

The Life and Teachings of Jesus 11

The Messiah's Witness

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To God Be The Glory

Jesus is God. He was God manifested in the flesh. He is the Son of God. He is the Creator of all things, and the Savior of the world. To Him all glory and praise is to be given.

In Revelation 5:11–14, John wrote, “And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, [be] unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four [and] twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.”

Jesus is the center of attention in creation. He receives honor and worship from all of creation. Why is this? He is God our Savior.

Jesus Is The Savior

John 1:1–5 says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”

Jesus is God, the beginning of all things, the Word of God, and the Creator of all things. He is life, and He is light. He lights the world with truth. He enlightens us with truth. And with truth, He frees us from bondage to sin, from fear of condemnation, and from the crippling snares of falsehoods.

This message of freedom in Christ is the message everyone needs to hear about, needs to know about, and need to believe.

Jesus Verified With Witnesses

The title of this message is The Messiah's witness

The Written Witness

When Jesus came, He came with a witness. He came with proclamation, declaration, and verification. He is the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God, and God our Savior.

The Apostle John, the beloved disciples of Jesus, wrote in John 20:31, "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." The book of John is all about Jesus. It is a book written to share the truths of Jesus with the purpose of convincing people to believe in Jesus.

John The Baptist Prepared The Way

John the Baptist, the cousin of Jesus, prepared the way for the coming of Jesus 2,000 years ago. At age thirty, it was time to reveal the long-awaited and promised Messiah. It was time for Jesus to present Himself to Israel as their King, their Savior, and their Messiah. John was six months older than Jesus. They were both thirty years old.

John 1:6–8 says, "There was a man sent from God, whose name [was] John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all [men] through him might believe. He was not that Light, but [was sent] to bear witness of that Light. [That] was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

This is perhaps one of the saddest passages in the Bible. No greater sacrificial love has ever been rejected than during this time when Christ came to His own. No greater love has ever been felt and no greater sacrifice ever made to save another than Christ's love and sacrifice. No price has ever been paid or a more costly gift offered than that which Christ brought to His own. The magnitude of love is what makes the rejection so horrendous. Rejecting the greatest love in all creation, makes that rejection the greatest and most tragic of all rejections.

Rather than rejoice with an abundance of gratefulness and humility, His own rejected Him. They snubbed Him. They had no time for Him. They had no room for Him. They had no concern for Him. His great love was returned with indifference, hate, and contempt. His eternal concern was returned with ... unconcern. His invitation to come to Him was rejected. His precious gift was tossed away before it was even opened.

Isa 53:3 says, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were [our] faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." Words fail to describe the pain and the sorrow Christ must have felt. The unlimited, pleading love of God was refused.

John's purpose in life was to be a witness of the Light, of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, the life and the Savior. The purpose of his witness was for all men to believe in Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the promised Savior of God. John was not the message. He was the messenger. His witness was not about him. It was about Jesus.

John was God's chosen witness. He had priestly testimony. He had family testimony. He had Scriptural testimony. He had firsthand knowledge testimony, and He had Holy Spirit testimony, as well as testimony from the Father.

John was chosen by God. Luke 1:11 says an angel came to Zacharias while he was in the temple, and Luke 1:13 tells of John's miraculous birth. Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth were not able to have children. Luke 1:15 said John would be filled with the Holy Ghost and live as a Nazarite, that is dedicated

and consecrated to God. Luke 1:16 said Because of John's testimony, many would be turned to the Lord. Luke 1:17 said He would prepare people for the Lord in the spirit and power of Elias (Elijah).

John was the son of the high priest, Zacharias. He was in the lineage Aaron of high priests. God chose a man of the high priest lineage to prepare the way for the Lord.

John was a family witness. Luke 1:36 says the angel Gabriel told Mary her cousin Elizabeth would have a baby, then six months later Mary would have a baby. Elizabeth miraculously conceived in her old age after being barren, and Mary miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit before she was married. The barren conceived and the unmarried conceived. Two miracles in the same family with one purpose; Preparing the way for the Lord; Announcing the king's arrival...the Messiah has come.

Scriptural witness

John had Scriptural witness from the prophets and knowledge of Jesus fulfilling critical prophecies. For example,

The Messiah would be from the tribe of Judah: Genesis 49:10 says, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him [shall] the gathering of the people [be]."

The Messiah would be a descendant of King David: 2 Samuel 7:12-16 says, "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom."

The Messiah was to be born at Bethlehem: Micah 5:2 says, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, [though] thou be little among the thousands of Judah, [yet] out of thee shall he come forth unto me [that is] to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth [have been] from of old, from everlasting."

The Messiah was born of a virgin and called Emmanuel. Isaiah 7:14, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

The Messiah would be called out of Egypt. Hosea 11:1 says, "When Israel [was] a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."

The Messiah would be declared by another. Isaiah 40:3-5, "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see [it] together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken [it]." John was that someone called by God filled with the Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit confirmation

John had Holy Spirit confirmation. In Luke 1:33, John said, "And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost."

John not only saw the Holy Spirit descend upon Jesus, He heard the Father declare who Jesus was. Mark 1:9-11 says, "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, [saying], Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

At Jesus baptism, there was the fulfillment of the First John 5:7 declaration, “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.”

Other witnesses

And besides John, there were other witnesses, such as Anna. Luke 2:36-38 says, “And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity. And she [was] a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served [God] with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.”

And there was Simeon. Lu 2:25-32 says, “And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name [was] Simeon; and the same man [was] just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.²⁶ And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.”

John’s firsthand knowledge

With firsthand knowledge from God who the Messiah would be and who Jesus was, John proclaimed in the wilderness of Jerusalem, “Prepare ye the way of the Lord.” John 1:15 says, “John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.” John 1:29 says, “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” In John 1:31, John said, “And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.” In John 1:34, John said, “And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.” And in John 1:35–36, John said, “Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!”

John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus with his witness. He fulfilled the prophecy of his own coming leading up to the coming of the Messiah. Luke 1:16 says, “And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.”

John the Baptist pointed others to Christ. He declared who the Messiah was. He proclaimed that Jesus was the Christ.

John prepared the way by warning people to repent. Mark 1:4 says, “John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.”

In Acts 13:24–25, Paul said, “When John had first preached before his coming [the coming of Jesus] the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not [he]. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of [his] feet I am not worthy to loose.”

John was a humble witness of Christ. He did not speak of himself. He did not lift himself up. He did not compete with Christ for attention. He was the witness and the messenger, not the Messiah or the message.

John 1:19-23, says, “And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I [am] the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.”

He told people to prepare themselves by repenting to *make straight the way of the Lord*. He baptized those who did so to make a public statement that they believed the message of John. They believed in the Messiah. They believed that God’s way was the right way. They believed that the Messiah was coming to them at that time.

Many believed. Many were baptized. This was not a baptism to save their souls. This was a baptism to proclaim that they believed the Messiah had washed their sins away. This was a baptism of repentance. It was a public declaration that they believed God had provided for them a Savior, the Messiah, and had saved them.

John fulfilled his calling as Luke 1:15 said he would. “For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother’s womb.”

He was great in the sight of the Lord because he believed God and obeyed Him. He fulfilled his calling.

Personal Challenge

John’s greatness in the sight of the Lord and his faithfulness raises the question for us to ask ourselves: Are we being faithful to fulfill our calling? Are we proclaiming to others that the Savior has come?

Our duty to God is no less important than John’s. We are witnesses of God, of His Christ, and of His promise to save sinners. There is no greater message in history, in the present, or in all of creation. It is up to us to proclaim this message to the world. It is God’s calling on our lives.

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