

John: the Forerunner of Christ

John 1:19-51

- I. DAY ONE: JOHN THE BAPTIST IDENTIFIES HIMSELF (John 1:19-28)
 - A. The Record of the Gospel of John
 1. Use of the word *record*
 - a. Found 30 times in the entire Bible
 - b. Found 10 times in the Gospel of John; in 7 different verses
 - c. Also prominent in the other writings of John (1John 5:7, 10, 11; 3John 1:12; Revelation 1:2)
 - d. A record is an official notation of events, facts, etc.; usually refers to a written account as a permanent and authoritative description of the facts as they occurred.
 2. The records of the Gospel of John
 - a. The record of John the Baptist (John 1:19, 32, 34)
 - b. The record of Jesus (John 8:13-14)
 - c. The record of the witnesses of the resurrection of Lazarus (John 12:17)
 - d. The record of John the Apostle (John 19:35; Revelation 1:2)
 - B. The Identity of John (John 1:19-24)
 1. Who he is not (John 1:19-21)
 - a. He is not the Christ (John 1:19-20).
 - b. He is not Elijah (John 1:21a).
 - (1) Malachi's prophecy (Malachi 4:5-6)
 - (2) John's denial (John 1:21)
 - (3) Christ's explanation (Matthew 11:13-15)
 - c. He is not that Prophet (John 1:21b).
 - (1) That Prophet prophesied (Deuteronomy 18:15-18)
 - (2) That Prophet identified (Acts 3:20-23)
 2. Who he is (John 1:22-24)
 - a. What he said of himself (John 1:22)
 - b. He is the voice of one crying in the wilderness (John 1:23-24; Isaiah 40:3).

C. Seven Interesting Facts about John the Baptist

1. He was a fulfillment of prophecy (Isaiah 40:3-5; Matthew 3:1-3).
2. He was the voice crying in the wilderness (John 1:23).
3. He came to prepare the way of the Lord (Malachi 3:1; Matthew 3:3).
4. He had a miraculous birth (Luke 1:5-25).
5. He was filled with the Holy Ghost from the womb (Luke 1:15).
6. He did not drink wine or strong drink (Luke 1:15; 7:33).
7. He came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:16-17).

D. The Temptations of John the Baptist

1. The temptation of pride in his identity (John 1:19-22)
 - a. What the angel said of him (Luke 1:15)
 - b. What he said of himself (John 1:23)
2. The temptation of jealousy for his following
 - a. How his disciples exalted him (John 3:26)
 - b. How John humbled himself (John 3:28-30)
3. The temptation of doubt in his calling
 - a. His questions of doubt (Luke 7:19-20)
 - (1) Art thou he that should come?
 - (2) Or look we for another?
 - b. The answers of Christ (Luke 7:21-23)
 - c. The testimony of Christ (Luke 7:24-28)

E. John the Baptist's Sevenfold Witness of Christ (John 1:19-34)

1. He is the pre-existent One (John 1:15, 30).
2. He is the Lord (John 1:23).
3. He is the preferred One (John 1:27; John 3:28-31; Colossians 1:18).
4. He is the Lamb of God (John 1:29, 36).
5. He is the Spirit-anointed One (John 1:32; John 3:34).
6. He is the One who baptizes with the Holy Ghost (John 1:33).
7. He is the Son of God (John 1:34).

