

John's Final Testimony About Jesus John 3:22-36

by David Servant

David Servant's sermon emphasizes the importance of humility and recognizing Jesus' supremacy through the example of John the Baptist.

Scripture: John 3:30

Topics: "Humility In Ministry", "Overcoming Pride"

Description

David Servant preaches on the humility of John the Baptist, who recognized Jesus as superior and willingly stepped aside to exalt Him. John understood his temporary role in God's plan and embraced the idea of Jesus becoming greater while he became less. He emphasized the importance of obeying Jesus for eternal life and warned against living a lifestyle of sin and selfishness. The sermon also addresses the concept of pride, highlighting that God cannot be guilty of pride and encouraging humility in recognizing and using our talents without boasting.

Transcript

Today we realize even more what a humble man John the Baptist was. We can learn a lot about humility by considering his words and deeds.

Although John was, according to Jesus, the greatest person to have ever lived (see Matthew 11:11), John knew that Jesus was far superior to himself, since Jesus was God from heaven. Pride sneaks into our lives when we compare ourselves with others. If we know we're better at doing something than someone else, we can become prideful. If, however, we will compare ourselves with Jesus, as John did, we won't be able to become proud.

Most often, we compare ourselves with people who have similar abilities and talents. If I'm a basketball player, I don't care how good another person might be at playing the piano---I'm only interested in other basketball players. For a while, John was the most famous preacher around. Multitudes traveled great distances to hear his anointed sermons and to be baptized. But then Jesus started doing the same things as John, preaching and baptizing, and Jesus' popularity began to grow. Additionally, God gave Jesus the Holy Spirit "without measure" (John 3:34), something He didn't do for John. Thus Jesus was able to perform miracles, something John never did, and those miracles really attracted large crowds. God the Father gave Jesus "authority over everything" (John 3:35), including sicknesses and demons. Before long,

hardly anyone was coming to hear John, and some of his own disciples became jealous for him.

John, however, realized his place and time in God's plan. His job was to prepare the way for Jesus. The whole idea from the beginning was that Jesus would be exalted, not John. John knew his ministry would be temporary and said of Jesus, "He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less" (John 3:30). Proud people don't want to ever let go of something God has given them, even when it's obvious that God's plan for them is that they move on to do something else because God has anointed another person to take their place. Proud people want to be recognized and appreciated more and more. Christians, however, should want Jesus to become greater in people's minds, not themselves. They should be interested in building God's kingdom and not kingdoms for themselves. They should want to be servants, not rulers.

John also knew that Jesus was the only way to heaven, and that only Jesus could give eternal life to people who believed in Him. John clearly understood that those who truly believe in Jesus obey Him. John said, "Those who don't obey the Son will never experience eternal life, but the wrath of God remains upon them" (John 3:36, emphasis added). This doesn't mean that if we commit a sin that we will go to hell, because no Christian is perfect and we all do sin at times. We know from reading the rest of the New Testament that John was talking about people who never obey Jesus, living a lifestyle of sin and selfishness. They are not submitted to Jesus at all, which proves they don't believe in Him.

Q. Could God ever be guilty of the sin of pride?

A. No, it would be impossible for God to think too highly of Himself. When He speaks of His own wonderful attributes, He isn't bragging---He's only telling the truth.

Q. Is there something that you do better than others? (Parents, this would be a good time for you to compliment your kids for things they do well, as they may think they're being proud if they respond.) Could that talent be an inroad for pride? What can you do to keep pride out?

Q. Is it prideful to say, "I'm a good swimmer" if you are a good swimmer?

A. No. Pride is having an inflated or unrealistic opinion of yourself. To say that you are a good swimmer when you are a good swimmer is simply telling the truth. But, to say that you are the world's best swimmer (unless you are) would be prideful. It's best to talk as little as possible about yourself, your abilities and your accomplishments, because even if you are just telling the truth, some people might think you are pridefully boasting. As the proverb says, "Don't praise yourself; let others do it!" (Proverbs 27:2).

Application: The Bible says that God humbles those who exalt themselves and exalts those who humble themselves. In which of these two categories do you fall?

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