

# (John) 02 - the Life Announced

by Alan Redpath

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*Alan Redpath's sermon explores the testimony of John the Baptist and his role in revealing Jesus as the Lamb of God to the world.*

**Duration:** 49:34

**Scripture:** John 1

**Topics:** "John"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by leading the congregation in a prayer, asking for the Holy Spirit to guide their teaching and fill their hearts with the love of Jesus. The sermon focuses on the first part of the Gospel of John, highlighting the various titles and revelations of Jesus mentioned in the text. The speaker emphasizes the significance of these revelations, including Jesus being the Word, the Light, the Son, the Lord, the Lamb, the Rabbi, the Messiah, the King of Israel, and the Son of Man. The sermon concludes with a powerful story of a missionary named Helen Roseveer, who questioned the worthiness of her sacrifices, but was reminded by God to ask herself if she was worthy of worshiping and serving Jesus.

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## Transcript

And we're reading tonight from verse 19. I'll just read this remainder of the chapter to you, reading from the Revised Standard Version. And this is the testimony of John.

When the Jews sent priests and devits from Jerusalem to ask him, Who are you? He confessed. He did not deny, but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? You Elijah? He said, I'm not.

Are you the prophet? And he answered, No. They said to him, Then who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself? He said, I'm the voice, the one crying in the wilderness.

Make straight the way of the Lord, as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet? John answered them, I baptize with water.

But among you stands one whom you do not know, even he who comes after me, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. This took place in Bethany, beyond the Jordan, where John was

baptizing. The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

This is he of whom I said, After me comes a man who ranks before me. For he was before me. I myself did not know him, but for this I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.

And John bore witness, I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.

The next day again, John was standing with two of his disciples, and he looked at Jesus as he walked and said, Behold, the Lamb of God. The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, What do you seek? And they said to him, Rabbi, which means teacher, where are you staying? He said to them, Come and see.

They came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his brother Simon and said to him, We've found the Messiah, which means Christ.

He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, So you are Simon, the son of John. You shall be called Cephas, which means Peter.

The next day, Jesus decided to go to Galilee, and he found Philip and said to him, Follow me. Now, Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, We have found him of whom Moses is in the law, and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

Nathanael said to him, Can anything good come out of Nazareth? Jesus said to him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him and said of him, Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. Nathanael said to him, How do you know me? Jesus answered him before Philip called you, When you are under the fig tree, I saw you.

Nathanael answered him, Rabbi, you are the son of God, you are the king of Israel. Jesus answered him, Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things and ease. And he said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.

This is the word of the Lord. Just for one moment, let's bow our heads and hearts and pray in the words of our chorus. Thank you, God, for sending Jesus.

Let's sing it together. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me so that you may be able to teach others through me. And fall afresh on each one of us that this conference hall may be lit up with the glory of God.

That our hearts may be filled up with the love of Jesus. Speak, Lord, for thy servant herewith. Speak just now, some message to meet my need, which thou only dost know.

Speak now through thy holy word and make me see some wonderful truth thou hast to show to me. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

Thank you so much. Now, just refer to your outline, would you, a minute. And you'll notice that this evening we're commencing the first part of this gospel, which we've called the revelation of God as life to the world.

That's part A. It's from chapter 1, verse 19, through chapter 12, verse 50. And you notice it's in three sections, beginning with the life announced. Announced.

Chapter 1, verse 19. And through verse 34, actually it's 36. Much different, really.

But it was better to put 36 there. It's in three parts. This witness of John the Baptist.

And then we have the witness of the first disciples in verses 35 through 51, in your outline. And the witness of the works of Jesus in chapter 2. We won't be getting that far this evening. So let's just look at the witness of John the Baptist, what he had to say about the Lord.

In three parts. There's, first of all, this deputation that came from Jerusalem. In verses 19 through 28.

A deputation, D-E-P-U-T-A-T-I-O-N, from Jerusalem, in verses 19 through 28. And then there's the general public, in verses 29 through 34. And then there's two of John's disciples, in verses 35 and 36.

Now those are the three things we're going to think about this evening. There's this deputation from Jerusalem, verses 19 through 28. Now notice two things here.

First of all, something I've called, I'll explain it in case there's anybody from another country that doesn't quite get hold of the word. First we have John's Disclaimer. I'll spell it.

D-I-S-C-L-A-I-M-E-R. John's Disclaimer. Now when you disclaim something, you're rejecting it.

You're refusing to acknowledge it. John's Disclaimer, verses 19 through 22. Let me read them again.