F. The Baptism of John (John 1:25-28)

1. The authority for his baptism (John 1:25, 33)
2. The mode of his baptism (John 1:26a; John 3:23; Matthew 3:16)
3. The purpose of his baptism
 - a. Repentance from sin (Mark 1:4)
 - b. Remission of sins (Mark 1:4)
 - c. Revealing of Jesus (John 1:26b-27, 31; Luke 1:76-77; Acts 19:4)
 - (1) Unknown to the Jews (John 1:26)

- (2) Coming after John (John 1:27)
- (3) Preferred before John (John 1:27)
- (4) Unworthy to loosen shoe latchet (John 1:27)
4. The place of his baptism (John 1:28)
 - a. Matches Bethbarah of Judges 7:24
 - b. Located “beyond Jordan” (east of the Jordan) in the north, not too far from Galilee

II. DAY TWO: JOHN THE BAPTIST IDENTIFIES THE LAMB (John 1:29-34)

A. Behold the Lamb of God (John 1:29).

1. The Surrendered Lamb (Genesis 22:7-13; John 10:17-18; Philippians 2:8)
2. The Suffering Lamb (Isaiah 53:4-7, 10-11; 1Peter 1:18-19; 1Peter 2:21-25)
3. The Substitutional Lamb (Leviticus 1:1-9; Ephesians 5:2; 2Corinthians 5:21; 1Peter 3:18)
4. The Saving Lamb (Exodus 12:1-3, 11-13; 1Corinthians 5:7); “that taketh away the sin of the world”
5. The Sovereign Lamb (Revelation 5:1-14)

B. The Seven in John Who Bore Witness to the Deity of Christ

1. John the Baptist (John 1:29, 34)
2. Nathanael (John 1:49)
3. Peter (John 6:68-69)
4. Jesus (John 10:36)
5. Martha (John 11:27)
6. Thomas (John 20:28)
7. John the Apostle (John 20:31)

C. The Spirit Likened to a Dove (John 1:32)

1. Brings comfort
 - a. The dove (Genesis 8:8-12)
 - b. The Spirit (John 14:16, 26; John 15:26; John 16:7; Philippians 2:1)
2. Available to the poor
 - a. The dove (Leviticus 5:7)
 - b. The Spirit (Isaiah 57:15; Isaiah 66:2; Matthew 5:3; Luke 11:13)
3. Untiring in flight
 - a. The dove (Psalm 55:6; Isaiah 60:8)
 - b. The Spirit (Zechariah 4:6; 1Corinthians 2:4; 2Timothy 1:7)
4. Found in secret places

- a. The dove (Song of Solomon 2:14; Jeremiah 48:28)
- b. The Spirit (Psalm 91:1; Matthew 6:6)
5. Known for its purity
 - a. The dove is white, a color that symbolizes purity (Song of Solomon 5:2; Song of Solomon 6:9).
 - b. The Spirit is called the Holy Spirit or the Holy Ghost (Romans 1:4; Ephesians 1:13).
6. Can be grieved
 - a. The mourning of the dove (Isaiah 38:14; Isaiah 59:11)
 - b. The grieving of the Holy Ghost (Ephesians 4:30)
7. Gentle in nature
 - a. The dove (Matthew 10:16)
 - b. The Spirit (Romans 8:6; Galatians 5:22)
8. Sign of coming spring
 - a. The dove (Song of Solomon 2:10-13; Jeremiah 8:7)
 - b. The Spirit (2Corinthians 1:22; 2Corinthians 5:5; Ephesians 1:13-14)
9. Sweet in voice
 - a. The dove (Song of Solomon 2:14)
 - b. The Spirit (1Kings 19:12; Isaiah 30:21)

D. The Holy Spirit in the Life and Ministry of Christ (John 1:32-33)

1. At His birth (Luke 1:35)
2. At His baptism (John 1:32-33)
 - a. Descending on Him
 - b. Remaining on Him
3. In His temptation (Luke 4:1, 14)
4. In His ministry
 - a. Anointed by the Spirit (Luke 4:17-21; Acts 10:38)
 - b. Unlimited possession of the Spirit (John 3:34)
5. In His miracles (Matthew 12:28)
6. In His crucifixion (Hebrews 9:14)
7. In His resurrection (Romans 1:4; Romans 8:11; 1Peter 3:18)
8. In His post-resurrection ministry (Acts 1:2)
9. In baptizing with the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:4-5; Acts 2:33)

