

# **Jesus as John Introduced Him**

## **Understanding Jesus by Understanding the Word In Relation to John the Baptist**

### ***Introduction***

If we are going to know Jesus as God has revealed Him in the Scriptures, we need to give our attention to how the Apostle John has introduced Him in the introduction to his Gospel.

Instead of introducing Jesus by speaking of his miraculous conception and birth, or by speaking of his lineage, John introduces Jesus by first speaking of “the Word” saying that the Word was in the beginning, with God and even was God (1). Life (eternal life, true life) existed in the Word (4). And that life was the Light of men (4).

These little words (Word, life, light) had large meanings to John’s first readers. The Word was known to them as the creating and ordering agency of the divine -- however his readers variously conceived the divine. How did all that is come into existence? John’s first readers would have said it was through “the Word.” Where is the source of eternal life? It is in the Word. How do we understand life? It is the Light -- it is the “Let there be light” spoken by God which displaced the darkness of God’s absence and ushered in God’s creation according to God’s will.

As John continues to introduce Jesus we will see that the Light, life, and Word find their most ultimate expression to us in the person of Jesus.

If we want to understand Jesus as John the Apostle introduced Him we have to hear what he has written concerning the Word, life, and light. All that is look back by way of review.

John, in verses 6-8 of chapter 1 (which we are considering today), continues to introduce Jesus by speaking of another John, John the Baptist. Specifically we hear about John the Baptist in relation to the Light who we have just heard was was the life which is in, and only in, the Word.

John 1:6-8 -- 6 There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the Light, but *he came* to testify about the Light.

If we are to understand Jesus as John introduced Him we must add to our active thinking about Him first of all today ...

- I. An Understanding of John the Baptist -- an understanding which John’s Readers Would Have Already Had**
  - A. Bridging the Gap Between John’s Readers and Ourselves**

**1. What John's first Jewish and Christian Readers would have Understood about John the Baptist (but we may not).**

**a) First: What John's Readers Would have Understood about God's Purposes and Plans in Their Time**

**(1) Yahweh Himself is spoken of as coming to set things right**

(a) Is 35:2bff

(b) Is 40:1, 10-11

**(2) Yahweh's Servant is seen as being the way in which Yahweh comes and works**

(a) Servant Songs in book of Isaiah

(i) Is 42:1-4 --

1 "Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold;  
My chosen one in whom My soul delights.

I have put My Spirit upon Him;

He will bring forth justice to the nations.

2 "He will not cry out or raise His voice,  
Nor make His voice heard in the street.

3 "A bruised reed He will not break

And a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish;

He will faithfully bring forth justice.

4 "He will not be disheartened or crushed  
Until He has established justice in the earth;

And the coastlands will wait expectantly for His law."

(ii) Is 49:1-7

3 He said to Me, "You are My Servant, Israel,  
In Whom I will show My glory."

6 He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be  
My Servant

To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the  
preserved ones of Israel;

I will also make You a light of the nations

So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

(iii) Is 50:4-9

5 The Lord God has opened My ear;

And I was not disobedient

Nor did I turn back.

6 I gave My back to those who strike Me,

And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard;

I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting.

9 Behold, the Lord God helps Me;

Who is he who condemns Me?

Behold, they will all wear out like a garment;

The moth will eat them.

(a) Re: the Obedience of Jesus see: [Matt 26:39](#); [John 8:29](#);  
[14:31](#); [15:10](#); [Acts 26:19](#); [Phil 2:8](#); [Heb 5:8](#); [10:7](#)

(b) Re: Jesus Suffering see: [Matt 26:67](#); [27:30](#); [Mark 14:65](#);  
[15:19](#); [Luke 22:63](#)

(iv) Is 52:13-53:12 (cf. [Phil 2:9](#); [Heb 9:28](#); [1 Pet 2:24-25](#))

13 Behold, My servant will prosper,

He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted.

