

Date: September 16th, 2025

John Section: John 1:19-51

Key Text: John 1:29

Main Idea: JTB and The Disciples

Genre: Theological Narrative

Author: John

Audience: Primarily second-generation believers, Jews, and Gentiles, needing encouragement and clarity about Jesus' identity.

Setting: Likely written from Ephesus, AD 85-95, in a context of synagogue opposition and emerging false teachings.

Quotes of the Week: "But these words, I don't know... They're not familiar language to me. I always have to ask what it is. What is rizz? And I'm assured that I don't have it..." - **Pastor Giles**

"Help me see my circumstances through the lens of Your character, rather than Your character through the lens of my circumstances." - **Pastor Giles**



John Preview:

Highlight:

The Gospel of John is a unique New Testament account of Jesus' life, written by the Apostle John, the beloved disciple. John's Gospel is not merely a biography but a theological portrait, revealing Jesus as the eternal Son of God who became flesh to bring life and light to the world. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, John emphasizes signs and discourses that unveil Jesus' divine identity and mission. From the opening words—"In the beginning was the Word"—to the climactic resurrection appearances, John presents Jesus as the one in whom God's glory is revealed, calling all to believe in Him for eternal life. This Gospel is rich with imagery (light, life, bread, water, shepherd, vine) and repeatedly centers on the theme of belief.

Focus of John:

- **Purpose of John:**
 - John tells us his purpose plainly: "But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." (John 20:31).
 - **Themes in John:**
 - Jesus is the Word made flesh
 - Jesus reveals God's glory
 - Eternal life is found in Him alone
 - Belief is the way to life
 - Life flows only from union with Christ
 - **Our Response to this Truth:**
 - Believe in Him – Abide in Him – Live by His Word – Trust in His promises – Love as He loved
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What did we discuss in last week's study (John 1:1-18)? Specifically, what makes the Gospel of John different from the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke)?

- The Testimony of John the Baptist
 - Following the poetic prologue that the Gospel of John opens with, we see the first narrative scene of the book of John. The focus shifts from a theological standpoint to a testimony, the testimony of John the Baptist.
- Plot arc of John 1:19-28
 - **Exposition:**
 - **Rising action:**
 - **Climax:**
 - **Falling action:**
 - **Resolution:**
- A deeper look into John's Testimony:
 - During John's questioning, he denies being:
 - The Messiah
 - Elijah
 - The Prophet
 - Frustrated and in need of an answer, the priests and Levites press harder. They ask, "What do you say about yourself?"
- John then points toward Jesus by referring to the prophet Isaiah.
 - Isaiah 40:3
 - "A voice cries: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.'"
 - Reflecting on last week in John 1:8
 - "He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light."
 - Think of the sun shining on a mirror. The mirror reflects the light and makes it visible to others, but the mirror is not the sun itself. In the same way, John wasn't the Light; he only reflected it. His role, like the mirror, was to direct people's eyes to the true source, Jesus. That's why John calls himself just 'a voice' and not the Word. John's whole purpose was to point beyond himself to Christ (see John 20:31).
- John's authority is put into question:
 - As John is questioned about his actions (baptism) in verse 25, they are basically asking John, "Who do you think you are?" They believed John did not possess the proper authority to actively perform baptisms.
- **Why do you think the religious leaders were so determined to question John's authority to baptize?**

- Baptism with water:
 - John emphasizes that the baptisms he is performing are an outward symbol of repentance, cleansing, and the work of Christ. This is not a baptism that saves, but one that points towards Jesus.
 - Jesus' baptism: Matthew 3:13-17
 - **13** Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. **14** John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" **15** But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. **16** And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; **17** and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved son, with whom I am well pleased."
 - John's baptism reveals the need for cleansing. Jesus brings the means of cleansing through His death and resurrection. John's baptism was temporary and anticipatory of what is to come. Jesus fulfills the new covenant reality.
- The Lamb of God:
 - John 1:29
 - "The next day, he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"
 - A lot of the people in Israel thought that salvation was only for them. They were called to be a light to other nations. John comes in and changes this belief, that those who believe will be saved.
- **In last week's study, we analyzed John's use of imagery when it comes to his writing. "Lamb of God" is a strange thing to call the Messiah. What is the significance behind "Lamb of God?"**
- Throughout the entirety of the Gospel of John, he has continuously pointed towards Christ as being the one worthy of praise and the one of ultimate authority. This is even more evident in verse 30, as John says:
 - **30** This is he of whom I said, "After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me."
- John has been relentless throughout this first chapter, emphasizing that he is not:
 - The light (v. 8)
 - The Christ (v. 20)
 - Elijah (v. 21)
 - The Prophet (v. 21)
 - Worthy of untying Christ's sandals (v. 27)

