



That you may believe... **Leaders Guide for Week 2**

(Times are approximate) – start time: _____

Welcome

- Welcome everyone and whoever may be new to your group. Have new people share a bit about themselves and then have everyone introduce themselves.

(+5 min)

Opening prayer

- Prayer focus may be on the Holy Spirit revealing a new insight to each one in the group as you go through the study lesson.

(+2 min)

(Note to leaders: You may not get through all this material but be sure but your main focus should be to get through all the questions. Also, some of the Study Lesson questions contain comments to help you lead your group. They are not meant to be the only "answers" by any means.)

Opening Comments

- Last week we talked a bit about who John was and how his gospel is different than Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the synoptic gospels.
- John's Gospel was written that men (generic term) might believe that Jesus Christ was God.
- Throughout his Gospel, John identifies seven witnesses to prove this fact. The first two are in Chapter 1 of the Gospel. One is in this week's study and the second is just beyond that. You may want to keep these witness accounts in mind as you go through our study of John's Gospel.
 1. What was John the Baptist's witness to Jesus being God? – "I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God" (1:34).
 2. Nathanael witnessed to Jesus being God is: – "Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel" (1:49).
 3. Peter witnessed also to Jesus Christ being God? – "Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God" (6:68-69).
 4. Then there was Martha's witness – "Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" "Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."" (11:24-27).
 5. Even "doubting" Thomas change his witness about Jesus – "Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"" (20:28).
 6. Lastly, Jesus witnessed to Himself – "Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, 'I am God's Son'?" (10:36B).
- The number seven is seen in multiple ways throughout the Gospel of John.
- For instance, John identifies a group of seven miracles, which he calls signs and they support the deity of Jesus Christ. The seven are:

(+6 min)

1. Water was turned into wine – **2:1-11**.
 2. Jesus healed the nobleman's son – **4:46-54**.
 3. He healed the man at Bethesda – **5:1-47**.
 4. He fed 5,000 with a few fish and some loaves – **6:1-14**.
 5. John records that He walked on water – **6:15-21**.
 6. Jesus healed the blind man – **9:1-41**.
 7. He also raised Lazarus after being dead for four days – **11:1-57**.
- We will see other groups of seven later in our study of John.
 - There are a couple of things to watch for as we go through **John 1:18-34**:
 - First, if we begin just three verses prior to **vs. 18**, we will see that John summarizes John the Baptist' witness to Jesus (**1:15**) – That *Jesus is eternal*.
 - Then in **vss. 17-18** John states that *Jesus Christ is the fullness of grace and truth*.
 - Grace is God's favor and kindness bestowed on those who do not deserve it and cannot earn it.
 - If God dealt with us only according to truth, none of us would survive!
 - But, He deals with us on the basis of grace *and* truth.
 - Then, in **vs. 18**, John says that *Jesus Christ reveals God to us*.
 - As you go through this Gospel, you might want to underline the phrase "*the Son of God*."
 - You should find at least 9 references like this.
 - As you know from studying this lesson that men came to John the Baptist to question who he was, what he was doing, and by what authority he was doing it.
 - Some thought he might be the Prophet, Elijah, or the Messiah.
 - Although John the Baptist denied being Elijah, Jesus said otherwise, see in **Matthew 17:10-13**.
 - There was a very interesting interplay between the Jewish religious leaders and John regarding his baptizing.
 - Religious leaders baptized Gentiles who wanted to adopt the Jewish faith; *but John baptized Jews!*
 - Now in the second day of the week, the Apostle John recorded that John the Baptist called Jesus "*the Lamb of God*."
 - An interesting thought is that the whole of the Old Testament can be summed up in the question, "Where is the lamb?"
 - The entire Old Testament points to this "*Lamb of God!*"
 - When John the Baptist was baptizing Jesus, it is reasonable to think that they were picturing the "baptism" Jesus would endure *on the cross* when He would die as the sacrificial *Lamb of God!*
 - Perhaps John the Baptist had his doubts later; perhaps John was not sure that Jesus of Nazareth was the Lamb of God, or even the Son of God.
 - But the Father made it clear to John the Baptist just who Jesus is by sending the Spirit like a dove to light on Jesus.
 - What a beautiful image of the Trinity.
 - Now to our study lesson:

(+8 min)

Discussion of the Study Lesson – (~34 min) – **Week's title:**

This week's title: **The Lamb of God** - John **1:18-34**

Highlighted verse: "*The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*" - John **1:29**

(**Note leaders** that the last question is one which should be good to discuss at a greater length than the other questions. More than usual time has been allotted for that question)

Day 1: Read John 1:19-34

1. Read **John 1:19-34** at least once, jotting down initial observations.
 - Keep your Bible open to John 1:19-34 as you go through the study lesson. The other passages are included in this guide so you don't have to find them as you lead. Saves a lot of time. We recommend you underline key parts of the passages.
 - Spend some time sharing what the Holy Spirit has revealed to individuals as they studied this passage. (+4 min)

Day 2: Read Isaiah 9:6-7, Psalm 132:11-18, Isaiah 40:1-5, Luke 1:11-17 and John 1:19-28

