

John The Baptist's Record

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 02 October 2011

[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. This is the third message of our new series on the book of John entitled, Jesus is God.

John chapter 1, John chapter 1, verse 19, and we're going to read down to verse 37. I am extremely excited that you're here. I'm excited that we get to be in the gospel of John because we're going to see Jesus and we're going to see him clearly and we're going to know more about who he is and what he does and you're going to be able to apply that and you're going to be able to take that to other people.

So read with me if you would, John chapter 1, starting in verse 19. Hope you have an ink pen handy. As we go through, watch for this. There are three days going to take place in the passage that we're going to read.

John's going to talk to three different groups of people. He's going to make three different announcements about Jesus Christ that we're going to look at and apply to our lives today. Look if you would in John 1, 19.

And this is the record of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, who art thou? And he confessed and denied not, but confessed, I am not the Christ.

[1 : 13] And they asked him, what then? Art thou a liar? And he said, I am not. Art thou that prophet? He answered, no. Then said they unto him, who are you? Who art thou? That we may give an answer to them that sent us.

What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I'm the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah.

And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him and said unto them, well, why do you baptize? Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

John answered them, saying, I baptize with water. But there stands one among you whom you know not. He it is who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe latch that I'm not worthy to unloose.

These things were done in Beth Barba, beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day, John seeth Jesus come unto him and said, behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world.

[2 : 20] This is he of whom I said, after me cometh the man which is preferred before me, for he was before me. And I knew him not, but that he should be made manifest to Israel.

Therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove and an abode on him. And I knew him not.

But he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same as he which baptizes with the Holy Ghost.

And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God. And the next day, after John stood and two of his disciples, and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, behold the Lamb of God.

And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Let's pray one more time and ask God to make that reading. Enter into your heart, fill your heart up, make you hungry to share the gospel.

[3 : 22] Father, I pray you make our church a soul-winning church, a gospel-sharing church, a missionary-sending church as you already have. I pray, God, that you draw this passage into our heart and make us hungry to see you work and move.

I pray, God, for those that are here today that do not know you as their personal Savior. They have not believed yet. They may know, but they have not believed that you are the very Son of God, the very Messiah.

You are God in human flesh. I pray, God, that they would today realize their sinful condition, place their trust in you, and I will give you great honor and glory and praise for all that you do.

We love you, and thank you for all you do. In Jesus' precious name, amen. Well, if you got your Bible open to John chapter 1 again, I want you to remember that there's this wild man preacher that's down on the river in Jordan, down close to River Jordan.

He is the craziest, wildest preacher they've ever seen. The only thing they could compare him to is a guy named Elijah that they know about from the stories. He had a miraculous birth.

[4 : 29] His mother was old and couldn't have babies and never had had a baby, and her daddy or his daddy got struck with dumbness and couldn't speak. And so growing up, everybody had known this was an unusual guy.

Then when he gets big, he goes out in the desert, puts on the weirdest clothes. When everybody else is wearing linen and nice clothes, he's wearing leather skins, and he is eating honey and locusts, and he's just a wild man, and he's become the sensation of the day.

People are coming from all over the city. They didn't have Twitter. They didn't have Internet. But people are hearing about him and coming from everywhere to hear him preach. And all of a sudden, the big shot religious leaders in town, they hear about John, and they decide, we're going to find out who he is and what he's doing.

And so they send somebody down to look at him, to find him, and to ask him who he is. And so here they show up. It's some priests and some Levites, and they show up.

There's some Pharisees thrown in the mix, and they come up to John, and they say, man, you are the sensation. Everybody's talking about you. We want to know who are you.

[5 : 37] Tell us who you are. And you must be or you must think you are the Christ. And John says, well, no, I'm not. I am not the Christ. I know exactly who I am.

I'm not ashamed to tell you who I am, but I am not the Christ. They say, well, you must be Elijah. And he said, nope, not him either. And they say, well, come on now. You must be a prophet. He said, nope, I'm not him either.

He said, I'll tell you who I am. I'm a voice crying in the wilderness and telling people to get ready for God's son to come. God in human flesh coming to the earth.

Read with me, if you would, in John chapter 1 and verse 21. John, excuse me, John chapter 1 and verse 19, and see what the Bible says. And this is the record of John. When the Jews sent the priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, who art thou?

If you have your ink pen, would you put a circle around the record of John? That's really what the message is. This is John's public testimony. Now, don't forget you're in the gospel of John.

[6 : 37] And John, as he writes this gospel, is saying, I am going to prove to you from the beginning of my book to the end of my book that Jesus is God.

And that's the only way you can be saved. And life is in him. And I'm going to give you testimony. And basically, he calls to the courtroom stand a guy named John the Baptist, the most famous preacher of his day.

And he puts him on the witness stand and says, I want to hear your testimony, John. I want to hear your record. I want to hear what you got to say. You're the man. If anybody could tell us, if they get you, talk to us about who Jesus is.

Now, the Jews, they want to control religion and the political efforts. And so they send these guys out to find out what's going on. They're the ones that kind of keep everybody in line and keep the party line straight.

And they want to know who John is. Look at verse 20. Verse 20. John says, and John and he confessed and denied not, but confessed, I am not the Christ.

[7 : 36] I am not the Christ. Now, these guys got to be expecting that John is going to brag about being somebody special. And so when they asked him, he said, nope, don't change my testimony.

I don't back down. I'll just tell you real clearly. I am not Jesus. I am not the father. I am not the son. I am nobody special. No, I'm not him.

So they asked him in verse 21. In verse 21, they said, they asked, what then? Well, if you're not the Christ, if you're not the Messiah, well, then who are you? Are you Elijah? And he said, I lost.

He said, I am not. And then they said, are you the prophet? Are you one of those special prophets? He said, no, I'm not. Now, you remember Elijah. Elijah's one of the few guys, only two guys that didn't die.

And Elijah has been taken up in a whirlwind. These Jews have been expecting him to come back any time. They know. He's probably coming back. But they say, well, are you him? Are you Elijah? Did you get taken up in a whirlwind if you come back?

[8 : 34] And John said, nope, I am not him. Now, Jesus later clarifies that he was Elijah in the spirit. He wasn't that Elijah. He wasn't Elijah physically that had walked around there.

He was a man born to a man and a woman. He didn't come back down from heaven. But he was that guy. Look, if you would, in Matthew chapter 17. Matthew 17, 10 through 13. And his disciples asked him, saying, why then, say the scribes, that Elias must first come?

Why do the guys that studied the Old Testament tell us that Elijah's going to have to show up? Now, let me tell you, the Bible's the word of God. And it never messes up. And the scribes have been studying it. And Jesus, they want to know why they say that has happened.

And Jesus said, well, Jesus answered them to them, Elias truly shall first come and restore all things. But I say unto you that Elias is come already.

And they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise also shall the Son of Man suffer. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

[9 : 36] John the Baptist was the picture, the power, the symbol, the image of Elijah. Luke chapter 1 and verse 17. He shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias.

To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children. And to the disobedient, to the wisdom of the just. To make ready a people prepared for the Lord. And then John, Matthew says in Matthew 11, 14.

If you'll receive it, I'll just tell you, that's Elias. He said, if you'll receive it, this is Elias which was come. But here's the key. Now watch this. And this is important for all of us.

First, I want you to know the greatest preacher of his day. A preacher that could have been in competition with Jesus. A preacher that could have wanted attention for himself. A preacher that could have wanted headlines. When he was questioned, he said, no, I am not the Christ.

I am nobody special. I point to one. I point to one. And his name is Jesus. I point to Jesus. He is the Son of God. Verse 22.

[10 : 35] Then said they unto him, well, who are you? Who art thou that we may give an answer? We got to go back to the big shots in Jerusalem. We got to tell them, who do you claim to be? And he says, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness.

Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah. And some of them were sent were Pharisees. They want John to say who he is. Where do you get all this fame?

What are you doing? Now here's some questions for you real quickly. Now just listen to this. In the moment of fame and popularity and everybody liking us, it's awful easy to take praise that belongs to Jesus and accept it for ourselves.

It is awful easy to say, you know, I was that drunkard and I had that messed up life and I was doing all that wrong stuff. But I got saved. And if you're not quick, it's like I was doing all that bad stuff.