**5** But He was pierced through for our transgressions,  
He was crushed for our iniquities;  
The chastening for our well-being *fell* upon Him,  
And by His scourging we are healed.

**6** All of us like sheep have gone astray,  
Each of us has turned to his own way;  
But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all  
To fall on Him.

**11** As a result of the anguish of His soul,  
He will see *it and* be satisfied;  
By His knowledge the Righteous One,  
My Servant, will justify the many,  
As He will bear their iniquities.

(v) Is 61:1-3 (cf. Lk 4:16-21)

1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,  
Because the LORD has anointed me  
To bring good news to the afflicted;  
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
To proclaim liberty to captives  
And freedom to prisoners;

#### **b) That Servant will be Heralded/Announced**

(1) Malachi 3:1 speaking of the Isaianic Servant -- **"Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me.** And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming," says the LORD of hosts.

#### **c) John the Baptist was that Herald, the "Isaianic Forerunner"**

- (1) Every Gospel Declares John to be the Isaianic Forerunner
- (2) Every Gospel Cites Isaiah when speaking of John the Baptist as he helps us understand Jesus
  - (a) John 1:23 cites Is 40:3
  - (b) Mat 3:3 cites Is 40:3
  - (c) Mark 1:1-3 cites Mal 3:1 and Is 40:3
  - (d) Luke 1:76 cites Mal 3:1 which looks to Is 40:3
  - (e) Luke 3:4-6 cites Is 40:3-5

#### **b) The Isaianic Forerunner Would Come at the Most Important Time in Salvation History (the history of God's saving work)**

(1) **The Gospel** -- God had promised from the very midst of the Fall that He would reverse the curse of estrangement and restore creation to the order of His intention. All that was clearly wrong with the world would be righted. The kingdom which had fallen would be restored. He would bless all the families of the earth and He would do so through Abraham and his descendants -- the people called

Israel -- who were collectively His son. But, as history makes clear, Israel failed to be the son living in intimate communion with God and representing Him to the world as a light to the nations. So in Israel's later years God spoke through His prophets declaring that **He** Himself would bring about the restoration, the New Creation, by His own coming. He Himself would somehow come in a person Isaiah described as a Servant, the Servant, the Servant who would Himself be God. When that Servant came there would be such a real change in the way things were that **that time** would be regarded as the pivotal point in salvation history. History would be divided into the time before the coming of the Isaianic Servant, and the time after. There would be the old creation and the new creation. The coming of the Servant (Jesus), whom John will disclose to us as we move forward in His gospel, is the time coincident with what we also call the "Christ Event" which is the conception, birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, enthronement of Jesus Christ and His sending of His Spirit. Paul in Eph 1:10b calls this, "the fullness of the times" -- "**fullness of the times, that is,** the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth." It is a time so significant, a time God so wanted His people to discern, that he not only sent Christ Jesus (the substance of this change and the incarnation of the Word) but he also sent a herald before the Christ to prepare the way for him -- He sent a man named John -- John the Baptist. John is the key figure of the time of transition between the old order and the new. Following the herald came the King. He would not come unannounced. He would come on the way prepared by the herald. Isaiah had said, Is 40:3-5

A voice is calling,  
"Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness;  
Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.  
4 "Let every valley be lifted up,  
And every mountain and hill be made low;  
And let the rough ground become a plain,  
And the rugged terrain a broad valley;  
5 Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed,  
And all flesh will see *it* together;  
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

2. **As those seeking to know Jesus as He is revealed in the Scriptures, we must call these things to mind** so that when we read, "There came a man sent from God, whose name was John" we will be understanding what John meant -- not starting from scratch but "caught up" to what John's first readers

would have known.

a) A Good Question to Ask When We Read the Bible

- (1) What did the original readers understand about the things said that we might understand from our distance from the original writing?

## II. An Understanding of John the Baptist that John the Apostle Was Adding

### A. In Verse 6

There came a man  
sent from God,  
ἀποστέλλω  
whose name was John.

Ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος, A.M.I. 3rd Sing, γίνομαι  
ἀπεσταλμένος παρὰ θεοῦ, Perf. Pasv. Ptcp. Nom. Sing. Masc.,  
ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰωάννης·

#### 1. John Came

a) γίνομαι

- (1) to become, i.e. to come into existence, begin to be, receive being

b) **Not came along** (like coming down the road)

c) **But came about** (as in was created, came into being)

#### 2. John Was Sent from God

a) **Not from alongside as if he was hanging out with God**

b) **But “from” in the sense of “an intimacy of purpose not proximity”**

- (1) “...this individual came into being as one set apart and commissioned by God Himself... to fulfill divine promise and accomplish a specific foreordained mission pertaining to God’s design for the creation.” (Culver, p. 22)
- (2) He was sent from (as in by) God as a means to God’s purposed end (Beale’s second use of παρὰ with the genitive M-Ed or C-E.)
- (3) Luke records the story of John’s conception and birth. His account makes it clear that God, from the very beginning of his life, had specific purposes for John. Read Luke 1:5-17ff, 39-45, 57-80.
- (4) Before John was conceived, God had purposed and chosen Him to go before the Lord to prepare His way as He came to save.
- (5) He was commissioned by God to bear witness to the Light as verse 7 says. But one more thing from verse 6 before we get there.

#### 3. John was named by God

a) This text says, “his name was John”

b) But Luke’s account recorded God’s angel giving Zacharias the name John. People were surprised by that name because it was not a family name; a clue that this person was to be defined not by his family of birth and their history, but by God and his purposes.

c) It could be that God liked the name John, or it could be that the meaning was also significant: “graced by God” or “Yahweh is gracious”

d) Interestingly Jesus too was named by God

- (1) Mat 1:20 -- an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream,

saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. **21** She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

(2) Jesus means savior

(3) **John 3:17 -- For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.**

e) It is indeed fitting that in John and Jesus we have God’s graciousness and Savior

## B. In Verse 7

He* came as a witness, *[This One]	οὗτος ἦλθεν εἰς μαρτυρίαν	A.A.Indic. 3rd Sing., ἔρχομαι, I come οὗτος -- Demonstrative pronoun. Nom. Sing. Masc.
to testify about the Light, so that	ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ φωτός, ἵνα	A.A. Subj.3rd P. Sing, μαρτυρέω, I testify
all might believe through him.	πάντες πιστεύσωσιν δι’ αὐτοῦ.	A.A.Subj 3rd P. Pl., πιστεύω, I believe

### 1. As a Witness = As a Means to the End of Witness

a) See Beale’s use of εἰς with the accusative

### 2. Witness = μαρτυρίαν from μαρτυρία

- a) Thayer shows this to refer to prophetic **office** or the actual **testimony** of one testifying
- b) From root μάρτυς as used in Acts 1:8 (you shall be my witnesses) describing **a person** who can state or assert something to be the case
- c) John’s God given office was that of witness -- he was to present a testimony. And what was he to testify?

### 3. He was to Testify (μαρτυρήσῃ) About/Concerning the Light

- a) **We know where John the Writer is going** (Jesus as the Light)
- b) **But He hasn’t gone there yet.** The Light at this point in John’s introduction resides in the Word.
- c) **John came to testify about the Light**

(1) at first as it resided in the Word (eternally existing, pre-incarnate Word)

(2) and then as the Word was incarnated in Jesus (v. 14).

(3) Remember the Light was the life which was in the Word who was God (1-5). And from God’s first “Let there be light” (Gen 1:3) I am helped by letting LIGHT point to the creating/redeeming presence and work of God which brings about His purposes from the darkness of pre-creation or the darkness of fallen estranged humanity. Light (all that is of God and His life), darkness (all that is not of God and is of death). If estranged humanity can be pictured

by darkness, redeemed humanity in communion with God can be pictured by Light. The Light of the Word was in the world since creation, subdued but present after the fall, and it would be most evident in the person of Jesus the incarnate word.

