

## Home Group Leader's Notes

Week of January 10, 2021

John 1:29-34

### Welcome Back

The Christmas holidays have some rich meaning and sometimes occasion people getting together with friends and family.

- What was your experience in this last season? What did you enjoy? What was difficult or painful?
- What keeps you encouraged in these times?

### The Trinity Church family is journeying through “the book of John”

John, the author, is one of Jesus' apostles, one of those closest to Him during his earthly ministry. He wrote a summary of Jesus' life and ministry that we call the gospel according to or book of “John.” There are three other accounts: Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Each of these summarizes or synthesizes the words, work, and life of Jesus in a unique way. Our series is entitled, “Beckon.”

The gospel according to John has a grand purpose: “Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.” (20:30-31) John reflects this in his early statement: “And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.” (1:5) God wants us to have life, eternal life with Him. This gospel story reveals that though mankind prefers darkness, the light of Jesus Christ overcomes the darkness. Through the cross, Jesus overcomes the darkness of sin.

He came in love, full of truth and grace. He reveals the Father and the Way back to his presence. While the “signs” (miracles) of Jesus reveal His identity, it is the cross that blazes with the glory of Christ.

### Growing from our time in “The Gospel According to John”

Here are a few suggestions as you begin this journey:

- 1) **Keep in mind John's purpose statement**– “that you may believe that (a) Jesus is the Christ” (meaning Messiah, Anointed One), (b) that Jesus is “the Son of God,” and (c) “and that believing you may have life in His name.”
- 2) **Watch for the specific themes** found in 1:1-18.
- 3) **Treasure in your heart** what we learn about . . .
  - a. The character of God as seen in Jesus
  - b. The “signs” (miracles) of Jesus and how they point to God's master plan
  - c. How we see the glory of Jesus in the cross (His passion)
  - d. What is revealed about our relationship with God
  - e. How we can live as His people (as His children, disciples, etc.)
  - f. God's plan and promises for this life and the life to come
- 4) **Share what you are learning.** This encourages one another and helps us keep God's Word in our thoughts and actions.
- 5) **You might want to reference other resources.** There are many good commentaries on “John.” Two of them are “The Gospel According to John” by D. A. Carson and “The NIV Application Commentary: John” by Gary Burge.

**Begin by reading John 1:1-18.**

John references Genesis 1:1 in his introduction to the account of Jesus life. He understands that this Jesus, this gospel, is bringing about a whole new creation. This passage is a prelude of the movements and themes that John will use throughout this book. What grand statements and themes do you identify?

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

**For this week**, we will be walking through John 1:29-34. (You can hear the previous messages at [https://www.trinityonline.org/resources/sermons/.](https://www.trinityonline.org/resources/sermons/))

**Read John 1:29-34 and consider the following:**

In this setting, who is speaking? Whom might have been his audience(s)?

- John the Baptizer is speaking. (Here, he is more as 'John the Witness')
- After he previously talked about "one who is coming" he now specifies that this one coming is Jesus.
- He became specific after Jesus was baptized. There, the Father spoke from heaven, and the Holy Spirit descended and remained on Jesus.
- His audience is most likely John's own disciples who later changed their allegiance to Jesus. John, the apostle, was one of those disciples.

How did John the baptizer describe Jesus? How are these descriptions significant?

- The Lamb of God. This references Jesus as the one would fulfill the Passover lamb.
  - He takes away the sin of the world. Only God can do this and it happens through Jesus.
  - Jesus is the one he referred to previously when he said, "there is one who comes after me ..." in 1:15
  - He has a higher rank, for he existed before me. This speaks to Jesus eternal existence as seen in 1:1 as well as being the promised one, the Messiah (anointed one) who is manifested to Israel.
  - "I beheld the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him." This is very significant. In all the Old Testament kings, prophets, and other people, the Spirit only dwelt with them temporarily. This makes Jesus the "Anointed one"
  - Jesus is the one who "baptizes in the Holy Spirit." Jesus alone can give to / baptize people in the Holy Spirit.
  - Jesus is "the Chosen One of God." This refers to Him being the one chosen to do God's work, to fulfill God's plans to bring justice to the nations. (A reference to Isaiah 42:1.)
-

We know from this and the other Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke) that John had a call from God to baptize people to prepare the way for the coming Messiah. By now he had a following of people (disciples, learners) who were around him on a regular basis. How is John's public witness significant in his and Jesus' ministry?

- John the baptizer called the people to repentance, to be ready for the Messiah. His ministry most likely included words from the Old Testament that called people to confess their sin and turn back to the one and only true God – their God.
- We don't know the elapsed time, but John had baptized many people.
- John the baptizer had followers who were waiting for him to identify this coming one.
- At Jesus' baptism. John the baptizer heard the voice of God say, "You are my Son whom I love; with You I am well-pleased." This and other things convinced John of Jesus identity.
- This ministry and witness of John became the beginning of Jesus' public ministry.
- This follows the prophecies in the Old Testament – another witness to Jesus as the Messiah.

Throughout our walk through the book of John, we will try to identify the character of God as seen in Jesus. What do we learn about Jesus' character and works from John's public witness?

- Jesus gave up His life to take away the sin of the world.
- He pre-existed before He was born as a person in this world
- He was in perfect relationship with the Holy Spirit (who was "remaining upon Him")
- Jesus has the ability to baptize others in the Holy Spirit
- Jesus was always in God's Master plan as God's chosen one to come

How does seeing and understanding these truths about Jesus impact you, knowing that He eternally existed as God, that He was in on the plan to sacrifice Himself for the sinners of this world, that He came to bring us to God, and that He is the Anointed One and Chosen who will one day rule the world?

### **Questions for consideration and discussion**

What are you looking forward to as we walk through the book of "John?"

**LEADERS:** It is important that we listen well as people respond to this question.

If you were a castaway on a desert island and had only the first 34 verses of John to read, what might you conclude about the identity and purpose of Jesus?

**LEADERS:** The possible responses to this question are in the above bullet points.

How has modern society convinced people that they don't need the Jesus revealed in this passage? What has influenced their thinking and attitudes? (Consider the themes of this passage - Jesus is the Lamb of God, the sin of the world, that Jesus alone has the anointing of Holy Spirit He will baptize others in the Spirit.)

**LEADERS:** This question is to help us see that modern society has rejected Jesus as spoken of in John 1. You might want to read this paragraph from Burge's commentary (p.65): "God has been dismissed from his role of running the external world, thanks to the advent of science, and God's last domain—the inner world – had been taken over by psychology."

In the darkness of our culture, the following 'thought factories' have led to many rejecting the gospel:

- Science. Some believe that science has proven the Bible wrong about creation, the flood, history of the Bible, and even the very existence of Jesus. Thus, science has changed the view of the outside world.
- Psychology. They can explain our thoughts and feelings, our causes and reactions.
- Education. Many in general have led others to believe in a naturalistic world view.

There are many other possibilities.

### **Let's Pray**

A prayer promise from Jesus: "And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father." John 14:13. Let's pray ...

- for one another in your group
- for Trinity family who are hurting and sick in our family
- for our nation's leaders including political, medical, etc.
- for us to live by faith in and to the glory of Jesus in these challenging times
- for the Micah House team and our food box team

MAY OUR FATHER OF LIGHT AND LOVE HELP YOU SHEPHERD YOUR GROUP.

Steve