

The Gospel of St. John

John 1:5-13

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Quotes ...

“A word is worth a thousand pictures.” E. Abbey

“I have no special gift - I am only passionately curious.” Albert Einstein

“Preach the Gospel at all times. Use words if necessary.” St. Francis of Assisi

“Of what value is learning that does not turn to love?” St. Anthony of Padua

John 1:4

The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. (John 1:4 NLT)

And His life brought Light (hope, revelation, understanding) to men. Jesus, God with us, was and is the source of true understanding of reality - the basis of the knowledge of the truth.

John 1:5

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome [*katalambano*] it. (John 1:5)

The world, the race of mankind, is in darkness. The “Dark Ages” do continue on. Any doubts?

Katalambano - “overcome,” “comprehend,” or “understand.” The word, as we discussed, means to grasp, possess, apprehend, lay hold. We might say in today’s vernacular, “the darkness didn’t get it.”

John 1:6

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. (John 1:6)

“John” means - God is gracious. How apropos!

And God Himself sent John - period.

Let's look at the fascinating events at the start of the Baptist's life. Luke 1:59-80

Luke 1:59 On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah, {60} but his mother spoke up and said, “No! He is to be called John.” {61} They said to her, “There is no one among your relatives who has that name.” {62} Then they made signs to his father, to find out what he would like to name the child. {63} He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone’s astonishment he wrote, “His name is John.” {64} Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue was loosed, and he began to speak, praising God. {65} The neighbors were all filled with awe, and throughout the hill country of Judea people were talking about all these

things. {66} Everyone who heard this wondered about it, asking, “What then is this child going to be?” For the Lord’s hand was with him. {67} His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied: {68} “Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people. {69} He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David {70} (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago), {71} salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us-- {72} to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, {73} the oath he swore to our father Abraham: {74} to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to

serve him without fear {75} in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. {76} And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, {77} to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins, {78} because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven {79} to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.” {80} And the child grew and became strong in spirit; and he lived in the desert until he appeared publicly to Israel. (NIV)

John 1:7,8

He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. {8} He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. (John 1:7,8)

I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ {34} And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.” (John 1:33,34)

John 1:7,8 (2)

Nothing more fully shows the darkness of men's minds, than that when the Light had appeared there needed to be a witness to call attention to it.

John the Baptist was a witness sent by God. Jesus Himself was a witness. God the Father is a witness. The Apostles were called to be witnesses even after all Jesus had done. Nature is a witness. Being a witness is a primary activity for the Kingdom of God; and, we are all to be witnesses.

“Testify.” Open your mouth and tell what happened, what you saw, and what you know.

John 1:7,8 (3)

John gave the people “knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins.”

But with all that “preaching” from John also came the application: “What should we do?” his listeners would ask. Their hearts were “cut” and awaiting the treatment (Acts 2:37).

All of this testimony is so that it would be possible for them to believe (“that all might believe through him.”) when the true Light arrived.

Believe very simply means to accept / grasp / understand and then respond.

John 1:9

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. (John 1:9)

Jesus is referred to as the truth, the true vine, the true light, true food, true drink: Jesus is the real deal, the genuine article, the real McCoy!

Rom 1:19-20 says that we are without excuse because of the testimony of “the things that have been made” (nature is a witness too!).

John 1:10,11

He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. { 11 }

He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. (John 1:10,11)

God/Jesus → world (His creation) → Israel (land, home, place) → Jews (His people, relatives) → He was not known.

John's version of the Christmas story! Boom! two sentences.

John 1:10,11 (2)

“Jesus came to the place where God indelibly wrote His name, and they received Him not. The land promised to Abraham, the Temple dedicated to His Father, His own chosen people, whom He personally taught and instructed for centuries, especially about Messiah, and they did not know Him.”

John 1:10,11 (3)

Let's read the prescient words of Isaiah:

(Isa 53:1-2 NIV) Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

{2} He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

John 1:10,11 (4)

Or maybe Zechariah...

(Zech 13:6 KJV) And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.

Ordo Salutis

Grasp → Believe → Receive

election → predestination → gospel call

→ inward call → regeneration

→ conversion (faith & repentance)

→ justification → sanctification → glorification

Nevertheless, God opens our spiritual eyes

(regeneration) and we see ourselves as we truly are,

which leads *infallibly* to belief - faith and repentance

- which results in our justification or receiving

Christ: His righteousness is credited to us.

John 1:12

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, (John 1:12)

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: (John 1:12 KJV)

If we believe and receive Christ, we have the right, authority, power to become God's children.

He who is made a child of God enjoys the greatest privilege which the Divine Being can confer this side of eternity!

John 1:12 (2)

And those who are engrafted in the heavenly family have the highest honor and dignity to which it is possible for a human soul to arrive. What an astonishing thought is this!

John 1:13

who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:13)

Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:13 KJV)

Our “blood” or distinguished human ancestry or family does not get us into God’s kingdom. I’m quite proud of my Scotch-Irish heritage, but it does me no good here. Christian parents do not earn us a pass. Having Abraham and Sarah for our parents does not entitle us to the blessings of the new covenant.

John 1:13 (2)

Our “will” does not earn us a spot in heaven. We cannot make ourselves or talk ourselves or study ourselves into being God’s children. Our works do not get us there. No will of the flesh - anything that the corrupt heart of man could purpose - will make the grade.

John 1:13 (3)

Third, it is not the “will of man.” It is not the efforts of others that make us Christians. No one can make you a Christian: no Bishop, no Priest, no Pope, no Preacher, no friend, no friend of your cousin’s, no relation, no one. You cannot come to God by ceremony, baptism, going forward, going backward, standing up, sitting down, signing a card, raising your hand, kneeling at an altar, or any other machination of man.

John 1:13 (4)

(John 1:12-13 NIV) Yet to all who received him, ... he gave the right to become children of God ..., born of God. (*abbreviated*)

Real children of God, born of Him! *Pinocchio* raised to the billionth power. “What is impossible with men is possible with God.” (Luke 18:27)

John 1:13 (5)

One last thought: what does that little phrase “he *gave the right* to become children of God” or “*gave he power* to become sons of God” mean?

Our *effectual call* and *regeneration* infallibly results in our *faith*.

“...yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace.” [Rom 6:16-18; John 6:37]

This “right” and “power” to receive is an “offer we cannot refuse.”

Questions

What was John's baptism and what did it mean?
And why was Jesus baptized?

What is *ordo salutis*?

Gospel

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