariah, And Elizabeth, They kept God's law, And they raised, Their son, John the baptizer, In that way, In the capital city of Jerusalem, Where is that ministered?

Now Jerusalem, Is equivalent, With God's holiness, And law, The law goes forth, From Jerusalem. Galilee is further north, So you can picture, The nation of Israel, Cut north to south, By the Jordan river, Major cliffs, And valley going down, To the Jordan river, At the north, Is the sea of Galilee, Around the sea of Galilee, There would have been contact, With the Greek cities, And really trade, Going east and west, And from the south, So the sea of Galilee, Became a cosmopolitan hub, And the people of Israel, Had been scattered, A long time ago, Commingled and mixed, Under the rule of the Assyrians, So Galilee, Would have been a hub, For the people of God, Being scattered, Among the nations, Further south, Off the main trade road, Jerusalem, Tucked in like a fortress, Among the rocks, Very conservative, Very secluded, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Represented the power, Of the nation, As they were seeking, To keep the covenant law, Of God, With their nation, John the baptizer, Grew up in that conservative, Capital city of Jerusalem, He would have had access, Through his dad, To expert, Old testament, History, Law, And interpretation, Of prophecy, But in Mark chapter 1, We're told that John was clothed, With camel hair, And he had a leather belt, And he ate locusts and honey, Dwelling in the wilderness, Like a wild man, With long hair, For being a Nazarite as well, Now Jesus, By contrast, Grew up, Not in the big capital city, Nor around Galilee, He grew up tucked in, Kind of in the cliffs, That would overlook, The Galilean trade routes, In the city of Nazareth, And John, We're told, Was the last one, Coming now, To prosecute the nation of Israel, Calling sinners to repentance, For breaking God's covenant law, And John was sent from God, We just read, Verse 6 of chapter 1 of John here, A man, Is what it was, A man sent from God, To bear witness, About the light, That all, Might believe through him,

So he's proclaiming, A gospel of repentance, Turn from your sin, Repent, Come to the waters, Of repentance, And all, Are both commanded and invited, To turn back to God, As John prepares the way, For the Messiah, And John was baptizing, Why?

Well, Look at verse 33, He said, I didn't know who the Messiah would be, But God sent me to baptize with water, And told me what to watch for, Now in Acts chapter 19, Verse 4, Paul says, John baptized with, Baptism of repentance, Telling the people to believe in the one, Who was to come after him, That is Jesus Christ, So his baptism was one of repentance, Okay, So what can we conclude, Who was this last prophet, Who was John, John was a man, Grippled by the glory of God, His back was turned, To the powerful Jerusalem, And he was not living, For the comforts of this world, He was trusting, In what God had revealed to him, And he was there, Crying out from the wilderness, That glory, Glorious invitation, And command, Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away your sin, Preparing the way for the Messiah, Now I want to draw a contrast, Between his audience, On one hand we have those who believed,

[13:55] Through John the baptizer, On the other hand we have, A smaller group, That John refused to baptize, So first, Who were those who believed, Through John the baptizer, Look at verse 7, He was sent to bear witness, About the light, That all might believe, Through him, Those who did not believe, The witness of John the baptist, Were hardening their hearts, Because the invitation, Went to them as well, And by rejecting, That call to repentance, They hardened their hearts, Toward God, And they brought the judgment of God, Upon themselves, But there were many, Who did believe through John, Why were there so many people, First of all, Wandering through, This wilderness road, Along the Jordan river, Have you thought about that, How could there be crowds, Way out there, In the wilderness, Being baptized, In the muddy, Jordan river waters, Well most likely, According to, Context clues, That scholars have deduced, That this would have been, In the autumn, And there are, True believers,

Coming from all 12 tribes, That have been scattered, They're all coming back, To Jerusalem, For this once a year, Festival, There are actually, Three festivals, That would be taking place, And there's a major trade road, That goes along, The Jordan river, So as they're traveling, They can see, John standing in the waters, And a crowd gathering around him, And nothing draws a crowd, Like a crowd, So they want to go see, And hear this message, And he calls them, To repent of their sin, And God prepared them, Because they were already, Traveling to Jerusalem, With that exact

purpose, They were coming to celebrate, These three feasts, And, What they were, Quickly was this, Number one, The feast of trumpets, Number two, The day of atonement, And then number three, The feast of tabernacles, Now the feast of trumpets, We're told in Leviticus 23, Is that in the seventh month, On the first day of the month, That would be in October, You shall observe a day of solemn rest, A memorial proclaimed, With blasts of trumpets, And it would be a holy convocation, Gathering the people of God,

