

The Gospel of John

Chapter 1:29-51

December 22, 1996

- **The Gospel of John Outline:**

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- Chapter 1 Our Lord is the Word, the Light and the Life

- **Review & Introduction**

John began this chapter declaring the theology of the deity of Christ. He began with His preexistence as the Word of God, then he declares Him to be the creator of all things. Then we see Christ as the life and light of man. John then moves into the testimony of John the Baptist so as to begin giving the elements of his defense of both the humanity of Christ as well as His deity.

In the rest of this chapter we will see further testimony of John as well as see the calling of the initial Apostles.

- **Exposition**

John 1:29-51

- • *29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"³⁰*

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- One of the aspects of John's ministry was to announce the Lord. Not only did he prepare the way and call people to repentance, he was also one of the ways that the Father chose to announce His Son. John's job wasn't to make Jesus into the Son of God or to get Him into the office of King. John's job was to recognize Him when He came and announce that to the world. They were able to "behold" Him because He was there in their midst.
 - The term "Lamb of God" has tremendously deep covenantal background. This title describes not only what our Lord's actions were but also describes His next office—Priest. The paschal lamb was a picture of the perfect Lamb of God and the Aaronic priesthood was a shadow of the Melchizedekian priesthood of Christ. This sacrifice of Christ was a once for all sacrifice which does not continue to be offered but was offered as atonement. The sacrifice of Christ as the Passover lamb was offered and received by the Father as an efficacious atonement for the sins of the world. In that the old system was unable to make those who offered the sacrifices righteous, this sacrifice of Christ was able to fully atone and propitiate the wrath of God. Although there are a number of blessings which flow from Christ, this blessing is primary.
 - There has been much debate for centuries about what it means for Christ to have taken away the sins of the "world". This is an absolutely central doctrinal issue that we must be clear on. Does the word "world" in this context mean each and every sin of each and every person on the world who has ever lived, is living, or ever will live? When John teaches about the extent of the atonement is the extent exhaustive? The Bible teaches clearly to the contrary.

- **WORLD**

	ALL	SOME
Sin	Universal Damnation	Universal Damnation
Salvation	Universal Atonement	Limited Atonement

- • *"This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.'³¹ I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."*

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- John restates what was declared in vs. 15 but adds and interesting wording, "a Man". Not only does this word bring with it specific references to maleness but it is also the word for husband and the authority that comes with that office. As we

know Christ came as the groom and is preparing the bride to which he is currently betrothed.

- It also appears that John did not grow up knowing who the Messiah was to be. Although it is feasible that John and Jesus knew each other well as relatives, it appears that John wasn't aware that Jesus was the Christ until this moment.

• • 32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him."³³ "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.'³⁴ "And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."

- This becomes the climax of John the Baptist's testimony because here he declares that he witnessed the descent of the Spirit of God which God Himself had informed John would be the sure sign of the messiah. This anointing of Christ by the Spirit was not the same as the baptism of the spirit of regenerated believers. For Christ, who was fully God, the descent of the Spirit was a declaration of the identity of Christ and the inauguration of his priestly ministry.

• • 35 Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples.³⁶ And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"³⁷ The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.³⁸ 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?"³⁹ 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).⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.⁴¹ He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ).⁴² And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).

- Once Christ has been revealed to John, his mission became to point people specifically to Jesus. John points two of his followers, Andrew for sure and possibly Peter (probably not) who follow Jesus based on the testimony of John. The immediate response of the disciples was to abandon their other activities and spend their time with Jesus. Armed with a sure testimony of John, Andrew heads home and notifies Peter that he has found the Messiah. They were so hungry for the advent of the Christ that they responded instantly. Jesus gives Peter a new name, foretelling the role that Peter would play in the advancement of the Church.

• • 43 The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."⁴⁶ And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!"⁴⁸ Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."⁴⁹ Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"⁵⁰

- Philip is the first to be called directly by Christ and this calling had its immediate effect. On a somewhat funny note, notice that Philip goes and calls Nathanael to declare to him that they have found the Messiah. Philip declares two technical truths incorrectly, first that Jesus was of Nazareth and secondly that Jesus was the son of Joseph. Although what Philip said was true on an elementary level, the deeper technical truth was not declared. The point here is that the faithful declaration of even elementary truth is honored by God and Nathanael is drawn to be a disciple.
- Our Lord pronounces Nathanael as a true Israelite, one who harbors no deceit. This is probably a twofold comment first that Nathanael was a faithful man and secondly the phrase is probably an indictment on many of the other Israelites He had encountered. Nathanael's willingness to believe and quick recognition of Christ reveals the hope that was built up in him.

• • Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these."⁵¹ And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." NKJV

- Jesus doesn't reprove Nathanael for his quick confession but rather commends his faith and declares that there would be even greater evidences of the things that Nathanael was faithfully receiving. But this was enough for Nathanael to follow Christ and to rest in the assurance of greater things to be revealed.
- There is strong evidence to equate Jacob's dream (Gen. 28:12) with this vision of angels ascending and descending upon Christ. It is very possible that Jacob's vision finds its fulfillment in Christ as the Ladder which creates the access to the Father in heaven.