

JESUS THE MESSIAH, THE LORD: THE SECOND WITNESS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST JOHN 01:19–28

Introduction

The witness of John the Baptist is a dynamic example for every servant of God.

- I. John was questioned by religionists who were suspicious of him: They asked, “Who are you?” (v. 19).
- II. He was a man who knew who he was (vv. 20-22).
- III. He was only a voice — only a forerunner for the Lord (v. 23).
- IV. He was a baptiser (vv. 24-26).
- V. He was an unworthy servant of this One, the Messiah (v. 27).
- VI. He was a man who brought honour to a place (v. 28).

I. *John 01:19 John the Baptist*

John was questioned by the religionists who were very suspicious of him. These particular religionists were a fact finding commission sent from Jerusalem, the headquarters of Jewish religion. The questioning of John by the religionists was to be expected, for John’s father, Zechariah, was a priest (Lk. 1:5); and in the eyes of the authorities, all the sons of priests were automatically priests by descent. However, John was not a priest like other priests. He was most unusual, for the way he lived and preached was radically different (Mt. 3:1-12). He was a nonconformist, and the authorities had to find out why.

Thought 1. Too often institutional religion is suspicious and opposed to the unusual.

=> If a person is different or does things differently, he is questioned.

=> If a person is unusually blessed or if miraculous things are happening in his life and ministry, he is questioned.

JOHN 01:19 LEVITES

These men were servants of the priests. They were descendants of Levi just as the descendants of Aaron were. However, only Aaron’s descendants could serve as priests: all other Levites served under them. □

II. *John 01:20–22 The Self Identity of John the Baptist*

The messenger was a man who knew who he was. Others had questions about John, but not John. He knew exactly who he was. He knew God personally; therefore, he knew

God had sent him into the world for a specific ministry. He was from God, called and commissioned by God; therefore, He knew exactly who he was and what he was doing.

1. John was not the Messiah (See *Christ*, Jn. 1:20).
2. John was not Elijah. Elijah was expected to return from the dead to proclaim the coming of the Messiah (Mal. 4:5). He was expected to do several significant things: to warn the people, to anoint the Messiah to His kingly office, to raise the dead, and to help select those who were to have a part in the Messiah's kingdom. John denied that he was Elijah in person. It should be noted that Jesus did later identify John with Elijah (Mk. 9:11f); however, what Jesus meant was that John was Elijah in spirit, not in person.
3. John was not "the Prophet." This Prophet was thought to be another forerunner of the Messiah (Jn. 7:40). Some persons thought he would be either Jeremiah or Isaiah. This belief was based on Moses' prediction that there would be a prophet like himself (Deu. 18:15). However, today most Christians interpret the Prophet predicted by Moses to be Christ Himself (Acts 3:22; 7:37).

Thought 1. The lessons are clear. The servant (minister or layman) of God must not...

- claim to be the Christ nor any other great prophet
- pretend to be some great man of God
- seek recognition
- assume some honour that does not belong to him
- allow God's power upon his life and ministry to turn his head toward pride, thinking more highly of himself than he should.

Gen 18:27 *Then Abraham spoke up again: "Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord though I am nothing but dust and ashes."*

Gen 32:10 *I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant. I had only my staff when I crossed this Jordan, but now I have become two groups.*

Exo 3:11 *But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"*

Exo 4:10 *Moses said to the Lord, "O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue."*

2 Sam 7:18 *Then King David went in and sat before the Lord, and he said: "Who am I, O Sovereign Lord, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far?"*

1 Kng 3:7 *"Now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties."*

Mat 8:8 *The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed."*

1 Cor 15:9 *For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.*

1 Tim 1:15 *Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the worst.*

JOHN 01:20 JESUS CHRIST, THE MESSIAH

He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Christ."
John 01:20

The words *Christ* (christos) and "Messiah" are the same word. Messiah is the Hebrew word and Christ is the Greek word. Both words refer to the same person and mean the same thing: the anointed one. The Messiah is *the anointed one* of God. Mathew said Jesus "is called Christ" (Mt. 1:16); that is, He is recognized as *the anointed one of God*, the Messiah Himself.

In the day of Jesus Christ, people feverishly panted for the coming of the long-promised Messiah. The weight of life was harsh, hard, and impoverishing. Under the Romans, people felt that God could not wait much longer to fulfil His promise. Such longings for deliverance left the people gullible. Many arose who claimed to be the Messiah and led the gullible followers into rebellion against the Roman state. The insurrectionist Barabbas, who was set free in the place of Jesus at Jesus' trial, is an example (Mk. 15:6f).

