

Community Group Discussion Questions

“Now, Introducing Jesus” John 1:29, Matthew 3:13-17 June 29, 2019

Getting Started

The greatest privilege of John the Baptist was to introduce Jesus to the world, but that same privilege God gives us every day. Seize the Moment you have been given!

Going Deeper:

The Importance of our Belief: (John 1:29)

Take Notice: “Behold”- to Stop, Look, and Listen.

Take Notion: “*the Lamb of God*”- The sinless substitutionary sacrifice (Isaiah 53:7, 1 Peter 1:19, Revelation 5:12, 12:11)

Take Note: “*who takes away the sin of the world!*” (i.e. 1 John 3:5)

This word ‘Behold’ goes beyond our normal experience of an announcer asking, ‘May I have your attention please?’ This word means to look to Jesus and to the Holy Spirit to see, observe and comprehend His will and ways through His Word, the Bible. Notice how John ties in his words about Jesus to Isaiah 53:7, which was written 600 years before Jesus was born. John wants his audience to know that what he says about Jesus is biblical, and has been foretold in advance.

To ‘Behold’ means we have a choice – a choice to see and believe, or not see and not believe. It represents the responsibility that is our part in the Christian walk. We behold the ways of God, then behold our own lives. **Do you ‘behold’ that you need a Savior? Do you ‘behold’ Jesus as God’s Son who was sent to take away your sins? Share with us when you make this decision and why?**

The Importance of our Baptism: (Matthew 3:13-16)

Sentiment in the Hesitation: *“John would have **prevented** him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” (Vs.14)*

John’s baptism was to allow people to symbolically cleanse their mind and heart so they would be prepared to receive the Person of the Messiah (Jesus) who was soon to come. Jesus certainly didn’t need this, but John realized that he too needed to prepare his heart to receive Jesus as Messiah. **If you have not already chosen to receive Jesus as Savior, what is keeping you from making this decision?**

Statement of Identification: *“But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for thus it is **fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.**” (Vs.15)*

Authenticating: John the Baptist as Prophet

Communicating: Humility and Obedience

Jesus’ choice to be baptized was not an admission that He was a sinner who needed to repent. It was a way to honor John the Baptist and help everyone realize that John’s ministry was true and necessary for the nation of Israel. Jesus wanted to model humility and obey even when it wasn’t strictly required of him. **Share with us about a time when you chose to humble yourself and obey someone or some policy or rule in a situation when it really wasn’t required of you. Why did you do this?**

Symbol of Regeneration: *“And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went **up from the water...**” (Vs. 16)*

The word ‘baptize’ means to immerse. In laying a person down under the water, we show that they are imitating what Jesus did when His body was laid down in the tomb. When we raise a person up from the water, we show that we are imitating how Jesus was raised from death to life. Like water cleans us during a bath or shower, in the same way the water of baptism symbolizes that our sins are all washed away. **Have you chosen to be baptized as a Christian so people who know you can see the decision you have made to trust in Jesus as your Savior?**

The Importance of our Belonging: (Matthew 3:16-17)

Symbolism of the Dove: *“...he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him;..”*

Significance of this Declaration:

You are beloved: *“This is my beloved”*

You are blessed: *“with whom I am well pleased”*

When the Spirit descended as a dove on Jesus, and the voice of the Father spoke out loud about Jesus, it showed that God as Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) was about to re-engage with His people Israel and with the Gentile world in a powerful and personal way. After 400 years of silence, things were about to start happening and they would happen through Jesus, who belonged to the Father, and through the power of the Holy Spirit who would do the works of the Father through Jesus.

What was true of Jesus then can be true of you now. You too can claim God the Father as your own and know that He delights in you. You too can be aligned with the mission and work of Jesus to bring the Gospel (good news) to all the world. You too can depend on the Holy Spirit's power to do God's work in the world. **How are you already doing this? Where do you think God might want you to serve or go next?**

Take Away: Never forget you have been **embraced** by the Father; therefore, never be **embarrassed** of the Father, and now go **engage** the world on behalf of the Father!

Prayer: