

3. Jesus Was Introduced to Two Future Disciples

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children understand the ministry of John the Baptist. We saw that John preached a message of repentance and the forgiveness of sins. We also saw that John was telling people to prepare their hearts for the coming of the Messiah. In this topic, we will see that John introduced two men who had been baptized by him to Jesus and they followed Jesus.

The day after John was questioned by the priests and Levites from Jerusalem who wanted to know who he was, another person came to visit John. John 1:29-31 says, “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.’ I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water.’” John had earlier baptized Jesus before He had been tested by Satan in the wilderness.

John would have known Jesus because they were related. However, John understood at the time that he baptized Jesus that He was also the Messiah. Mark 1:9-11 says, “It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then, a voice came from heaven, ‘You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’” Here, we see that the Father spoke from heaven to John and told him that Jesus is the beloved Son of God. As a result, John knew how to introduce Jesus when He came to him that day

As Jesus came walking toward John the day after the priests and Levites from Jerusalem questioned him, John said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” The word “behold” means *to look and see*. Throughout the Old Testament, the people offered lambs as sacrifices for a covering of their sins. These sacrifices were to show that their faith was in the promise of God that one day He would send One who would take away sin. That is why this introduction by John was so important. He identified Jesus as the One who is the Lamb of God. He also said that Jesus would take away the sin of the world.

John also made it clear that this One coming after him was the One who had been in existence before him. John made it very clear that Jesus existed before John even though the physical birth of Jesus happened after the physical birth of John. This provided the same witness that the writer of John had given in the first verses of this book that Jesus is the One who is the Creator of all things. John the Baptist did not know that Jesus was the Messiah and the Creator of all things, even though he knew Jesus as a relative. John knew that God had chosen him to reveal the One that would be the Lamb of God. That was why John had been baptizing those who repented of their sins.

John 1:32-34 goes on to say, “And John bore witness, saying, ‘I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him,

this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.” And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.” Here, we see that it was the Holy Spirit descending from heaven like a dove and remaining on Jesus that caused John to know for sure that Jesus was the One that is the Messiah. The Father then confirmed that Jesus is the Messiah as Matthew 3:17 says, “And suddenly a voice *came* from heaven, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’” This voice from heaven confirmed the message that Jesus was the Messiah.

The Father had revealed to John that the Holy Spirit would descend on Jesus in the form of a dove. Then, we see that the Father confirmed this by speaking from heaven. John also explained what Jesus would do for all believers in the future. John said that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit. John said in Luke 3:16-17, “John answered, saying to all, ‘I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.’” In his statements about the coming Messiah, John had said that the Messiah would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He explained that the Messiah would baptize all who believed with the Holy Spirit. In contrast, all those who rejected would be baptized with the eternal judgment of unquenchable fire.

Since John had seen the Spirit descend on Jesus and had heard the words of the Father, He could now introduce Jesus as the Son of God. That is why John testified that He had both seen and now gave formal witness that Jesus is the Son of God. Later in this book, Jesus said in John 5:31-33, “‘If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true. There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the witness which He witnesses of Me is true. You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth.’” In addition to the witness of John in that chapter, Jesus also said that His works, the witness of the Father and the witness of the Scripture were all in agreement with the witness of John. God gave us many witnesses of the fact that Jesus is God.

The concern of John the Baptist was not to gain a large following for himself. Instead, his concern was to help people get to know Jesus so that they could follow Him. John 1:35-39 says, “Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, ‘Behold the Lamb of God!’ The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, ‘What do you seek?’ They said to Him, ‘Rabbi’ (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), ‘where are You staying?’ He said to them, ‘Come and see.’ They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).” Here, we see that John encouraged two of his disciples to get to know Jesus.

We see that John had introduced Jesus the previous day by saying, “Behold the Lamb of God!” In these verses, we see that Jesus used the same title the next day to introduce two of his disciples to Jesus. John wanted to help these followers become followers of Jesus. Later, when some of his followers became concerned because part of the followers of John were following Jesus, John said in John 3:28-30, “‘You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, ‘I am not the Christ,’ but, ‘I have been sent before Him.’” He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom,

who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. He must increase, but I *must* decrease." John was glad to see his followers begin to follow Jesus. John understood the fact that he was to help people learn to follow Jesus rather than see how many people he could get to follow him. The same is true today.

When John said, "Behold the Lamb of God!", the two men who had become disciples of John immediately followed Jesus. They wanted to learn more about Jesus from Jesus. Jesus knew that they were following Him and turned to them. Then, He asked them, "What do you seek?" They answered Him, "Rabbi, where are You staying?" Perhaps, they just wanted to know where He was staying so that they could come later and get to know Him better. However, instead of just telling them where He was staying, Jesus gave them the first of four invitations that He would give to His disciples.

Jesus just said, "Come and see." This invitation was to just spend time with Jesus and get better acquainted. The other three invitations came at various times in the ministry of Jesus. About a year later, Jesus gave a second invitation when He said in Mark 1:17, "Then, Jesus said to them, 'Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.'" This was an invitation to "Come and Grow" and learn how to serve Jesus. About 21 months after this first meeting, Jesus gave the disciples a third invitation. Mark 3:13-14 says, "And He went up on the mountain and called to *Him* those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach." We could call this invitation "Come and Serve" because Jesus invited them to spend even more time with Him and also to begin to go out and preach (first the twelve in Luke 9:1-11 and then as a part of the 70 in Luke 10:1-12).

The fourth invitation came after the resurrection and might be called the call to "Come and Shepherd." Jesus met seven of the disciples one morning by the Sea of Galilee. After giving them the breakfast that He had prepared for them, Jesus asked Peter three times, "Do you love me?" Each time Peter answered "yes". After each answer of Peter, Jesus made a statement. The three statements taken together are "Feed My lambs," "Shepherd My sheep" and "Feed My sheep." Finally, after giving these four calls, Jesus gave the disciples a commission in Matthew 28:19-20 where we read, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.' Amen." The one command was "Make Disciples." This commission included three things: going, baptizing and teaching those who were baptized to obey all that Jesus had commanded.

The two men here, in John 1:39 responded to the invitation of Jesus to "Come and See" at about four in the afternoon and then spent the rest of the day with Him. We also want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to understand each of the calls and a commission that Jesus also gives to each of us. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children understand the "Four Calls and a Commission" that Jesus gave.