And I was going to say, now look at what I'm doing. I was going to say, look what I'm doing. It's kind of like you kind of minimize what God did and maximize what you did. And John said, I'll tell you, I'm a big shot and everybody's out here.

[11 : 40] But just let me go ahead and tell you, it's not me. It's Jesus. Let me ask you, did God change your life? You know, my dad was a fallen down dead drunk, buddy. By the age of 25, my daddy said a few days passed that he wasn't stone drunk.

My dad said there wasn't a sin he hadn't committed. And then my dad got saved and nobody believed my dad had ever been a drunk. And my daddy said that it was Jesus that changed his life.

That's what's going on here. Do you ever deflect the praise that belongs to Jesus and act like, yeah, I am pretty good. I am a good preacher. I'm a good man. I do have a good home. I do run a good business or do you send the praise to Jesus like John did?

John, what do you think of yourself? And John says, I don't. I think of Jesus. And I ask you, what do you think of yourself? And your answer should be, I think of Jesus.

In Isaiah chapter 40 and verse 3, the Bible said, The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness prepare you the way of the Lord. Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

[12 : 41] John said, I'll tell you who I am. I'm just the voice. That's all I am. I'm just the guy telling people to get ready. Jesus is coming. John, why are you baptizing?

That's what he says in verse 25. John, why are you baptizing? If you're not the Christ and if you're not alive, just to baptize a bit is a tad strange. And I love verse 27.

You got to look at verse 27. You got to mark verse 27. Look what John says. John says, he it is who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe latch that I am not worthy to unloose.

Would you circle? He it is who comes after me is preferred before me. He said, Jesus may be coming after me and I may have the big shot ministry and I may be the man today.

But it is Jesus. It is Jesus. He is no one famous. He has no position that gives him the right to baptize. Now just real quickly, I guess maybe we ought to look at this.

[13 : 38] It was not uncommon for them to baptize a pagan and make a Jew out of him. It was not uncommon to go to people that didn't know God and were far away from God and proselyte or pull out of another religion and put them into Judaism and baptize them.

But that is not what John is doing. John is standing up in front of the people, the elect, the nation. And he said, hey, all of y'all are right with God. And you need to get right with God.

And he is preaching to Jews and he is baptizing Jews. And if you would just like to think about it a second, that is what is going on up in Jerusalem. They are like, who do you think you are?

He said, I will tell you who I am. I am the guy that has come to remind you, Jesus is here. The son of God is here. I came baptizing.

He is here. I would like to stop and just say this to our church for a second. If you are here, listen to this. They were Jews. They were religious. They were Jews.

[14 : 38] They went to synagogue. They were Jews. They knew truth. But they were lost. What does that mean? They were religious, but they weren't believers.

They were religious, but they weren't saved. Boy, I'm afraid we're so much like Israel here. We're so much like the Jews here. We all know the lingo.

We all prayed the prayer. We all got baptized. We didn't get sprinkled, man. We got baptized. Hey, we're Baptist, Baptist, Baptist, but we're probably not Baptist saved.

Or we may be Baptist saved, but we're not God saved. Because we just did the religious thing. John says, John says, you guys are Jews. Could you be spiritual but not know God through Jesus Christ?

Could we learn from John the Baptist that we never take much of men, make much of men, but always much of Jesus, that we don't seek our own selves? Because here's the first day. First day, a religious crowd comes to see John.

[15 : 41] And John, they want to know who he is. You can imagine, after the service is over, they got the radio microphones, they got the cameras, and they're ready to interview John the Baptist. And he's on TV.

Everybody's hearing about him. He's like the big shot of his day. And they say, John, tell us who you are. And here's what John says. I'm a nothing. I'm a nobody. I'm just a voice in the wilderness. I'm just telling people to get ready. They say, well, it seems to us that you're talking to the people that are already God's people.

And John said, I am. And they need to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. This is not just a head knowledge. It's a heart knowledge. This is not just I prayed a prayer and I joined a church. It is I knew I was a sinner and I knew Jesus was the only way I could be saved.

And he said, that's who I'm here to deal with. I'm getting them ready for the coming of the king. Second day. Look in your Bible, if you would, chapter 1, verse 29. It's another day, another crowd. The Bible said the next day, John sees Jesus coming unto him.