This is the testimony of John. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, who are you? He confessed. He did not deny, but confessed, I am not the Christ.

They asked him, what then? Are you Elijah? And he said, I'm not. Are you a prophet? And he answered, no. And they said to him, then who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us.

What do you say about yourself? Notice this disclaimer. John begins his testimony by telling them who he was not. Here were members of the Jewish Sanhedrin, the court of the Jews.

And they were anxious to know who he was. Clearly, they thought he was a very important person. And that, of course, creates a temptation and an opportunity.

The temptation would be to accept the compliment. I'm trying to go fairly slow. Forgive me if I get excited.

I'm trying not to, for your sake as well as my own. I don't want to blast you out of the building. But if I go too quickly, you should just holler and I'll stop.

There are times when I will pause and ask you to take down word by word. But I must go fairly slowly. Here we have a temptation and an opportunity, then.

And the temptation would be to accept the compliment and claim to be either Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet. Most people identify that word, the Prophet, with Jeremiah. So there was the temptation.

And John said he was none of these. Verses 20 to 21. You notice how his denials grew shorter and shorter, as though he got impatient.

I am not the Christ. I am not. No.

Pretty straight and waste a word. But shorter each time. You might like to note that.

Because, you see, it's only small-minded people who are pretenders. Only small-minded people. Who want to think, other people to think that they are what they're not.

An honest person is content to be himself. Are you? Just content to be yourself. That's how the Lord deals with us.

It's his chance, then. Well, we're prepared to be honest. So this is John's disclaimer.

With me? Anything missing? Okay? All well? Right. Here we go again. Now we have his claim.

In verses 23 to 28. He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.

They asked him, then, why are you baptizing? If you're near the Christ and the religion of the prophet, John answered them, I baptize with water. Where among you stands one whom you do not know, even he who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I'm not worthy to untie. This took place in Bethany, beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Nor is now. He didn't deny himself. He was an important person.

And he said so. Verse 23. He was a herald.

The last of the prophets. The last of the prophets. It's as dishonest to deny what you are, as to claim to be what you're not.

May I just repeat that? It's dishonest to deny what you are, just as it is to claim to be what you're not. Don't look it up. But jot down chapter 5, verse 35.

John, Jesus said, John was a burning and a shining light. He shone because he burned. And he also said about him, Luke 7, verse 28, that he was the greatest born of women.

That's what Jesus said about John. Each of us have to be learned, have to learn to be great in humility. And in honesty.

There is no virtue in self-depreciation. May I just repeat that? There is no virtue in self-depreciation. In other words, pretending to be humble.

I think it's so thrilling. I was thinking of you all today, thinking how thrilling it was that I could come and talk with you. It's so thrilling to know that there's a place in the world for you, each one of you, and for me, which no one else can fill.

Just let that boo-hoo, you know, maul it over like a cow, chew the cud, chew it over. There's God has a place in the world for you, which nobody else can fill. What a tragic thing it is if that place remains empty.

Some of you have already started. Burnham, quite a lot more will before the school ends. And come to have a chat with me about wondering what to do next.

That's lovely. Absolutely lovely. But it's really quite frightening because there are about a thousand possibilities, but 999 of them are wrong.

There's a place, not two places, but a place in the world which God has for every one of us. What a tragic thing if that place remains empty. John's claim.

The next part of John's witness is to the people, the public. This is 29 to 34. Oh, there's some lovely things here.

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, after me comes a man who ranks before me, for he was before me. I myself did not know him, but for this I came, baptizing with water that he might be revealed to Israel.

And John bore witness. I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, he on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.

I and I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God. Notice one or two things about this testimony. Testimony to the public.

The first thing that John did was to point other people to Jesus. Verse 29 and 30. He saw Jesus coming and said, behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

This is he of whom I said, after me comes a man who ranks before me, for he was before me. John was always getting behind the Lord. Are you? Am I? Getting behind the Lord.

The slain Lamb, the Lamb of God, was John's hope for them. Not education, not theological degrees, not social improvement, not entertainment or rock and roll. Only the Lamb of God can lift and as the Greek really is, and carry away the sin of the world.

You notice, behold the Lamb of God. Verse 29. Verse 34.

I have seen and bear witness that this is the Son of God. And in between the two, verse 32, I saw the Lamb of God, the Spirit of God, the Son of God, and the Spirit of God descending as a dove from heaven. And that's how the Spirit came on Jesus at his baptism.

A dove is the picture in the Bible of gentleness. A dove is the picture of gentleness. And I just have to stop a moment there.