The true worshipers, Near the presence of their king, And we're told that John, Was like a trumpet now, Announcing the arrival of King Jesus, Who would bring God's rest, The second festival, The day of atonement, Would be the annual sacrifice, Performed by the high priest, And there would be both, The goat whose blood would be slain, To pay the penalty of sin, And the second goat, The scapegoat, Who would be sent, Burying the sins of the nation, Far away, Into the wilderness, With the wild beasts, The third festival, Was the feast of tabernacles, And that was a reminder, That if you belong to God, You are a sojourner, This world, This age, Is like a wilderness to you, But God dwells with you, In a tent, He tabernacles in this hard, Life in this age, With his pilgrim people, So those are the three festivals, That people were coming to celebrate, And in Mark chapter 1, We read that, All the country of Judea,

And all Jerusalem, Were going out to him, And were being baptized, By John in the Jordan, Confessing their sins, See in Luke chapter 1, An angel had told Zacharias, John the baptizer's dad, What would take place, In the life of his son, And it all was coming true, See it was fulfilled, That this man, Was now full of the Holy Spirit, He was great, In the eyes of God, In Luke 1, We read that, He will turn many, Of the children of Israel, To the Lord their God, And he will go before him, In the spirit and power of Elijah, So he's dressed, And living in a way, That resembles Elijah, Why? To turn the hearts, Of the fathers, To the children, And of the disobedient, To the wisdom of the just, See those in the old covenant, Would now, Be brought back, In repentance, To a saving, Faith in God, Why?

[17:51] Because he was making ready, For the Lord, For Jesus Christ, A people prepared, If you have beheld, The glory of Jesus, It's because God, Has prepared you, As his people, And you need to praise God, For all the things, He has brought into your life, To bring you to that point, Those things that have been a blessing, And those things that have been, Extremely hard, But have driven you down, To your knees, Praise God, That you belong to a people, Prepared for the Lord, And in the fullness of time, These true believers, Who loved God's law, Who gathered to worship him, And have their sins forgiven, They are now getting to hear a voice, Crying from the wilderness, Clearly anointed by the spirit of God, After 400 years of silence, God has revealed now, Once again, The hope of a Messiah, Who will make things right, Do you believe, John the baptizer's cry, From the wilderness, That there is,

A lamb, From God, God himself, Sent to you, To take away, Sin, See, John was baptizing, He was plunging, Sinners low, Into the muddy waters, Of the Jordan River, And he was lifting them up, By saying, Behold, The lamb of God, Who takes away sin, But John, Discriminated, He discerned, And he was selective, On who he would, Perform, Such a baptism for, He would not baptize, A certain group of people, In Matthew chapter 3, We read that, When John saw many of the Pharisees, And Sadducees, Coming to his baptism, He said to them, You brood of vipers, See, A viper was an unclean animal, And these were, Extreme law keepers, And vipers have venom, That comes out of their mouth, That's how he saw, These law keepers, From Jerusalem, You brood of vipers, Who warned you, To flee from the wrath to come, See, His call goes out as a command, Judgment is coming, And here's the command, To those vipers, Bear fruit, In keeping with repentance, See, Their lives, As righteous as they wanted to be, On the outside, They were spewing venom, They were not bearing a fruit, That only the Holy Spirit, Can produce in the life, Of a true believer, After the Holy Spirit, Has brought you low, In repentance, And these men were proud, And unrepentant, Now look at our text, Verse 19, We're told the Jews, They sent priests, And Levites, Now priests, They were like inquisitors, They were masters of the law, That could drill down, And try to expose, The error, Of a man like John the baptizer, The Levites were there, Most likely as bodyguards, Like the muscle, They were there to crush a riot, If anyone wanted to get tough,

