

## 042620 Growth Group Study

### The Witness

#### John 1:19-34



**Background:** This Sunday we will continue our studies in the Gospel of John. After that magnificent prologue, we now enter into the story with the witness of John the Baptist. Throughout John's Gospel, the concept of witness is very important. In fact, one could read the entire Gospel through the "lens" of witness. Jesus is on trial, and many witnesses are called forward to testify to his nature, character, words and actions. By the end of the Gospel, we, the readers, will need to render our own verdict. Who is this Jesus? But, for now, let's call the first witness. John the Baptist, please come forward and take the stand.

#### Sermon Text (ESV):

#### John 1:19-34

*19 And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" 20 He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." 21 And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." 22 So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" 23 He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said." 24 (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) 25 They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ,*

*nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" 26 John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, 27 even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." 28 These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing*

*29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.' 31 I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." 32 And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. 33 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.*

### **Discussion Questions:**

- Shawn noted two important points about being a witness: 1) a witness doesn't create the facts, and 2) a witness commits to the truth. How does this change your thinking about or approach to being a witness for Jesus?
- In Jesus, Scripture was fulfilled from Isaiah that the Holy Spirit would *remain* on Him. Believers in Jesus also receive this gift through the indwelling Holy Spirit. During this crisis, what does it mean to/for you that "God is with us"? Where do you most need Jesus's presence in your life today?
- Unfortunately, we can quench and grieve Spirit through sin & disobedience... In the past, how have you experienced God's forgiveness & fresh filling through repentance? This coming week, will you ask the Lord to shed light on any other areas of sin & disobedience in your life?
- Shawn encouraged us to pray for & expect new experiences from the Lord, and new spiritual awareness in our lives. As a growth group, will you pray for one another, and for our church body, for this newness of life?
- When you hear Jesus is the Lamb of God, what do you think of first?
  - Jesus as Lamb of God could have meant many different things: Passover lamb, Suffering lamb, Apocalyptic/conquering lamb, Abraham/Isaac sacrificial lamb.
  - How do any of these other options round out/add more to your understanding of Jesus as the Lamb of God?

- Because of who Jesus is, Shawn encouraged us to come to Him as we are... What is stopping you from coming to Him as you are... will you come? Who in your life needs to know that they can come as they are... will you pray for them to do just this?
- Lastly, how can you bear witness to Jesus by “showing & telling” your first-hand knowledge of His love, grace, mercy? We don’t have to create new facts... we just witness to them, commit to them, and believe in them through the power of the Holy Spirit in us.