1. From **Isaiah 9:6-7** and **Psalm 132:11-18**, describe Jewish expectations for the Messiah.
 - **Isaiah 9:6-7** – *“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.”*
 - **Psalm 132:11-18** – *“The LORD swore an oath to David, a sure oath that he will not revoke: “One of your own descendants I will place on your throne-- if your sons keep my covenant and the statutes I teach them, then their sons will sit on your throne for ever and ever.”For the LORD has chosen Zion, he has desired it for his dwelling:“This is my resting place for ever and ever; here I will sit enthroned, for I have desired it-- I will bless her with abundant provisions; her poor will I satisfy with food. I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints will ever sing for joy. “Here I will make a horn grow for David and set up a lamp for my anointed one. I will clothe his enemies with shame, but the crown on his head will be resplendent. “*
 - Get input from a few in your group on this but be careful to avoid a long discussion. (+4 min)
2. From **Isaiah 40:1-5**, **Luke 1:11-17**, and **John 1:19-28**, how does John the Baptist fulfill the role God intended for him?
 - **Isaiah 40:1-5** – *“Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. A voice of one calling: “In the desert prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”“*
 - **Luke 1:11-17** – *“Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John. He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink,*

and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth. Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous--to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

- If there is anyone who hasn't shared, you might encourage them to do so.
- (+3 min)

Day 3: Read John 1:29-34

1. What does verse **1:29** tell us about the central mission of Jesus?

- A thought you might search for from your group is in regards to Jesus coming to take away the sins of the world.
- Jesus' primary mission was to save the lost by giving eternal life to all who would believe Him.
- To accomplish this, He had to be the sacrificial Lamb of God.
- This is the central mission of Jesus – the primary reason Jesus became incarnate as a man.

(+2 min)

2. **Read John 1:32-33.** What do these verses tell us about the Holy Spirit's role in relation to Jesus?

- See if those in your group know that it was through the work of the Holy Spirit that John the Baptist was able to know Jesus.
- To know Jesus here, in this passage, is to know who Jesus really is: the Christ, the only Son of God.
- The ongoing work of the Holy Spirit is to reveal Jesus Christ to unbelievers.
- However, before He does that, the unbeliever must hear the Word.
- Believers are commanded (**Matt. 28:19-20**) to share the gospel message with others.
- Let us understand that we do not save anyone that is the work of the Holy Spirit.
- He is the One who brings people to faith in Jesus.

(+3 min)

Day 4: Read John 20:31

1. Consider how **John 1:19-34** relates to John's purpose in writing this Gospel. What parts of John the Baptist's testimony confirm the stated purpose of the Gospel of John - "*...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**)?

- Here are some responses you may expect:
- John the Baptist points people to Jesus.
- We see the importance of believing to become children of God.
- John stated that Jesus takes away the sins of the world.
- Jesus taking away the sins of the world is necessary for anyone having life in His name.

(+3 min)

2. How does John the Baptist describe Jesus in **1:34**?

- "*I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God*"

(+1 min)

Day 5: Read John 1:19-34

1. One way we come to Jesus is through the witness of others. Who were some people that shared Jesus with you? Think of some people you could tell about Jesus.

- This is a personal question and so as the leader, you might want to tell your group that and remind them that what is shared should be confidential to the group.
 - Also remind them that this is a very safe environment in which to practice sharing with others about their faith.
 - By hearing these examples we can be encouraged to do the same with other people we know.
- (+4 min)

2. **Read John 1:29.** Describe how Jesus has met your greatest need(s).

- Again, this is a personal question so the same policies given above apply here.
 - You might remind the group after sharing, if someone doesn't touch on these items:
 - Our greatest need is for our sin(s) to be forgiven.
 - We all stand under the judgment of God. (**Rom. 3:23**)
 - All of us deserve God's judgment. (**Rom. 14:10**)
 - The penalty for sin is death. (**Rom. 6:23**)
 - Jesus came to be our savior and to take our sin on Himself. (**1 John 2:1-2**)
 - Jesus met our greatest need on the cross. (**Heb. 12:2**)
 - We receive forgiveness through faith in Jesus. (**Eph. 2:8-9**)
 - Faith is trusting that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose again. (**Heb. 11:1**)
- (+10 min)

Closing Comments

- There are so many important lessons in the passage for this week's study.
- In closing here is something you may want to remember.
- We have seen in this passage that John the Baptist knew his purpose and ministry well.
- He was challenged by the religious leaders of the day, who became frustrated because they couldn't "guess" who he was.
- He knew he had two assignments: prepare the people and reveal who Jesus is – that's all!
- He knew he wasn't the Christ, Elijah, nor the Prophet.
- Just as John the Baptist knew who he was **not**, we need to know who we are **not** as believers!
- You are **not** an orphan – you are a child of God, you have a Father, you are not illegitimate.
- You are **not** an enemy of God – you are in relationship with God – He has brought you into His family.
- You are **not** a condemned sinner – God frees you to be alive.
- You are **not** alone – you are a part of Christ's own body, in fellowship with all believers!
- You are **not** the Master – you are a servant for the Master whom we know through His infallible Word.
- One thing that brought the religious leaders to John the Baptist was his baptizing of Jews.
- Israelites were never baptized, they believed they were God's already and didn't need to be washed!
- This type of baptism was for proselytes, in-comers, commonly Gentiles, from other faiths.
- John was making the Israelites do what only Gentiles had to do!
- He was saying chosen people had to be cleansed whomever they were; no automatic inclusion.
- The Rabbi's had disciples who followed them to learn and cared for them.
- The disciples of the Rabbi's were not allowed to loose sandals of a Rabbi; that was only done by slaves.
- See what John was saying to them?

- He was saying, “I’m not fit to be a slave of the One coming!”
 - John knew who he was and who he was not – he said of himself that *he was a voice!*
 - A lesson for us to remember is that we must know who we are and who we are not!
- (+4 min)

Closing Prayer

- Try to mention something someone or multiple people said during the discussion to let them know what they share is important and to strengthen their faith.
- (+1 min)