III. DAY THREE: ANDREW AND PETER FOLLOW JESUS (John 1:35-42)

A. Four Methods of Soul-Winning Illustrated (John 1:35-51)

1. By public proclamation (John 1:35-39)
 - a. John preached Jesus and pointed to Him (John 1:35-36).
 - b. Two disciples of Jesus followed Jesus (John 1:37).
 - (1) Andrew

- (2) The second is unnamed, but is probably the Apostle John
 - c. Jesus asked them: What seek ye? (John 1:38); NOTE: Jesus always went to the heart of any situation. He asks them their purpose in following him.
 - d. The men replied (John 1:38).
 - (1) They call Him Rabbi.
 - a) This means Master or Teacher (John 3:2)
 - b) Since John commonly defines words like this, it shows that he is writing the book for a Gentile audience who would need to have such words defined.
 - (2) They asked: Where dwellest thou?
 - a) They wanted to be able to find Him again.
 - b) They wanted to know how He lived.
 - e. Jesus replied (John 1:39).
 - (1) Come and see.
 - (2) They abode with Him that day.
 - (3) It was about the tenth hour.
 - a) Bible students argue over whether this is Roman time (10AM) or Jewish time (4PM).
 - b) It was probably Roman time.
 - i) Roman time is used in John 19:14.
 - ii) If it had been 4PM, they would have stayed with Him that night.
 - iii) The recruiting of John 1:40-42 evidently occurred on the same day (see John 1:43). This points to the earlier time.
2. By personal invitation (John 1:40-42)
- a. Andrew is one of the two disciples (John 1:40).
 - b. Andrew finds his brother Simon (John 1:41).
 - (1) He does this *first*. That is, he leaves everything else undone until he takes care of this business. He counts introducing his brother to Christ as his first priority.
 - (2) He counts his discovery as belonging to Peter as well. He says, **We** have found.
 - c. Andrew brings Peter to Christ. He does not just tell him about Christ, but He brings him to Him.
 - d. Andrew's witnessing habit
 - (1) He brought his brother to Christ.
 - (2) He brought the lad with the fishes to Christ (John 6:8-9).
 - (3) He brought the Greeks to Christ (John 12:20-22).
 - (4) NOTE: Andrew is not one of the prominent apostles. He certainly does not have the importance of his brother Peter. But Andrew is always bringing someone to Christ. What a testimony this is to us.

3. By providential intervention (John 1:43-44)
 - a. Jesus goes into Galilee and finds Philip. He is specifically sought out by the Lord. (John 1:43)
 - b. Jesus gives Philip a specific call to follow Him (John 1:43). This can be compared to the conversion of the Apostle Paul.
 4. By patient instruction (John 1:45-51)
 - a. The testimony of Philip (John 1:45)
 - b. The doubt of Nathanael (John 1:46)
 - c. The testimony and insight of Jesus (John 1:47-48)
 - d. The belief of Nathanael (John 1:49-51)
- B. The Meaning of Messiah (John 1:41)
1. Messiah (John 1:41; John 4:25) is the New Testament spelling of Messiah (Daniel 9:25-26).
 2. Messiah is the Hebrew word for the Greek word Christ (John 1:41).
 3. Christ and Messiah have the meaning of *anointed* (cp. Acts 4:25-26 with Psalm 2:1-2).
 4. All this can be determined by comparing scripture with scripture according to the built-in dictionary in the Bible.
- C. Simon Peter Called Cephas (John 1:42)
1. Cephas is an Aramaic word meaning *a stone*.
 2. Cephas is given as the name for Peter six times in the Bible (John 1:42; 1Corinthians 1:12; 1Corinthians 3:22; 1Corinthians 9:5; 1Corinthians 15:5; Galatians 2:9).
 3. Cephas is roughly equivalent to the Greek name Peter, which also means *a stone*. See Matthew 16:18 where “this rock” may refer to Jesus Christ but most likely refers to Peter’s confession that Jesus is “the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). The church is built on the rock of faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 1:5, 16-17). It certainly does not refer to Peter. Here, Peter as a stone is being contrasted with the rock upon which the church is to be built.
 4. In 1Corinthians, chapter three, Paul carefully distinguishes between Christ as the only foundation (1Corinthians 3:11) and Cephas as one in which not to glory (1Corinthians 3:21-22). Obviously, Paul did not think of Peter as the rock.
 5. In 1Peter 2:4-8, Peter pens a significant passage referring to Jesus Christ as “a living stone” (1Peter 2:4), as “a chief corner stone” (1Peter 2:6), as “the stone which the builders disallowed” (1Peter 2:7), and as “a stone of stumbling” (1Peter 2:8). And, although he refers to all believers as “lively stones” (1Peter 2:5), he never singles himself out as a stone or