With the lawyers, They were sent from Jerusalem, To ask John the baptizer, Who are you? So these Jews, The word Jew, It's better translated, Judeans, So those from the southern part, Most likely from the capital, Will be called Jews, But it's really the Judean elite, So some of the Judean

elite, Might have actually grown up, With John the baptizer, He's 30 years old right now, Just like Christ, And these men were also at the peak of their careers, So they said to him, Who are you? We need to give an answer, To those who sent us, What do you say about yourself? You can read between the lines, John the baptizer, You know what you're doing here, You know who sent us, Be careful with the words you choose, See these Judean elite, Were from the powerful elitist capital city of Jerusalem, And their job was to enforce the law of God, Verse 17 confirms that the law was given through Moses, And the law was still in effect, John the baptizer was a prophet under such a law, The Judean elite, They abused the keys to men's consciences, And they became masters of manipulation, Using fear tactics, When that goes on, Especially in the name of God, You know these are not baptized men, These are men who do not have the Holy Spirit, Who behave in such a way, In John chapter 9, We see the damage such men would continue to make, Many were told, [22 : 26] Fear the Judean elite, These Jews, For the Jews had already agreed, That if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, He was to be put out of the synagogue, They controlled the synagogue, Where the word of God would have been read, And in John chapter 12, We're told that many, Even of the authorities believed in Jesus Christ, But for fear of the Pharisees, They did not confess it, So that they would not be put out of the synagogue, The Judean elite did have this authority, To shut down and punish false religious leaders, Deuteronomy 18 says, The prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name, That I have not commanded him to speak, Says God, That same prophet shall die, Now that's the words of God, And it's a good warning against false prophets today as well, So these Judean elites, That John refused to baptize, They brokered man's glory, John 12 tells us, They loved the glory that comes from man,

More than the glory that comes from God, Here are these religious leaders, Who loved the glory of man, More than the glory of God, No wonder there's such a need for reformation, In the name of Jesus, A church gathers for the glory of man, Beware the judgment of God is coming, To those who do not bear fruit, In keeping with repentance, And use the name of the Lord, For their own vain glory, Look at verse 24 in our text, These men had been sent from the Pharisees, The powerful, ruthless elite, And John the baptizer would have known very well, What that group of men was willing, And able to do, Now verse 20, How will John respond to these men, Look at verse 20, We're told John confessed, And did not deny but confessed, I am not the Christ, What he wanted them to remember and know,

Is verse 29, Look at it one more time, Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away your sin, John, This was his message, I am a voice crying in the wilderness, But Jesus is the word, The wisdom, And the truth of heaven, I was on death row like you, But he is God's firstborn, His only son, Who became your Passover lamb, In exchange for your life, I am the plowman, That prepares the way, He rides on the king's chariot, I'm the moon, Just a faint reflection, But he is the sun itself, I tell you, That blood is on your hands, Condemning you, By the law of God's judgment, For breaking his covenant, Jesus, Is the Lamb of God, Who poured out his blood, As a cleansing for your sin, See those who were proud, Who would not be baptized, Not be brought low, Into the brown water, Of the river Jordan, They were standing, Trying to stand before holy God, By their own strength, Their own works, As if they were, Anywhere close to good enough, You stand, And you're dead, You behold Christ, As your savior, And he rescues you, I want to illustrate this with you, For you with something I read recently, There was a kayaker, On the Colorado river, Who hit debris, Fell off, And tried to stand up, In the big river, White water rapids, By standing, Her feet sunk under a rock, In the mix of sticks and debris, And her foot could not get loose, It became trapped, And this is what, River rafters call a foot trap, It's the most dangerous thing, That could possibly happen, To someone on a moving river,

So their training is this, When you're on a river, If you fall in, Wearing a life vest, You keep your nose, And your toes, Up, Out of the water, Do not try to stand, Let that river just wash you by, Do not try to stand up in it, Because if you get in a foot trap, You'll become a casualty, In the year 2020, 34 people died, In rivers in Colorado, We're on track this summer, I just read this week, To even break that record, So if you're not supposed to stand up, In a river when you fall out, What do you do?

