

THE GOSPEL OF

JOHN

STUDENT LESSON

PREPARING
THE WAY
FOR JESUS

Open it

1. What is a nickname someone has called you? Does this name have a specific meaning behind it?

Daily Devotions

Day 1 — Today's Theme: Explore It

Read John 1:19–34.

2. Who did the Jews in Jerusalem send to investigate John the Baptist?
3. Who are the three different people that they thought John the Baptist might be?
4. What did he quote from Isaiah the Prophet?
5. How do we see John the Baptist's humility?
6. Where was John baptizing?
7. Why did John baptize with water?
8. How did John recognize Jesus?
9. John describes Jesus in what three ways?

Day 2 — Today's Theme: What's Your Identity?

Read John 1:19–23

Identity is a big deal these days! We identify with certain groups at school, whether it's a sports team, a club, or a social group. We wear t-shirts to show who we identify with. Even at Village, we have green t-shirts that say, "Village Bible is my Church Family" to communicate that we love being a part of Village Bible Church, or we have student ministry t-shirts that say "Unashamed" to communicate that we are unashamed to be identified with Jesus and are not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.¹

In John 1:19–23, the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent some priests and Levites to identify who John the Baptist is because he is drawing crowds of people and performing baptisms as an "unauthorized teacher" by the Jewish leaders. The Jews thought he may be the promised Messiah, but John confessed freely that he is not the Christ..² They then thought that John the Baptist might be Elijah. They knew that Elijah hadn't died³ and thought he may actually be the Elijah that was taken up into heaven. The last chapter of the Old Testament prophesied the coming of Elijah,⁴ and Jesus says that John the Baptist is a fulfillment of this prophecy, as the one who prepared the way for Jesus, but not the actual person, Elijah. They also thought that John the Baptist was "The Prophet" that was foretold in Deuteronomy 18:15, 18, but he strongly denies being that person. Actually, he says in John 1:23, "I am the voice of one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'"

What is your identity? As a follower of Jesus, 1 Peter 2:9 says clearly what your identity is in Christ, "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

10. How does the world define a person's identity? What things would you say define your identity?

11. What groups do you identify with? (Sports you play, clubs, social groups at school, professional sports teams like the Cubs, Sox or Bears, etc.)

12. Go through each of the phrases in 1 Peter 2:9 and explain the significance of each title that describes who you are in Christ. Which one of these identifying titles resonates with you the most?

¹ Romans 1:16

² "The Christ" (Greek) and "the Messiah" (Hebrew) both mean "Anointed One." NIV Study Bible footnotes for John 1:20

³ 2 Kings 2:11

⁴ Malachi 4:5

Day 3 — Today's Theme: Humility

Read John 1:24–28.

The Pharisees questioned the authority John had to baptize. Since he is not the Christ, Elijah, or The Prophet, and since he wasn't authorized by the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem, they questioned why John was baptizing.

The Jews practiced baptism for ritual cleansing, but in all cases the baptismal candidates baptized themselves.⁵ There was no precedent for John to be "baptizing" other people, and the Jews did not regard themselves as needing to repent. This was something Gentiles needed to do when they converted to Judaism. Evidently, when Gentiles converted to Judaism: the males of the family underwent circumcision, and all members of the family—both sexes—were baptized.⁶

Instead of puffing out his chest and responding with pride, because God was using him, John responded in humility. He said that he is not even worthy to untie the straps on Jesus' sandals.

During the time that John the Baptist lived, rabbis had their own disciples who followed them around to learn the Scriptures and how to live out what God requires from the Scriptures. A rabbi's disciples would be servants for their rabbi, doing whatever was asked of them. One task that was considered too lowly for a disciple to do was to untie the straps of his rabbi's sandals. However, John showed humility because he was more than willing to untie Jesus' sandals, but he didn't feel worthy to perform this lowly task.⁷

13. What are the consequences for a person who is prideful and boasts about himself?

14. What are the benefits of humility?

15. How does someone become humble and go on living a humble life?

⁵ Carson, Donald A. *The Gospel According to John*. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, and Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991. p. 145

⁶ Morris, Leon. *The Gospel According to John*. New International Commentary on the New Testament series. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971. p. 123.

⁷ Ibid, page 124

Day 4 — Today's Theme: What's in a Name?

Read John 1:29–34

Do you know why your parents chose to give you the name that you have? Do you know what your name means? Do you know what the names “Jesus” and “Christ” mean? Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua which means “The Lord saves.”⁸ And “Christ” is the Greek form of “Messiah” which means “Anointed One.”⁹ According to Cruden's concordance, there are 198 names or titles in the Bible for Jesus.¹⁰

In these verses, Jesus arrives on the scene to begin his public ministry and John the Baptist acknowledges the greatness of Jesus because he saw the Holy Spirit descend upon him like a dove! We see two more titles of Jesus in these verses which help us understand more of who He is and what He has done for us. First, John calls Jesus the “Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.”¹¹ The Israelites were slaves in Egypt for 400 years and the Lord raised up Moses to confront Pharaoh and deliver the Israelites through the 10 plagues. For the final plague, each household was to take a year-old lamb without defect, slaughter it, and then place its blood on the doorpost of their house. When God sent the destroyer to kill the firstborn son of every home in Egypt, he would pass over each home that had blood on the doorpost and not kill their firstborn son.¹² Every year, the Israelites were instructed to sacrifice a lamb at the yearly Passover feast to remember how the Lord delivered the Israelites from Egypt. Jesus is the final Passover Lamb, who takes away our sin once for all when he sacrificed himself on the cross.

A second significant title that John the Baptist calls Jesus is “Son of God.”¹³ This name shows that Jesus is a deity, that He actually is God, just as we saw in John 1:1 that the “Word,” being Jesus, was God!

16. What have been some of the consequences your parents have given you when they caught you doing something wrong? Did you feel those consequences were fair?

17. What are the consequences of our sins? Do you think those consequences are fair? Why?

18. How should Jesus being the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world affect your daily life?

⁸ *NIV Study Bible* footnote on Matthew 1:21

⁹ *Ibid*, Matthew 1:17

¹⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Names_and_titles_of_Jesus_in_the_New_Testament#:~:text=Although%20the%20precise%20difference%20between,continuously%20in%20print%20ever%20since.

¹¹ John 1:29

¹² Exodus 12

¹³ John 1:34

This study was compiled, and questions were written by Pastors Mario Arindaeng and Jeremy Anderson. www.villagebible.church/students