rock of any significance. Evidently, Peter did not consider the statement of Christ about the rock to be referring to him.

IV. DAY FOUR: PHILIP AND NATHANAEAL FOLLOW JESUS (John 1:43-51)

A. Anything Good out of Nazareth (John 1:46)

1. Nazareth was located in Galilee, a area considered void of prophets (John 7:52).
2. Nazareth has no recorded Old Testament history; why would God use this town?
3. The Jews knew that Bethlehem of Judah was to be the birthplace of the Messiah (Matthew 2:4-6; John 7:41-42).
4. They ignored the spoken words of some of the prophets saying that He would be a Nazarene (Matthew 2:23).

B. The Character of Nathanael (John 1:47-49)

1. Only mentioned by name in the Gospel of John (John 1:45-49; John 21:2)
2. Probably identical to Bartholomew in the other gospels (Matthew 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:14)
3. Christ testified that he was an Israelite in whom was no guile (John 1:47).
 - a. Guile speaks of craftiness or slyness in nature. Deceit is the habit of which deception is the act, but guile applies to the inner character of a man out of which deceit and deception grow and also to their actual practice.
 - b. In scripture, guile is most often seen in the words that a person speaks (Psalm 34:13; 1Peter 2:22; Revelation 14:5).
 - c. Evidently, Nathanael was a man who by nature practiced no deception. But it is also probable that he recognized this trait and congratulated himself because of his lofty character. Jesus was not only pointing out the truth of his character, He was also pointing out its flaw. Nathanael did not deny his guilelessness, but only wanted to know how Jesus knew.
4. Christ then proved that he knew the heart of Nathanael (John 1:48).
 - a. Nathanael asked, “Whence knowest thou me?”
 - b. Jesus told Nathanael that He saw him when he was under the fig tree.
 - (1) This sight was beyond natural vision because Jesus had not been there in person.
 - (2) But this sight went even deeper. Jesus knew what was going on in the heart of Nathanael when he sat under the fig tree.

(3) We are not directly told what was going on in Nathanael's heart at this time. However, we know that it was an answer to the question about how Christ knew the character of Nathanael. Perhaps Nathanael was considering his heart at the time and feeling pride that he was a true man and not full of deceit as most men that he knew. We do know that this vision of Christ convinced Nathanael that He was the Son of God and the King of Israel.

C. Jesus Christ as the Ladder to Heaven (John 1:51)

1. This picture goes back to Jacob's ladder (Genesis 28:12-13).
 - a. The ladder is set up on earth.
 - b. The ladder reached to heaven.
 - c. The ladder had angels ascending and descending on it; this meant that the ladder was a connection between heaven and earth.
 - d. The Lord stood at the top of the ladder.
2. The ladder is fulfilled in Jesus Christ .
 - a. He is set on earth in His humanity.
 - b. He reaches to heaven in His deity.
 - c. He makes a way between the two for angels to ascend and descend; also, He makes a way for man to ascend to heaven.
 - d. He satisfies the demands of the Father at the top of the ladder.