And he said, behold, the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. Now, the religious guys have gone home or maybe they're still standing in the crowd.

[16 : 45] But today he's dealing with a whole different crowd. And all of a sudden, Jesus shows up. Now, Jesus is his cousin. And for a long time, he didn't even realize who Jesus was.

He was cousin Jesus. He was hangout Jesus at grandma's house. But he didn't know who he was. But now he knows. And all of a sudden, here comes Jesus walking up. And John stops and he says, hey, guys, behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

Everybody listen to me. That's the one. That's the man. That's who I was sent to talk about. Behold the Lamb of God. Now, that's a great phrase, the Lamb. They all knew what that meant.

He's using a term. They're used to a little animal. They know what it's like to bring an animal and sacrifice it and have its blood shed on the altar. They know what it's like to confess their sins over an animal.

They know what it's like to put their hands on the head of an animal. And he says, hey, guys, this is the one. This is every lamb you ever sacrificed. Every worship service you ever went to was all pointing to one guy.

[17 : 52] The Lamb of God. Jesus who takes away the sin of the world. You see, what happened is when men sin, there's no way to get right with God. When we sin, there's no way to get right with God.

Even if you quit sin and you couldn't erase all the sin you've already done. Your mess ups can't be fixed up. You can never fix up yourself. And so they had a system in the Old Testament set up by God to point to Jesus.

And that was a lamb that would die and take our debt, our penalty, and pay our price. I want you to notice this. He is the lamb that takes away the sin of the world.

He is the lamb that takes away the sin of the world. Would you take your Bible and follow with me through some verses? Go to John 3.16 with me. Just take your Bible now and look them up. In John 3.16.

See, the Bible says he's the lamb that takes away the sin of the world. If you're here this morning, he will save you. I'm not talking to you about getting baptized. I'm not talking to you about joining our church. I'm not talking about you getting another notch in your spiritual belt to think you'd go to heaven.

[18 : 59] It's Jesus who takes away the sin, who gets rid of sin out of our lives. Look at John 3.16. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

He loves the world. John chapter 4 and verse 42. You turning with me? The Bible said, In John chapter 6 and verse 51.

The Bible says, I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever. And the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I give for the life of the world.

The life of the world. I'm going to give you three verses that aren't in this book of John. You can just look at them on the screen behind my head. Or you can look them up in your Bible. 1 Timothy 2.3-6.

For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our Savior, who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

[20 : 07] For there is one God and one mediator between God and men. The man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due season.

He wants all men to be saved. All men to come to the knowledge of the truth. He has given himself a ransom for all. 1 Timothy 2.3-6. In Hebrews chapter 2 and verse 9, he tasted death for every man.

1 John 4.14, he says that we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. I want you to look this way. He loves you. He died for you.

He paid your sin debt. But you need not. Don't you rest in Jesus, the Savior of the world. This one, did you hear what I just said? Don't you rest.

And he said, Jesus, the Savior of the world. Here's why. You're not saved just because he died on a cross. Now listen to this. You're not saved just because he died on a cross.

[21 : 08] You're not saved just because he paid your sin debt. You're not saved just because he's the Savior of the world. Because here's what he says later. And we'll look at some verses. Because you're going to have to accept the gift.

The Bible says in Romans 6.23, for the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ. You could easily sit back and say, hey, we're all okay.

Thank God for Jesus. He saved all of us. No, there's a lot of us that are not saved, not going to go to heaven because God hasn't done a work of grace in our life.

Don't be so religious to think, I joined a church. I got baptized. I filled out one of those cards. Mama said I'm okay.

Daddy said I'm okay. And everybody ever know at every funeral is always going to heaven because every preacher said they did. Not true. Look what the Bible says. John 3.18.

[22 : 08] You're there with me? Look at it. John 3.18. He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already because he had not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

I want you to underline the word believe. If you don't believe, you are condemned. If you believe, you are saved. The fact that he died is one thing.

The fact that you trust is another thing. It's a two-headed coin. Do you trust Jesus? Have you believed in him? John 3.36.

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. Believe on the Son.

In John 5.24. The Bible says, Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life. He that heareth and believeth hath everlasting life.