Gentle? Would Jesus have talked to a congregation like I have done? I don't think he would. I don't think so. Yet it was the psalmist who said, wasn't it, that thy gentleness has made me great.

A very dear friend of mine was elected as chairman some few years ago to the Keswick convention. He had to resign from that appointment through illness. But remember when he was appointed, I wrote to him and praised God that he had been appointed to it.

And I said, in that tremendous responsibility, the Lord make you like molasses, like treacle. And he was quite a long way. He lived in London, actually.

And he called me on the telephone and said, here, thanks very much for your letter. I appreciate it. But what on earth do you mean? I said, don't you know? No, he said.

No, I don't know. But tell me what you mean. Well, molasses, firm and sweet.

You can be firm and hard. You can be sweet and sloppy. But when you're firm and sweet, that's a mark of the Holy Spirit.

Stop. Pause. I mean me.

You take notes. Put it down. Get it down.

Lamb of God, verse 29. Son of God, verse 34. In between, I saw the Spirit.

Descending as a dove. The mark of gentleness. Thy gentleness has made me great, said the psalmist.

Asked me for the reference. Don't know. Forgotten it.

I knew just a few minutes ago. When you get to my ancient years, your memory deserts you at times. But look it up in your concordance and jot down the verse when you find it.

Tell somebody else. Tell me. Thy gentleness has made me great.

Gentle, firm and sweet, like treacle. John always got behind his Lord. His hope for men was the Lamb of God.

Get this down. After the Lamb, the Spirit. After conversion, consecration.

After Calvary, Pentecost. Don't you worry, brother. It doesn't worry me.

I do it myself often. After Calvary, Pentecost. Hey, do you want a drink? Don't take it all.

Thanks. Got it so far? After conversion, consecration. C-O-N-S-E-C-R-A-T-I-O-N.

After conversion, consecration. That is all on the author. After Calvary, Pentecost.

John pointing others to Jesus. Now, second thing about him. Verse 34.

Verse 34. This is the Son of God. Verse 34.

What a tremendous revelation of the Lord Jesus is in this chapter. I don't want you to miss a word of it. Maybe you just underline or wring round or mess up somehow these words, these verses.

Verse 1, the Word. And beginning with the Word. Verse 7 and 8, the Light.

Verse 18 and 34, the Son. Verse 23, the Lord. Verse 23, the Lord.

Verse 29, Jesus, Lamb. Verse 38, Rabbi, Teacher. Verse 41, Messiah.

Verse 49, the King of Israel. Verse 51, the Son of Man. Have you got that? No? Repeat? Yeah.

Right. Reverse gear. Ready? The revelation of Christ in the first chapter of John's Gospel.

Staggering. Verse 1, the Word. Verse 7 and 8, the Light.

Verse 18 and 34, the Son. Verse 23, the Lord. Verse 29, Jesus, Lamb.

Verse 38, Rabbi. Verse 41, Messiah. Verse 49, King of Israel.

Verse 51, the Son of Man. Got it? Have you really? I was sharing a convention a couple of months ago in Scotland, and one of the speakers was Helen Rosevear, whom I'm sure you know. She found herself a doctor, but not a doctor among other doctors, but one doctor to 50 million people.

She began to feel the hurt of it all. I visited her in her mission station in Zaire. Saw her standing almost upside down in a truck, trying to make the engine go, trying to tell an African how to start this engine.

Saw her in her home. She'd been attacked during a revolution, raped, almost killed. And she kept on saying to herself, Oh God, is it worth it? She hadn't any money at all.

Is it worth it? Is it worth it? Every time the crisis came, Lord, what are you doing? Is it worth it? And she said in her testimony, the Lord said, Stop, Helen, asking me that question. The question you should be asking is, Am I worthy? My Jesus, all this, is it worth it? Oh, am I worthy? Of my worship, my love, my life. You should ask yourself that.

What a revelation of Jesus. You won't find any greater revelation at all in scripture. Do I worship him and love him? John's witness was also to two of his own followers.

Verse 35 and 36. The next day, again, John was standing with two of his disciples, and he looked at Jesus as he walked and said, Behold, the Lamb of God. The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.

Those two disciples were, one of them, the writer of this gospel, the other, Andrew. Verse 40. John's witness was also to these two.

One, the writer of the gospel, and two, Andrew. Fisherman from Galilee, who came to Jordan to be baptized by John. You notice what happened as a result of this witness to them, don't you? Verse 37.

The two disciples heard him say this,

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