The Messiah was thought to be several things.

1. *Nationally*, He was to be the leader from David's line who would free the Jewish state and establish it as an independent nation, leading it to be the greatest nation the world had ever known.
2. *Militarily*, He was to be a great military leader who would lead Jewish armies victoriously over all the world.
3. *Religiously*, He was to be a supernatural figure straight from God who would bring righteousness over all the earth.
4. *Personally*, He was to be the One who would bring peace to the whole world.

Jesus Christ accepted the title of Messiah on three different occasions (Mt. 16:17; Mk. 14:61; Jn. 4:26). The name *Jesus* shows Him to be man. The name *Christ* shows Him to be God's anointed, God's very own Son. *Christ* is Jesus' official title. It identifies Him officially as Prophet (Deu. 18:15-19), Priest (Psa. 110:4) and King (2 Sam. 7:12-13). These officials were always anointed with oil, a symbol of the Holy Spirit who was to perfectly anoint the Christ, the Messiah (Mt. 3:16; Mk. 1:10-11; Lk. 3:21-22; Jn. 1:32-33).

John 1:41 *The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, “We have found the Messiah” (that is, the Christ).*

John 1:45 *Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote — Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”*

John 1:49 *Then Nathanael declared, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel.”*

John 4:25 *The woman said, “I know that Messiah (called Christ) is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”*

John 4:26 *Then Jesus declared, “I who speak to you am he.”*

John 6:69 *“We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”*

John 11:25 *Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies.”*

John 11:26 *“And whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?”*

John 11:27 *“Yes, Lord,” she told him, “I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.” □*

III. John 01: 23 John the Baptist, the Forerunner

The messenger was only a voice, only a forerunner for the Lord. Why was it necessary for the Messiah to have a forerunner? Why did John have to run ahead of Christ crying, “Prepare. Make straight the way of the Lord”? What kind of preparation needed to be done?

1. The people needed their concept of the Messiah straightened out. Their concept had deteriorated through the years.
 - a. First, few had ever seen “the seed” [the descendants] promised to Adam and Abraham as referring to the Messiah (See *Abraham*, Gal. 3:8, 16; *Abraham’s Seed*, Rom. 4:1-25). They interpreted “the seed” as the nation Israel, as all circumcised Jews. “We are Abraham’s descendants [seed]” they were later to tell Christ (Jn. 8:33). They saw Christ as being “the descendant [seed] of Abraham” only in the sense that an ordinary Jew was. He was just an ordinary man born through Abraham’s line. Few ever saw the Messiah as “the Seed” or Descendant in whom all the promises made to Abraham were to be fulfilled.
 - b. Second, the Jews saw the Messiah primarily as the Son of David. David had liberated and led their nation to its highest peak, so they saw the Messiah as following in David’s footsteps. At first, the Jews saw the Messiah as a *liberator*, One who was going to deliver them from all their enemies and restore their nation to its greatest

glory. (Keep in mind how terribly the Jews had been treated and persecuted throughout history.) However, as centuries rolled on and they suffered brutal violence after violence, their concept of the Messiah deteriorated into *anger*.

The Jews saw themselves as the subjects of the Messiah's salvation (deliverance) and saw all other people (Gentiles) as the subjects of the Messiah's judgment. The Jews were the ones acceptable to God; all others were unacceptable. Therefore, the Messiah was to come and free Israel, elevating the nation to rule over all the nations of the earth. This, of course, led to two tragic faults. First, the Jews became blind to their own sinful condition and personal need for salvation. Second, the Jews saw salvation as a matter of national heritage and personal rites (being circumcised) and rituals (religious observances). They believed that they were safe because they had been circumcised and their forefathers were godly people.

The forerunner, John the Baptist, had to begin cracking through the crust of these errors. Salvation was not a national thing, not an institutional thing, not even a religious thing. It was not a matter of heritage and rites. It was a personal matter, a spiritual matter of the heart and life. A man had to personally want forgiveness of sins and then repent and be baptised if he wished to be saved. This was to be the message of the Messiah. Therefore, because of the stubbornness of the people in understanding the personal need for salvation, God had to send a forerunner to begin breaking through the crust of self-righteousness which had become so cemented in the mind of man. (Just how deeply rooted the false concept of the Messiah was can be seen in the enormous struggle the disciples had with it. Mt. 18:1-2.)

