

LifeWay Family Bible Series for Dec. 5: Proclaim Christ Lord with the way you live life_112204

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Proclaim Christ Lord with the way you live life

John 1:19-34

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John the Baptist was a visual oddball and a bold one at that. When he preached, curious crowds gathered to see and hear.

Clearly and courageously, he began the debate of the ages as a voice “crying in the wilderness.” The issue was: “Who is Jesus?”

Today, this question engages people in holy places and in Hollywood, stirs discussion by brilliant scholars in universities and the uneducated in backward villages and is debated in statehouses and in simple homes. Who is Jesus supposed to be? What is the meaning of his life? Did Jesus consider himself both God and man? Was he an itinerate sage, a social cynic, an

apocalyptic prophet, an inspiring rabbi, or is he truly God?

John the Baptist introduced the question, saying, “but among you stands one you do not know” (1:26). Jesus offered the question to his disciples, “Who do people say I am?” (Mark 8:27; Luke 9:18).



Few question the existence of the historical Jesus, but many debate the divinity of Christ. The aim of John's Gospel is to prove the true nature and character of Christ through the testimony of witnesses. John the Baptist was the first to confess and testify (1:19-21) of the divine identity and uniqueness of the man, Jesus from Nazareth.

He is Lord

“Make straight the way of the Lord” (v. 23). John, the writer-apostle, in the poetry of the prologue declares Jesus to be Christ, the incredible Word (vv. 1-18). He then presents his first witness, John the Baptist, respected by the Jews as a prophet, to corroborate his own belief.

The first announcement the Baptist made was that Jesus is Lord. This title affirms and validates Christ's absolute power and absolute authority. All people, in their personal freedom, are to submit in spiritual worship and obedience. Christ stands above all, in all authority, with a special measure of holiness, grace and love.

He is worthy

“I am not worthy to untie” his sandals (v. 27). Christ deserves his power

and authority and because of his power and authority is worthy of our confession and praise. It is one thing to declare Christ as Lord and another to accept him as Lord. This is the crucial step in understanding the nature of salvation. Genuine faith believes with the heart as well as the mind.

John the Baptist personally accepts the lordship of Christ in humility, praising him by describing his own unworthiness. Tending to shoes and feet is the menial work of a servant, but he considered himself unworthy of that. Rather than seek notoriety for himself, he prepared the way for the Lamb of God.

He is Savior

“The Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world” (v. 29). John is the intermediary who knows the past and sees the future (v. 17). Isaac asked Abraham, “Where is the lamb?” (Genesis 22:7). Isaiah spoke of “a lamb to the slaughter” (53:7). John also could see the new revelation in the old symbolism that Christ was the “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (1:29).

The lamb is a symbol of Christ's character without blemish, the perfect sacrifice offered for the sin of the world. The lamb also is a symbol of suffering, laying down his life willingly for others (the Passover lamb, Exodus 12:7-12). Jesus, the Lamb of God, sacrificed himself on Calvary as our substitute and became our Redeemer. “For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect” (1 Peter 1:18-19).

He is knowable

He is the one on “whom you see the Spirit come down and remain” (v. 33). He voiced before the crowd, “... among you stands one you do not know” (1:26, 31).

How does one recognize Jesus as the Christ, the expected Messiah? The Vatican has a document written by a Roman proconsul of Judea, describing the physical appearance of Jesus. John the Baptist did not identify Christ by his appearance. Two things convinced the Baptist that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah. The first was a spoken word or revelation from the Father, the “one who sent” him. The second was the fulfillment of that revelation when the Spirit came down upon Jesus and remained as had been told to him (v. 33).

This same principle is in effect today. Christ went away and left his Holy Spirit with us (John 14:15-27). As the presence of the Holy Spirit proved Jesus was God in human flesh, the presence of the Spirit attests to the validity of the Christian church and the Christian experience of faith. Christ is knowable through Scripture, the Holy Spirit and the testimony of other believers.

He is God

“This is the Son of God” (v. 34). John the Baptist confessed Jesus' superiority, his redemptive work and his deity, progressing to the ultimate conclusion that Jesus, Lord and the Lamb of God, was the divine Son of God. The chain of proof included a prediction or revelation from God, the fulfillment of that prediction and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Discussion questions

- ♦ How does the way you live your life proclaim who you believe Jesus to be? Do your actions and your beliefs match?

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