

LESSON 4: JOHN 1:19-51

JANUARY 17, 2018

OVERVIEW

- . First theme of John's letter focuses on the revelation of Jesus
- . John the Baptist's witness to Jesus as Savior – John 1:19-36
- . Jesus' personal witness to His first disciples

FIRST THEME OF JOHN'S LETTER FOCUSES ON THE REVELATION OF JESUS

- . Following the prologue John now focuses on the first of the three-part theme of his gospel, which is the revelation of Christ
- . John gives us a day-by-day account of the first eventful week of Jesus' public ministry
 - . Events of the first day – John 1:19-28
 - . Events of the second day – John 1:29-34
 - . Events of the third day – John 1:35-39
 - . Events of the fourth day – John 1:40-42
 - . Events of the fifth day – John 1:43-51
 - . No events of the sixth day are given
 - . Events of the seventh day – John 2:1-11
- . John records two type of witness to Jesus: John the Baptist, the first followers

JOHN THE BAPTIST'S WITNESS TO JESUS AS SAVIOR – JOHN 1:19-36

- . John the Baptist's previous preaching and baptisms – Matthew 3 and Luke 3
 - . Remember that John wrote this gospel well after the other three
 - . This is why he begins the gospel so abruptly
 - . He is presuming the reader is well acquainted with background
 - . When John began his ministry, people poured out from Jerusalem and Judea to hear him preach along the eastern bank of the Jordan River
 - . John called for an outwardly confession and cleansing of the spirit through a baptism of water
 - . Previous to John's day the only people who were baptized were non-Jews who wished to become proselytes of the Jewish faith
 - . Israelites were never baptized; they presumed they already belonged to God

- . This preaching was of great concern to the Pharisees because it implied the Israelite was unclean
- . John's preaching and message could also confuse some into thinking He was the Messiah
 - . "So will he sprinkle many nations" – Isaiah 52:15
 - . "I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean" Ezekiel 36:25
- . The Sanhedrin's deputation sent to John – John 1:19, 24
 - . The Sanhedrin was composed of seventy-one members coming from three groups – the chief priests, the elders of the priests (including ordinary priests and Levites) and teachers of the law and Pharisees
 - . The teachers were Levites who considered themselves experts
 - . The Pharisees were an ultra conservative sect of about 6000 who were conformers
 - . They wanted to bring the nation to the strictest observance of God's law
 - . They were also zealots who wanted to throw the Roman occupants of Israel out
 - . The Sanhedrin sent a group of these people out to John to question him on his message and authority
 - . John was the son of a priest and was, by birth, authorized to preach
 - . However he was acting in an unorthodox way and not teaching in a manner sanctioned by the religious authority
- . John's witness to the deputation – John 1:19-28
 - . The deputation asked three questions dealing with Old Testament prophesy
 - . The first question was whether John was the Messiah – John 1:19-20
 - . John made it very clear he was not the Messiah
 - . The second question asked if John was Elijah – John 1:21
 - . Elijah was Israel's greatest reformer.
 - . Elijah did not die but was taken up to heaven – 2 Kings 2:11
 - . It was written that Elijah would return to earth to prepare God's people for the Messiah's coming – Malachi 4:5
 - . John clearly states he is not Elijah
 - . The third question was whether John was a prophet – John 1:21
 - . John declared he was not
 - . He was then asked who he was and why he baptized
 - . John says not to fix their eyes on him, he is merely a voice preparing the road for the coming of the Lord – Isaiah 40:3
 - . John knew that he was acting as God's voice pointing to Christ
 - . "I just draw back the curtain so that Jesus occupies the stage"
 - . His answer to baptism is that he baptizes with water but that the true baptism of the Holy Spirit is reserved for the true Messiah
 - . The meaning behind John's baptism was a person's recognition of the need to be spiritually cleansed and their desire to change

- . It involves a confession of sin and points to its removal
- . John's baptism was to make aware and prepare oneself
- . John's reverence for Jesus – John 1:26-28
 - . When John said he was not worthy of untying the straps of Jesus' shoes he could not have given himself a lower position
- . John's witness to the people – John 1:29-34
 - . When John first sees Jesus he immediately recognizes and point Him out
 - . "Look the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world"
 - . "A man who comes after me has surpassed me because He was before me"
 - . In Israel, with age came seniority and John was older
 - . Here John implies that Christ has existed in past ages of eternity
 - . The confirming sign of the Holy Spirit as a dove
 - . John says that God spoke to him and said "the man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is He who will baptize with the Holy Spirit"
 - . John testifies that he has seen and that this is God's Chosen One

IESUS' PERSONAL WITNESS TO HIS FIRST DISCIPLES – JOHN 1:37-51

- . Andrew and John's following of Jesus – John 1:37-39
 - . These two men were baptized by and disciples of John the Baptist
 - . They follow Jesus immediately after John's declaration
 - . They didn't follow because the Messiah would deliver Israel from the Romans, rather because he said He would take away the sins of he world
 - . When Jesus turned to greet them, He asked questions that made them think
 - . John records the exact moment this happens
 - . John is reinforcing the enormity of this life changing moment
- . Andrews witness to his brother Simon (Peter) – john 1:40-42
 - . Although Andrew was the first to follow Jesus, he shows no resentment towards Peter when Jesus elevates Peter to one of the main disciples
 - . Whenever Andrew is mentioned he is always bringing someone to Christ
 - . Andrew 's words seem to be filled with joy when he finds Peter – John 1:41
 - . When Jesus meets Simon he quickly changes his name to Peter, which in Greek means "rock"
 - . The new name symbolizes the exact opposite of the unstable Simon
 - . In scripture a change of name often denotes a new relationship with God – Abram to Abraham, Jacob to Israel, Saul to Paul
- . Philip's witness to Nathanael about Jesus – John 1:43-46
 - . Jesus finds Philip and calls him to Himself
 - . The next day Jesus decides to head back to Galilee and finds Philip somewhere around the Jordan

- . Philip was probably also a disciple of John the Baptist
- . It's possible Andrew and John had told Jesus about Philip
- . Jesus calls him to follow and he does
- . Philip is filled with joy and finds his friend Nathanael
 - . He tells Nathanael this is the One the prophets spoke of and to come
 - . Nathanael was extremely well versed in scripture and knew the Messiah was not prophesied to come out of Nazareth
 - . Yet despite that, he was willing to go with Philip to see for himself
- . The witness of Jesus to Nathanael – John 1:47-51
 - . Jesus sees a sincere, true Israelite, as He looks directly in to his heart
 - . Jesus saw in Nathanael a sincere desire to know God
 - . Jesus' questioning revealed to Nathanael that Jesus knew him even though they just met
 - . Nathanael just knew based on that encounter that Jesus was the Messiah
 - . Of the first six disciples Nathanael makes the greatest leap of faith

**** THERE WILL BE NO LESSON ON FEBRUARY 7, 2018 ****

NEXT LESSON: FEBRUARY 21, 2018 – JOHN 2:1-22