- John desires for everything that he teaches to point directly to Christ only. In the same way, "He Must Increase" aims to point us to one man and one man only. John does not want to mince words when discussing his motives.
- Baptism of the Spirit (v. 32-34)
 - In this section, we see John again refer to his experience baptizing Jesus, specifically with "the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove."
 - When we are saved, our hearts are changed, and our old flesh is rid of. The Spirit changes our hearts and our desires so that we do not go on sinning through our old flesh. Can we completely stop sinning?
 - Of course not, and we all know this. But when we are saved, we are given a new heart, raised to walk in the newness of life, and have the desires of the Spirit of God, which now seals us from the moment we are saved. This is not something that happens at a random point after we are saved; it is something that happens with belief. All believers are baptized with the Spirit!
 - **Why does this have relevance to us today?**

John 1:35-51

Jesus Calls the First Disciples (vv. 35-42)

- Our scene picks up the next morning when John is standing with 2 of his disciples, and they see Jesus walking by. And again, as John had just proclaimed the day before, we see that John proclaims, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"
- **What do we think is so significant about John's proclamation and his posture here?**
- **What do we see as the response to the proclamation of this gospel truth?**
- **The Significance of The Lamb of God (v. 36):**
- **How does looking at Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away your sin affect how you view your sin and need for grace? And why does it shape our view of worship?**

Jesus Calls His Disciples:

- As we enter this passage about Jesus calling his disciples, I want us to focus on the nature of who Jesus is rather than just on how the disciples respond to Jesus. They have a loving and merciful Teacher who invited them into sweet fellowship with Himself, and we'll see that played out in the next few verses.
- In verses 37-38, we see that Jesus turns towards them. We are going to see that Jesus notices and engages his seekers. John points to Jesus, and the two disciples quietly start following. Jesus turns around. He sees them, acknowledges them, and begins the conversation.
 - Jesus, being the important God-Man that He is, could've just kept walking, but he slowed down and took the time to know and be patient with His future disciples. Him. Instead of waiting for them to figure it out on their own, he turns his face and reveals Himself to them. This shows us that we have a God who will seek us and show Himself to us.
 - This further shows us the nature of John's personal gospel account and will take a slower, more zoomed-in look at Jesus' life and relationships with people.
- The disciples don't quite know what to ask Jesus, and so they ask, "Where are you staying?" and we see that Jesus doesn't respond with just information about where He is staying, but instead he responds with an invitation to "come and you will see."
 - I want us to see that Jesus isn't just giving them a lecture, but He's giving them access to Himself, and this shows us that he welcomes relationship and fellowship with Himself.
 - He is making Himself available, and this is a pattern that we are going to see throughout His ministry, where he is eating with sinners and spending personal time with His disciples. And this is also showing us the nature of the new covenant.
 - Instead of access to God being a very fearful thing, He is showing us that this is very personal and relational.
- We then see that Andrew brings his brother Simon, and he tells him that he has to come! They have found the messiah! The one that they have been waiting for for generations is finally here. And now he needs to come and follow him.
 - And we see that when Jesus sees Peter, he looks at him and gives Him a new name.
 - *He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Cephas" (which means Peter). **John 1:42***
- **Why is Jesus' renaming of Peter significant for both Peter and us as believers?**

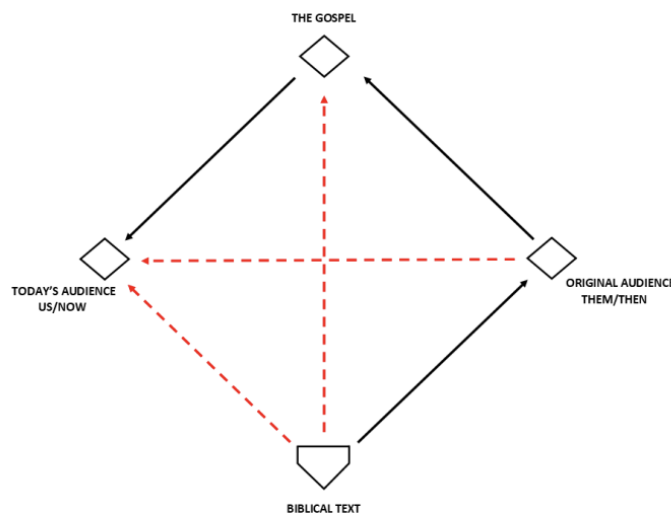
Jesus Keeps Recruiting (v. 43-51)