[23 : 06] It shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. John 6.40. This is the will of him that sent me, that everyone that seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life.

And John 11.36 said, He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And I'll stop right there. One verse. 1 Timothy 4.10. Therefore we both labor and suffer reproach because we trust in the living God who is the Savior of all men.

That sounds good. But then he says, especially of those that believe. He died. He paid the price. You can be saved.

But today, trust Jesus. Now I'm going to go on in just a second and read you some more verses here. But I just want you to understand something.

I worry about us. I love you. I pray for you. It is a bigger job than you think just loving you and caring about you. And I worry. I hear you talk the talk.

[24 : 11] But I don't know if God's done a work in your life. And sometimes when you talk, you talk religious talk to me. And you don't talk like Jesus did a work in your life. So can I just remind you what the truth is?

Are you ready? The truth is you sinned against the holy God. And your sin demands punishment. The Bible said that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The Bible said there is none righteous, no, not one.

The Bible says we have sinned and our sin deserve a payment. And that payment is the wages of sin is death. The wages of sin is dying and being separated from God in a place called hell for all of eternity.

That's truth. That's truth. But God loving you sent a means of salvation. He sent Jesus to die to be the savior of the world. And all those beautiful verses I read.

But then he's quick to say, the gospel of John is quick to say, Now you know about him, believe on him. Now you know about him, believe on him. Now you know about him, believe on him. Do you believe Jesus?

- [25 : 09] Do you believe that Jesus was God in human flesh? Do you believe that Jesus, God in human flesh, died on a cross and paid sin debt? So you can say, do you trust Jesus?
- No work of yours. All Jesus. Do you know that? I'll be blunt honest with you. I could name two or three of you I'm worried about. I hope you'll listen to me.
- Do you know that you've trusted Jesus? Not your baptism. Not your faithful church attendance. Not your tithing. Not your giving.
- But you have trusted Jesus. Go with me to John chapter 1 and verse 30 if you would. John is preaching and baptizing to show Jesus to Israel.
- Look at this. This is he of whom I said, after me comes a man which is preferred before me. He was before me. Look at this. Verse 30.
- [26 : 05] And I want you to remember, Jesus is God. Now listen to this. Look at this. Wait a second. He's not another preacher. He's not another prophet. He's not another teacher.
- And right here in verse 30, you should mark this in the verse. After me comes a man. After me comes a man. And John starts and Jesus comes. John was born.
- And six months later, Jesus came. And John the Baptist says, hey, he comes after me in both ways. But he was before me. Because I'm not talking about another preacher.
- I'm talking about God in human flesh. There are a lot of people in the world today that are believers in God. But they don't know it's not about believing in God.
- Everybody believes in God, the devil included. There's only one way to God. Through Jesus. John 1, 32. And John bear record saying, I saw the spirit descending from heaven like a dove.
- [27 : 04] And I knew him not. I didn't even realize who he was until God made it clear to me. But I love this phrase right here. Would you mark this in your Bible? John 1, 32. But he that sent me. John knew he was sent by God.
- He that sent me to baptize with water. The same said unto me, upon whom thou shalt see the spirit descending and remaining on him. The same as he which baptizes with the Holy Ghost. And I saw that and saw and bear record.
- This is the son of God. John the apostle calls John the Baptist to the stand in the courtroom. And John the apostle says, I'm writing a book and I'm putting down testimonies.
- I want them to know that Jesus is God. And that's what I'm writing this book about. Remember John 20, 31? That's why I'm writing this book so they'll know Jesus is God.
- And he says, so John the Baptist, come up here. John the Baptist, give us testimony. Who were you? Man, I was the greatest preacher of the day. I was born strange, man. I'm telling you. My mama couldn't get pregnant.
- [28 : 07] My mama got real old. My daddy got real old. And God worked American and brought me here. My daddy couldn't talk for nine months. My daddy couldn't even talk about what was going on in his life because he was struck dumb for not believing God.
- And I was born. And then God sent me out in the wilderness. And I got to preaching. And everybody came. And the court man, the lawyer says, well, so who are you? And he said, I'll tell you who I am. I'm a nobody.
- I'm just a voice pointing to one guy. The one guy. Jesus is the son of God. Jesus is the son of God. So John, let's get it clear.
- Are you Jesus? No. Are you the Messiah? No. Are you Elijah? No. Are you a prophet? No. Who are you? I'm just somebody pointing to Jesus. John the Apostle says, okay, so who is Jesus?