[27 : 04] You need someone else, To rescue you, You are there, Looking up, Not standing on your own, Intentionally keeping your feet up, Someone has to come in a raft, Or a boat, They grab a hold of you, By a life vest, They plunge you deep into the water, Like a baptism, And they lift you up, And the buoyancy of the life vest, Shoots you up out of the water, On top of them, And you lay there on

top of themselves, So that's how you get rescued, Out of the water, Do you see the picture of baptism, It's a person who's finally stopped, Trying to stand up on their own, Because they realize, It's a foot trap, And instead you say, I need my savior, Jesus Christ, To plunge me deep, Into the water, So that he can lift me up, Onto himself, That's what John the baptizer, Was crying out, Well that's who this last prophet was, And his cry was, Behold, The lamb of God, Who takes away, Your sin, And I just want to open up for you, What I think he meant by that, What he had in mind, Look at verse 23, I am the voice of one, Crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way, Of the Lord, As the prophet Isaiah said, So turn to Isaiah, Chapter 40, What did the prophet Isaiah say? The context for what John, Cries out, From the wilderness, Is most likely, What he was meditating on, Because of his upbringing, In Jerusalem, With access to God's word, And the scroll, And the parents, Who loved the Lord, And knew his law, And as a Nazarite, He was very devout, This is what John the baptizer, Was meditating on, And I just want you to hear, The tone of his message, Look at verses 1 and 2, God says, Comfort my people, Comfort, Says your God, Speak tenderly, To Jerusalem, And cry to her, That her warfare is ended, And her iniquity, Now iniquity means, A intentional, Rebellious, Grotesque, Sin against God, But her iniquity is, Pardoned, That she has received, From the Lord's hand, Double, For all her sins, What a glorious promise, That's the, That's the tone,

That the prophet, John the baptizer, Is crying out, And we know, Both from, Commentators like, John Calvin, And Matthew Poole, The Puritan, In verse 15, Look at verse 15, When John the baptist says, That he is, Bearing witness, And crying out, In the original language, In the Greek, Those verbs, Are given in the present active, I am bearing witness, I am crying out, That's how the apostle John, Describes the testimony, The life and the message, Of John the baptizer, It's still, Crying out today, Why could, Israel, And Jerusalem, Have hope?

It's because, The enemies, Were conquered, See, By this point, John the baptizer, Has already seen, The spirit, Descend and remain, On Jesus, He knows, Jesus is the Christ, And he knows, Therefore, That because the spirit, Immediately drove Jesus, Into the wilderness, And Jesus came back, The next day, And he declares this of him, So John the baptizer, Knows that, The kingdom of God, Is being inaugurated, We know, That Jesus, Had already conquered, Sin and Satan, In the desert, He had withstood temptation, And he was marching now, For three years, On his path to live, And ultimately die, To conquer death itself, So what did, John's baptism mean?

[30 : 57] Well the biblical theology, Of baptism, Would have represented, Cleansing, Judgment, And new creation, Cleansing in the ceremonial law, If you're a leper, A levi, Or a priest for example, You had to wash your body, Before you could be, Declared ceremonially clean, And able to be near, The presence of God, And of worship, It also would have meant, Judgment, And when God brings judgment, Through water, There's always redemptive, Judgment, It's redemption, Through judgment, Think for example, Noah and his family, Were redeemed, As the judgment of God, On a wicked world, Came with the flood, And I think again, The people of God, Were redeemed through the red sea, That God parted, As the judgment of the waters, Came upon Pharaoh, And his army, Chasing down God's people, And then new creation, That image of, The spirit of God, Hovering over the waters, In the book of Genesis, One and two, And then that image later, Of Noah, Sending out a dove, That hovered, And remained, Knowing that the waters of judgment,

Had been receding, The spirit went out, And remained, Just as the spirit of God, Descended over Jesus Christ, And remained, On him, That's what John's baptism, Would have brought to mind, For this audience, Cleansing, Redemption through judgment, And new creation, Well what did John's confession mean?

What would have been on everyone's mind, As they came for these three feasts? So picture a family, Marching down this trade road, Along the Jordan, What are we going to do dad? What does it mean? The dad said, Oh you're going to love it, The first thing you need to listen for, Is a trumpet, When you hear the trumpet, It's calling us to come together, To rest, And know that God, Will forgive our sins, And that he will dwell with us, Now look at verse 29, In our text today, In verse 29, We read that the next day, He saw Jesus coming toward him, Now 40 days earlier, He would have, Already known that the spirit, Had descended and remained on him, Mark 1 says that, God's spirit drove Jesus, Immediately into the wilderness, And after Jesus had his victory over Satan, He returned, Back to the same spot, So when John declares now, In verse 29, Behold the Lamb of God, To take away the sin of the world, What would he have had in mind?