- We then see Jesus continue to go out and personally seek out and find the other disciples to follow Him. Jesus does so with intention, care, and simplicity. Even when those who were being called doubted Him.
 - It is worth noting that Philip tells Nathanael that they have found the one of whom Moses, the law, and the prophets spoke of. This just further backs up Jesus' claims that the whole Bible truly is about him.
- **The Law (Moses)** Moses told Israel:
 - *"The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen."* (Deut. 18:15)
 - This was a promise that God would one day send a prophet who would speak God's words perfectly—one who would be greater than Moses and who must be obeyed.
 - **How It Points to Jesus:** Jesus is the **true and final prophet**—He doesn't just speak God's Word, He is the Word made flesh (John 1:14).
 - At the Transfiguration, the Father echoes Deut. 18:15: *"This is my beloved Son; listen to him"* (Mark 9:7).
- **The Prophet** Isaiah wrote:
 - *"He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed."* (Isa. 53:5)
 - **How It Points to Jesus:** Jesus is the **Lamb of God** (John 1:29, 36), fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy by bearing the sins of His people on the cross.
 - Philip's declaration in John 1:45 and John the Baptist's earlier testimony connect Jesus directly to this Servant figure.
- **The Writings** The psalmist declares:
 - *"The LORD said to me, 'You are my Son; today I have begotten you. ... Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way.'"* (Ps. 2:7, 12)
 - **How It Points to Jesus:** Jesus is the **Son of God** and **King of Israel** (titles Nathanael uses in John 1:49).
 - He is the anointed one who rules over the nations—the fulfillment of Israel's hope for a Messiah-king.
- Philip's statement in John 1:45 shows that Jesus is not a surprise or a backup plan.
 - The **Law and the Prophets anticipated Him all along.**
 - Seeing Jesus in these Old Testament promises strengthens faith and shows that the gospel is the fulfillment of God's eternal plan.
- Jesus then goes on to talk to Nathanael as if he had already met him before and already knew him. And when we think about it, he already does know him.
 - Jesus is the divine creator of the universe, and he has, in fact, created Nathanael and knows all about Him. And this is very cool to see how even before Jesus is going to make bold claims, flat out saying that He is God Himself and is Equal to God, we still see His divine nature on display.

- Then, at the end of our passage in verse 51, we see that Jesus mentions something that might seem a little out of place. He references Jacob's ladder by describing a scene where the heavens open and the angels of God are ascending and descending on the Son of Man.
 - **John 1:49-51** - **49** Nathanael answered him, *"Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"* **50** Jesus answered him, *"Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these."* **51** And he said to him, *"Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."*
 - **Genesis 28:12-14** - **12** And he dreamed, and behold, there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it! **13** And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, *"I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie, I will give to you and to your offspring. 14 Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed."*
- **Why do we think that it is important that Jesus references the ladder, and what does the ladder symbolize?**

ANOTHER WAY TO GO ABOUT THIS IDEA: THINK BASEBALL

- When preparing and studying scripture, our focus is to always stay true to the scripture.
- In order to best do this, we use a method called the Simeon Trust method, which simply lays out a process to faithfully discern the Bible.
- FIRST:
 - Understanding who the text was written to. (The Audience)
 - Understanding why the text was written. (The Purpose)
 - Understanding the structure, genre, context, emphasis, and melodic line of the text.
 - In a nutshell, the first step focuses on understanding what the text meant to its original audience.
- SECOND:
 - Once we have done this, we must filter it through the Gospel.
 - This means understanding when and why this text was written in reference to the cross. → Is it pointing to the coming of Christ (OT), is it pointing to Christ and what Christ has already done (NT), is the text speaking of law, is it speaking of the Gospel, etc?
- THIRD:
 - Once we've understood the text's original meaning/audience and have filtered it through the Gospel lens, we are able to determine what it means to us now. Without this process, the proper application of the Bible is essentially impossible.
- COMING HOME: Once we understand the appropriate application of the text, our legwork essentially stops, and we become fully reliant on the Holy Spirit to work in us.



The Gospel: *We Can't, God Can, Jesus Did!*

- **Sin.** None of us can escape it. Because of it, we are spiritually dead and in need of life. Our debt before God is insurmountable. It is the biggest problem any of us has, since there is nothing we can do ourselves to pay that debt. God's standard is perfection, so no amount of good works or religious activities is enough.
 - 1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience - 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. (Ephesians 2:1-3)
- **But God...** These two words are some of the most powerful words in the Bible. God is merciful and loving. He did what we could never do in and of ourselves. He saved us by grace alone and gave us new life in Christ.
 - 4 **But God**, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ - by grace you have been saved - 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:4-7)
- **Jesus saves.** He is God's gift to us. He paid our debt before the Father. And through his death and resurrection, we are raised to eternal life. There is nothing we can do to earn it. It is only through Christ that we live a life pleasing to God.
 - 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10)