And he says, you got your Bible open right there. Look at chapter 1 and verse 34. Put a circle around it and draw some errors to it. He said, and I saw and I bear record. Put her down. I'll sign my name to it.

[29 : 04] Put her down and I'll lift my hand and I'll put my hand on the Bible. And I'll tell you, I promise. I'll tell you, I swear. I bear record. This is the son of God.

This is the son of God. Everything in and about us should point to Jesus as the lamb of God and the son of God. We ought to proclaim his gospel everywhere we go to every person we know.

The Jewish crowd came and John said, no, I'm not. I'm not. I'm not. I'm not. I'm just a voice. Then he turned to everybody else. He said, guys, don't look at me. Behold the lamb.

Don't look at me. Behold the lamb. Don't look at me. Behold the lamb. Third day in this story today. Third day in this story. By the way, before I read you the third day, can I just say this to you?

Your life ought to point to Jesus. There's some great stories in here, but you don't tell your story very much. You're almost embarrassed about your past and embarrassed about the hand of God on your life.

[30 : 06] You ought to realize God picked you up out of dirt and slop and saved you and changed you. And the way you have a happy home today and the way God's blessed and the way you're living this holy life and this pure life is not because you're such a good guy and it's not your great character.

It ought to be out of your lips on a regular basis. It's not me. It's him. It is Jesus. We ought to brag on Jesus. I'm afraid we don't. We brag on our Baptist church.

I'm like this because I go to a Baptist church. I'm like this because I don't do that. You're like this because Jesus did a work in your life. Say amen. Third thing. Third day. John chapter 1 and verse 35.

The next day. Again, the next day after John stood. I love that. Again, the next day. It's like I've been doing this every day. Here comes the third day. I'm going to say the same thing again. I said the first day it was Jesus.

I said the second day it was Jesus. This is the third day. Here it comes again. Again, the next day after John stood and the two of his disciples. Verse 36. And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he said, hey guys, behold the Lamb of God.

[31 : 09] And you know who he's talking to this time? His disciples. That's a pretty hard move to make. It was one thing to tell the religious crowd. Yeah, I'm not him.

It's Jesus. I'm pointing to Jesus. It was another thing to stand up in front of a whole crowd and say, hey, behold the Lamb. That's Jesus. But now he has a handful of guys that are following him and he turns to the handful of guys that are following him.

And he says, guys, thank you for following me, but don't look at me. Behold the Lamb. Don't look at me. Behold the Lamb. Look at it. John chapter 1 and verse 35, 36, and 37.

John's pointing to Jesus, even to his family, even to his friends. You know who the hero of the story always is? It's Jesus.

Jesus, you're not the hero. The church isn't the hero. The pastor isn't the hero. Jesus is the hero. We're never to seek to make men followers or make men follow us or follow our church.

[32 : 11] We're to point them to Jesus. We're never to point them to religion. Religion stinks in the nostrils of God. All of it.

You hear me? There's only one kind of religion that doesn't. That's found in James. When you're taking care of the widows and the orphans. But the truth is, when we use that word today, we use it more as a code of rules and ethics that we've made up.

The Muslims got one, and the Baptists got one, and the Catholics got one, and everybody's got one. But here's the whole key. It's a person, not an institution. We're to point them to Jesus.

We are to realize that Jesus is to be magnified, and we are to be diminished. Jesus ought to be made much of, and we ought to be made little of.

Could I just ask you, listen to me, you're raising children in your home, and your kids are growing up, and you are the hero. I can sit down with my grandchildren, and I can be talking to my grandchildren.

[33 : 10] And Chris's kids, they're old enough to really have a discussion with me. And Andrew told me the other day, he said, oh, my daddy knows that. My daddy knows everything.

And I said, well, I'm your daddy's daddy, so I know more than your daddy. He said, oh, no, you don't, because my daddy's the smartest man in the world. And I said, well, I know that your daddy's a twerp, and I raised him. He said, no, sir. No, sir.