(4) I think of God's promises to Isaiah that He Himself would come to deliver His people (Is 35, 40:esp 10-11 as above). John the Baptist came to testify about the Light that was first in the pre-incarnate Word and then more fully in the incarnate Word in Christ. He was like the prophets of old who testified to the Light of God under the Old covenant and called men to God. But he was the greatest of all the prophets in that he called men to God incarnate in Christ Jesus who was Himself the New Covenant and the True Israel, the ultimate Light which shines effectively and finally displacing the darkness.

(5) Jesus spoke very highly of John in Mat 11:7ff.

#### d) The Purpose of the Witness' Testimony of the Light

(1) He came and testified so that all might believe through him.

(2) God's purpose for John the Baptist was the faith of His people.

(3) We see in John the transitional nature of his time and his calling. His exhortation was "Repent!" and we rightly see repentance as a change of mind that is the other side of the coin of faith. Repentance and faith are so closely linked that they really can not be separated. John called people to repent and God purposed through him the faith of His people. What a calling upon his life!

As great as John the Baptist was, and as famous as he became, verse 8 clarifies that...

### C. In Verse 8

He was not the Light,  
but  
*he came* to testify  
about the Light.

οὐκ ἦν ἐκεῖνος τὸ φῶς,  
ἀλλ'  
ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ  
περὶ τοῦ φωτός.

Impf. Act. Indic., 3rd P. Sing., εἰμί, I am

A.A.Subj. 3rd P Sing., μαρτυρέω, I testify

1. He did so first in calling people to repentance and faith in God
2. He did so secondly by pointing people to Jesus the Lamb of God

a) **John 1:29** -- The next day he \*saw Jesus coming to him and \*said, "**Behold, the Lamb of God** who takes away the sin of the world!

### Conclusion

6 There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the Light, but

*he came to testify about the Light.*

John the Baptist was the forerunner to the Messiah who Isaiah God's prophet had spoken of. He testified to the Light of the Word that was God and the Light of the Word that was incarnated in Christ Jesus.

John called out: Change your thinking (Repent) for the Kingdom of God is at hand. God Himself, Light, is breaking into the darkness of fallen creation and estranged humanity. He is doing so in the Servant Isaiah had spoken of. The spotlight is on Jesus. Turn away from the darkness of your thinking that would have you ignore the Light. Look at the Light of God in the person of Christ.

We must receive the ministry of John the Baptist ourselves. The Light has come into the darkness that remains even in our day. We must look to the Light to whom John is directing our attention.

John 8:12

"I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

Let's pray.

***Communion***



**Sermon Audio Input**

Full Msg. Title: Jesus as John Introduced Him, Part 3  
Short Ver. Title: John 006  
Series Title: The Gospel of John  
Text: John 1:6-8  
Key Words: Light, John the Baptist

**Message Outline**

**Jesus as John Introduced Him**  
**Understanding Jesus by Understanding the Word**  
**In Relation to John the Baptist**

**Please See**

Pastor Kit Culver's sermon and study notes for his John 006 message, "The Logos and the Fullness of Times" from 8/16/15.

**Examine the Scriptures (Be Berean!)**

- John 1:1-18

**Consider & Discuss (Be Transformed!)**

- **Community Group Discussion:** How does John the writer of the Gospel help us understand Jesus by speaking of John the Baptist's testifying about the Light?

**Memory & Meditation Verse**

There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the Light, but *he came* to testify about the Light. John 1:6-8

**Community Life**

- **Looking Ahead: Goal for Fall 2015:** That we (each and together) would be the members of the body of Christ God intends, being "transformed by the renewing of our minds", ministering and being ministered to as He has gifted.  
**Means:** While actively and thoughtfully listening to what God has given us in the Gospel of John, I encourage everyone to either participate in one or more of the Community Groups available at SHC, or come up with your own God honoring "Body Life Plan."

**Next Sunday**

John 1:9-13