



# REFLECTIONS

March 7, 2021

**"Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' "**

*John 1:29-31*

## John the Baptist's Message

The crowd along the Jordan Riverbanks gathered to hear John the Baptist's message of repentance and cleansing baptism. And I wonder what they thought when John called their attention to another person in the crowd. "*Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.*" I wonder how many of them realized what John was talking about?

Even before John's birth, he knew about Jesus. Remember how Mary hurried to Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth, her relative also with child. And Elizabeth said, "*As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.*" (Luke 1:44) Zechariah and Elizabeth's baby became known as John the Baptist, and the one chosen by God to introduce Jesus to the world.

God prepared John the Baptist for his role, but his audience that day likely wondered what he was talking about when he referred to Jesus as the *Lamb of God*. Would it dawn on them that God sent Jesus into the world as God's own sacrifice for the sins of all who believed in him? But John the Baptist knew.

A quality commonly identified with good leaders is that they ask nothing of their subjects they, themselves, would not do. And *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* (John 3:16 KJV)

Ever hear an announcement with significance you didn't fully grasp until you looked back on its happening? Even with John the Baptist's further explanation: "*This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.*" His words likely hung in mystery with the gathering on the Jordan Riverbanks that day. Then, on Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection, Peter finalized John's message:

*"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."*

*Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.* (Acts 2:38-39, 41)

*You are the light of the world,*

*Richard +*

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