The other day, they were picking on my sons, and somebody said that David was the devil. And they said that, and Hannah heard it. And Hannah came to me and said, did they say my daddy was the devil?

I don't like that. And I said, no, they said, Uncle David. She said, well, I don't like that either. You see, there's something special. And that's good. Let's keep that. That's all great. But when's the last time you sat down with your children and said, if you want daddy, if you want to know about daddy, daddy's only what he is, because Jesus did a work in his life.

If you want to know why daddy's a good daddy today, it's because daddy was a sinner. Behold the lamb. Behold the lamb. If you want to know, daddy's a good husband, and he loves mama, and there's a sweet relationship in our home, but we're not better than anybody down the road, because behold the lamb.

[34 : 27] Behold the lamb. And when we drive down the road and we see people living dirty and vile lives, and our kids even recognize that person's not right, our answer isn't yet. We're gardeners aren't like that.

No. We don't say that. We say this. Behold the lamb. Behold the lamb. Look unto Jesus. That's what John did. John didn't know who he was in his own heart.

Did you hear that? John didn't know who he was in his own heart. John, who are you? Well, I'm not a Messiah, and I'm not Elijah.

Jesus is even going to say he was, really. And I'm not that prophet. Well, who are you? I'm just a voice crying in the wilderness and pointing people to Jesus.

I'm afraid in Christianity, in our churches, in our families, we know too much about who we are and too little about who he is. We know what we've done, and we rehearse that often in our minds and in our stories, but we fail to rehearse who he is and what he's done.

[35 : 36] The goal of our lives should be to get others to come to Jesus. John, sit down in the witness box, would you?

Raise your right hand. Put your hand on the Bible. John, do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, nothing but the truth? Let's help you, God. John said, yes, sir, I will. John, are you the Messiah? I'm not going to lie to you.

No, I'm not. I'm not trying to be humble here. I'm just not him. Well, you're not the Messiah. No, sir, I'm not. Well, are you Elijah? He said, no, sir, I'll just be honest with you. No, I'm not. Well, John, let me ask you a question.

Are you that prophet? No, sir. Well, then, John, just tell us who you are. You keep avoiding the questions. All you do is these short answers. No, no, no. Tell us who you are. He said, I'll tell you who I am. I'm a voice.

Prying in the wilderness. Get ready. Jesus is coming. John, on that second day, we noticed your message. Said your message was a tad strange.

[36 : 35] And John said, no, sir, I told you on the first day it wasn't me. I told you it was him. And on the second day, all I told was, I told the whole crowd, that's him. That's him. John, how does this affect you?

He said, well, I lost two of my best disciples. They became disciples of Jesus. Why did they leave you and become disciples of Jesus? Because I told them he's the lamb. That's why. Because I point to Jesus.

And John, the apostle, says, okay, let's write that down. Let's put that in the court book records. John the Baptist proclaims clearly, Jesus is God.

Not only is Jesus God, he is the lamb of God. Not only is he the lamb of God, he's the lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world. Not only that, all John seems to be able to say, he's like a broken record.

Write it down. He's the son of God. He's the lamb of God. He's the son of God. He's the lamb of God. Okay, John, that's enough. Jesus is God. Do you know that?

[37 : 36] Have you come to that point? Because you see, the Baptist church had never done anything in your life, honestly. And this pastor and no other pastor has done anything. It's never a man. It's never a man.

It wasn't your mother and it wasn't your daddy and it wasn't your Sunday school teacher. It's always Jesus. It's Jesus. Jesus, behold the lamb. Behold the lamb.

Do you know that you place your faith and trust in him? Father God, would you deal with hearts now? Only you can convict and only you can draw people to you. And there's nothing I can do to make a difference in these people's lives.

Best I know how. I've just said what you said in your book. No, no flair. No, no beautiful words. No, no great oratory skills involved here. God, I've just told them who Jesus is.

So Holy Spirit, would you please convict today? Would you draw men to you? God, would you save those that don't know you? And would you motivate those of us that do know you to share the story about who the lamb is for your honor and for your glory?

[38 : 39] Thank you for listening to this message by Austin Gardner, pastor of Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. For more information on Vision Baptist Church, log on to www.visionbaptist.com.

At the website, you can also find more audio and video recordings. what airbag.