Well the day of atonement, There would have been the goat, Whose blood would be drained, For the sin of the people, And then this is what was said, Of the scapegoat, Leviticus 16 says, Lay both hands, On the head of the scapegoat, The living goat, And confess over it, All the iniquities, Of the people of Israel, All their transgressions, And all their sins, And he shall put them, On the head of the goat, And send it away, Into the wilderness, By the hand of a man, Who is in ready, John the baptizer, Was the man, The Levite prepared, Left in ready, To put his hands on this goat, And send him into the wilderness, By the spirit of God, This goat shall bear, All their iniquities, On itself, To a remote area, Far away from God, In the dwelling of God's people, And he shall let the goat, Go free in the wilderness, Well the feast of tabernacles, Was reminding them, You are sojourners, In the wilderness of this age, God dwells among you, As a pilgrim people,

[34 : 29] Now I want you to turn, To numbers 29, For each one of these three feasts, The people have a very special command, It's the same command, Given three times, Once for each feast, Look at numbers chapter 29, First at verse 5, Numbers 29 5, What you need to bring, For the feast of the trumpets, Is verse 5, One male goat, For a sin offering, To make atonement for you, Now look at verse 11, What you need to bring, For the feast, This holy convocation, The day of atonement, Is one male goat, For a sin offering, And now look at verse 38, What about for the, Feast of the tabernacle, Also bring one male goat, For a sin offering, So as the people gathered, They knew this, God requires of me, A perfect sacrifice,

As an offering, To pay the price, Of my sin, I cannot be forgiven, The feast of atonement, I cannot rest, With God's gathered kingdom, The feast of trumpets, Nor can I enjoy, The blessing of being, In his presence, The feast of tabernacles, Without the blood, Of an acceptable substitute, That's what John the baptizer, Who knew the law so well, And all those that God had prepared, To hear this call to repentance, That's what they had in mind, When John declares, Behold, That's him, It's the lamb of God, Hebrews 9.22 says, This is not just for that people, In Israel, This is for you church, Indeed under the law, Almost everything is purified with blood, And this is what still remains true, For all of us, Without the shedding of blood, There is no forgiveness of sins, Jesus said that himself, In Matthew 26.28, This is my blood of the covenant, Which is poured out for many, For the forgiveness of sins, In Ephesians 1.7, We're told, In him, We, The church, Have redemption, Through his blood, The forgiveness of our trespasses, According to the riches of his grace, And that's what John beheld, And he confessed Christ, Also by way of contrast, With his own ministry, See, The goal of a rabbi, Was always to graduate, And send out your own disciples, And John the baptizer has said, As these Pharisees approach, See, They have their own disciples, And their own disciples, Won't even take off their sandals, And carry them, That's too lowly of a task, They have special slaves, That follow them around, Just to handle their sandals, And John the baptizer says, You think my ministry is full of the spirit, Look at Christ,

Because I'm not even worthy, To be the lowest of the slaves, And with his own disciples, He had no interest in graduating them, Out of his school, Or his discipleship, Look at verse 35, The next day, John was standing with two of his disciples, And he looked at Jesus, As he walked by and said, Behold the Lamb of God, And the two disciples heard him say this, And surely they saw his face, They saw his bewilderment, At the glory of Christ, The Son of God himself, And the two disciples followed Jesus, This would have been an extreme sign, Of deference, And giving superiority to one much, Much greater, He draws the contrast with baptism, You think my ministry is powerful? Look at verse 26, He says, I just baptize with water, But among you stands one, Even if you don't know him, Look at verse 33, He points him out and says, This is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit, So Jesus' baptism, Is far superior, Than mine, Well what does Jesus' baptism mean?

