

# The Baptism of the Son and the Spirit

## - John 1:19-34

### Suggested Questions from the Text

Read through the passage from Sunday. These questions are designed to help you consider the text as you read.

#### **John 1:19-23 – *Who are you?***

- What qualities does society look to in order to determine identity and success?
- How do our friends/family measure greatness? How do we measure greatness?
- How can we be tempted to qualify/disqualify ourselves or others from being used by God based on our actions?

#### **John 1:24-28 – *He whose sandal I am not worthy to untie!***

- What can stop us from turning focus, from ourselves, back on to Jesus?
- How can our actions glorify God, and how can we point people towards Him?

#### **John 1:29-30 – *Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!***

- How do you talk about the things that excite you?
- What is the difference between knowing about Jesus, and knowing Jesus personally?
- What qualities are you trying to 'cover' yourself with? How do we attempt to earn our own righteousness?

#### **John 1:31-34 – *I saw the Spirit descend from heaven...***

- In what ways does Jesus' baptism differ from ours?
- How does Jesus' baptism reveal Jesus' mission, and testify of Him?

### Sermon Overview (The Baptism of the Son and the Spirit)

The Gospel is written by John the Beloved, a disciple who spent years with Jesus – one of His closest friends. This makes the account of Jesus life that we read more personal, and an account we can more easily believe. This is someone who spent time with Jesus, who knew Him, learnt from Him. When we read this Gospel, we are reading the words of a close friend.

#### Who is John the Baptist?

Up to this point in this Gospel, John has been describing Jesus: the word become flesh, the light of the world, at the right hand of the Father. In this passage, the focus shifts slightly onto another character – John The Baptist (JTB). This is a different John to the author of the Gospel. John - the author of the Gospel – starts to talk about JTB at the climax of his description of Jesus. This suggests that John considers JTB to be important to the account of Jesus life.

JTB is mentioned in all the Gospels. Mark's Gospel starts with JTB - described as being clothed with camel hair, eating locusts and honey. Luke's Gospel fills in JTB's story – even before his birth being described as "*great before the Lord*" (Luke 1:15). JTB lives out in the desert, dressed in hair, eating bugs and honey – what makes him great is not his appearance. JTB would not be considered great in the eyes of society – so what makes him *great before the Lord*?

The Pharisees had this same question. *What do you say about yourself?* (verse 22). What gives you the authority to baptise, to gather people, calling them to repentance – what makes you so great that you can do this? JTB's answer changed the focus. It is not about JTB, but one greater who is coming. JTB could have claimed importance from his family line (Luke 1:5-6) – this is the authority Jews could relate to. However, JTB knows it is not about this. It's not about him, his family line or who he is – but it is God who saves. It is all about Him.

#### Who is John the Baptist preparing for?

The next day, Jesus approached JTB (verse 29). This is written, suggesting that the Pharisees are still there. JTB has taught that one is coming that is greater – and the next day He approaches him. JTB's response is: 'this is the one I have been telling you about. The thing I am passionate about - and now you get to see it too.'

- *Behold...* JTB's response is a reminder that Jesus is not just to be read about. Jesus isn't just someone we can know about, but is someone we can know personally. He is to be seen, and experienced personally. We don't need to rely on other people's experience and understanding, but we can see Him for ourselves.
- *...the Lamb of God...* JTB's audience would know this reference to the Old Testament, particularly the Passover (Exodus 12). JTB is stating Jesus is the fulfilment of the sacrificial lamb. Just as the Blood of the Passover Lamb covered the Israelites, we are covered by the new Sacrificial Lamb, who saves us by and through His Grace – with whose Blood we are covered. He's not just a teacher, or good man – but He is a Sacrifice from God.
- *...who takes away the sin of the world...* Unlike what is expected, this promise is not restricted to just the Jews, the people of God or those who follow His rules. JTB describes Jesus as taking away the sin of THE WORLD. Anyone - from any tribe or nation, who believes and is covered by the blood of the new Sacrificial Lamb - has their sin removed. This is not about following the law. It's not about a bloodline. It is about being covered by the Blood of the Lamb.