

# **Eternal Life Through Believing in Jesus**

## **3) A Voice Crying in the Wilderness**

***'Now 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." Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?" He said: "I am The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Make straight the way of the LORD,' as the prophet Isaiah said." Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees. And they asked him, saying, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose." These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing'***

**(John 1:19-28)**

- ✓ **Probably John's baptism was like that of a proselyte baptism**
- ✓ **The novelty in John's case was that he applied this to Jews**
- ✓ **John was the son of a priest, and a priest by descent. This was no way for a priest to behave**
- ✓ **What was John teaching and why the big crowd?**
- ✓ **John was a non-conformist. The church often rejects what doesn't fit into the system**
- ✓ **Where did he get his authority?**
- ✓ **On the one hand we are not called to be rebels or divisive. On the other hand, our ministry is from God and it is to Him we must give account**

- ✓ **They asked, 'Who are you?'**
- ✓ **He replied: 1) I am not the Messiah; 2) I am not Elijah; 3) I am not the Prophet (Deut.18:15-18)**
- ✓ **Then who are you?**
- ✓ **He replied that he was a voice crying in the wilderness, preparing the way for the Messiah**
- ✓ **If they knew their Scriptures, they would have understood this**
- ✓ **When a King came to a city, the roads were repaired. He was preparing the way for the King**
- ✓ **He said that he was not worthy to loosen the sandal strap of Jesus**

- **John was an object lesson in humility.**
- **Jesus is the Light.** *'John was a lamp that burned and gave light...'* (John 5:35). **Jesus was the Word; John was a voice testifying to the Word**
- **A voice is heard, not seen. Also, the Word endures when the voice is silent**
- **May God keep us from claiming to be anything more than what we really are. Paul referred to himself as 'less than the least of all saints' (Eph. 3:8).** *'So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, "We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do"'* (Luke 17:10)

**He was the voice of one crying in the  
wilderness not in the temple**

**Because God was outside of organized religion**

***'We have an altar from which those who serve  
the tabernacle have no right to eat. For the  
bodies of those animals, whose blood is  
brought into the sanctuary by the high priest  
for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore  
Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people  
with His own blood, suffered outside the  
gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside  
the camp, bearing His reproach'***

**(Heb.13:10-13)**

***'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." 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"'***

**(John 1:29-34)**

## **What did he cry?**

***'Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'***

**John, the apostle, has already explained that the Word is God, that He was with God, that all things were made by Him and that He became flesh and dwelt among us**

**Now, He is presented as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world**

**The Pharisees wanted a king/deliverer but didn't know they needed a lamb**



- **The image of the sacrificial lamb, is represented many times in the Old Testament**
- **He is the lamb slain before the foundation of the world**
- **He is the animal slain in the Garden of Eden**
- **He is the lamb God would Himself provide for Abraham as a substitute for Isaac**
- **He is the Passover lamb for Israel**
- **He is the lamb for the guilt offering in the Levitical sacrifices**
- **He is the lamb led to the slaughter in Isaiah 53**
- **Each of these lambs fulfilled their role in death. So Jesus would die for the sin of the whole world**

- ✓ **'Who takes away'.** The sense of the original combines the words *to bear* and *to take away*
- ✓ **Not 'the sins' but 'the sin of the world,'** as if the whole mass of human sin throughout all ages was collected into one and placed upon Jesus
- ✓ **'Of the world'.** The sacrifice of the Lamb of God has the capacity to forgive every sin ever committed and cleanse every sinner. It is big enough for the entire human race throughout all history
- ✓ **Jesus takes something away (sins) but also gives us something (the Holy Spirit).** We cannot cleanse ourselves and we cannot live the Christian life by our own strength