[38 : 44] The baptism of the Holy Spirit, According to Acts chapter 2, By Peter, It's very simple, Peter said, Repent and be baptized, Every one of you, In the name of Jesus Christ, For the forgiveness of your sins, And you will receive, The gift of the Holy Spirit, Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Is when God himself, Causes your eyes, To behold Jesus, The Lamb of God, Whose blood washes away, Sin, And cleanses you, Preparing you for eternity, With him, And you receive that gift, Of the Holy Spirit, The moment, You are regenerated, To believe, Now look back at verse 16, The glorious promise, From the fullness of the Lamb of God, We all receive grace upon grace, What does that mean?

Grace upon grace, With John the baptizer, He wanted you to know, That the blessings of Christ abound, One blessing after the other, After the other, After the other, Just as you think, You might be coming to the end, And you're running on empty, Your tank's getting low in the wilderness, More

trial, More temptation, More attacks, There's grace, Upon grace, Upon grace, To continue
 sustaining you, That's, That's really his witness, Look at all the blessings, That Christ opens up,
 John the baptizer cries out, I am the Levite, Who washed Christ, With the waters of baptism, God
 himself, Went to the wilderness, With wild beasts, To battle the devil, And demons, For you as your
 scapegoat, He carried your sin, Far away, From the holy presence, Of God, On his own body, I am
 the priest, Who plunged Christ, Into the brown Jordan, But he is the one,
 Who took God's judgment, Of sin, On his body, On that tree, I eat locusts, Dipped in honey, So it'll
 go down, But he feeds you, With the bread of life, His own body, I dip your body, Into the muddy
 Jordan water, As an outward sign, Pointing to Christ, Showing that, He has made your heart,
 Contrite, He's baptized you, By his spirit, But it's his spirit, Who calls you, Into the blood, Of the
 lamb of God, Itself, I can tell you, That you need to repent, Because the kingdom of God, Is at hand,
 But Jesus is the king himself, Don't you hear the king, Calling you, To enter the rest, Of his rule,
 Over your life, I have no interest, In man's glory, What you need to do, Is behold, The lamb of God,
 Who takes away, Your sin, John the baptizer, Loved the glory of God, More than the glory of man,
 And he was so gripped, By God's holiness, That he would continue, To preach this, Sermon of
 repentance, Until, He lost his head, Beheaded, Died as a martyr, For Jesus Christ, Reminds me of
 another martyr, Named Polycarp, Of the church of Smyrna, The first century, Most likely would
 have, Sat under the preaching, Of John himself, The apostle John, And as persecution grew, In the
 early church, They told him, You must deny, That Jesus is God, Or else we will burn you, At the fire,
 At the stake, And he witnessed, Back to them, I have served my master, For 40 years, And he has
 always, Been good to me, I will continue, To confess, That Jesus is God, Polycarp said, I've
 learned, To trust, His grace, Upon grace, All my life, How could I dishonor, My good Lord, For you
 now, So when they went, To tie him up, And carry him to the stake, Where he would burn alive, One
 of the cruelest, Forms of torture, Polycarp said,
 Let me alone, He that gave me strength, To come to the fire, Will give me patience, To undergo
 your fire, Without your ropes, And Polycarp stood there, Like a man of God, With grace upon grace,
 To withstand, The flames, Without even being tied up, And if you're feeling like, You're in those
 white water rapids, Of life, With trial and temptation, Wave after wave, Feeling like you're gonna
 drown, Don't stand up, By your own strength, Let Christ plunge you low, And raise you up, And pull
 you on top of himself, Once again, You know how you do that?
 [43 : 23] You behold the Lamb of God, Once again today, Who takes away, Your sin, And if you
 are beholding Christ, It means that you are among that people, Prepared, You know in the book of
 Acts, We read that 3,000 believed in Christ, Because the spirit blew over them, And caused them to
 behold, I wonder how many of those, Had also been prepared, Through the baptism of John, That
 call to repentance, And now John, As a martyr from heaven, Got to look on in the early church, Just
 as the angels, And all the great cloud of witnesses, Look on at you today, Who will believe, And as
 the angels rejoice, When one soul is brought into the kingdom of God, Through faith, John the
 baptizer, And every saint who has beheld Christ, Rejoices, When you believe and trust in Christ,
 The Bible tells you, Behold the Lamb of God, And be ready, Jesus is coming back soon, Come
 quickly Lord Jesus, Amen.