2. The people needed their religion straightened out. They had allowed their religion to become formal and institutionalized, that is, just a *form* of godliness but denying its power (2 Tim. 3:5). So many were going through the motions of religion, its services and rites, yet living as they wished. God and personal righteousness were of little concern. The Messiah was to bring a new message, a message of God's love — a love so strong that it would proclaim the truth:

=> that man is sinful and perishing (Jn. 3:16).

=> that man must repent (Mk. 2:17).

=> that man must prepare, for the Kingdom of God is near (Mt. 4:17).

The message was to be so radical that some preparation of the people was needed before the Messiah appeared on the scene. Therefore, God sent the forerunner, John the Baptist.

3. The world needed to know about the Messiah. As the Son of God, the Messiah would be so different — so pure, so holy, so truthful — that men would not tolerate His presence too long. His proclamation of the truth and salvation would be very, very short. Men would destroy Him. Therefore, men needed to be stirred to a high pitch

of excitement when the Messiah arrived. Men needed to be buzzing about with great anticipation and with the glorious news that the Messiah had finally come. People would need to sit up and take notice. They may not respond; they might even react violently, but they needed to be aware of the Messiah's *historical coming* and *claims* to be the Son of God. The forerunner was to arouse and stir the people to expect the Messiah immediately.

Thought 1. The same can be said of men today.

- 1) Many need their concept of the Messiah straightened out.
 - a) Some have never seen that the *promised seed* is Christ.
 - b) Some still think of themselves as being *special* to God. They are blind to their sin and need for personal salvation.
- 2) Many need their religion straightened out.
- 3) Many simply need to hear about the Messiah: they have never heard that He has come.

Thought 2. The messenger of God is only a voice, only a forerunner for the Lord. But he is a voice and a forerunner; therefore, He *must* speak up for the Lord.

- 1) He must be a *clear* voice proclaiming a *clear message*.

Mat 10:20 “For it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.”

Mark 16:15 He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.”

1 Pet 4:11 If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Cor 2:13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.

- 2) He must be an *earnest* voice proclaiming the desperate need to prepare and repent.

Mat 3:2 And saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”

Acts 3:19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

GALATIANS 03: 08, 16 ABRAHAM

*The scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you." The promises were spoken to Abraham and his seed. The scripture does not say "and to the seeds," meaning many people, but "and to the seed," meaning one person, who is Christ. **Galatians 03: 08, 16***

The Scripture...announced the gospel to Abraham (Gal. 3:8). What does this mean?

God had promised Abraham an earthly son and a great earthly nation. But behind God's promise lay something more than just an earthly, human fulfilment. Abraham's son, Isaac, was a type of the real offspring (the *real seed*) that was to come, and the Jewish nation was a type of the *real nation* that was to be born. (See *Abraham's Seed*, Rom. 4:1-25.)

Paul gives at least two proofs for this typology.

1. The word "seed" is singular, not plural (Gal. 3:16). God's promise does not point to a great crowd of people, but to one single person. That person is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham. And the nation promised is the new nation of believers that God is creating to inherit the new heavens and earth (Gal.3:16; Eph. 1:9-10; 2:11-18; 3:6; 4:17-19).
2. The major events of Isaac's life parallel the life of Christ.
 - => First, Isaac was miraculously born (Gen. 15:2-3; 18:11; see Rom. 4:18-22; Heb. 11:11).
 - => Second, Isaac was to be offered up as a sacrifice (Gen. 22). Abraham was willing to offer up Isaac, and God accepted his willingness and motive as an actual fact. The word of Heb. 11:17 tells us this: "by faith Abraham...[who] received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son."
 - => Third, Isaac was delivered from death by a miracle of God (Gen. 22:10-13). Abraham knew that God was able to raise up Isaac from the dead, in order to fulfil His promise, if need be (Heb. 11:19). □

ROMANS 04:01–25

JEW, THE SEED OR OFFSPRING OF ABRAHAM; JUSTIFICATION; RIGHTEOUSNESS; NEW CREATION

Abraham held a unique position in the Jewish nation, for he was the founder of the nation. He was the man whom God had challenged to be a witness to the other nations of the world — a witness to the only living and true God. God had appeared to Abraham and challenged him to leave his home, his friends, his employment,

and his country. God made two great promises if Abraham would follow God unquestionably: Abraham would become the father of a new nation, and all nations of the earth would be blessed by his seed or offspring (Gen. 12:1-5; 13:14-17; 15:1-7; 17:1-8, 15-19; 22:15-18; 26:2-5, 24; 28:13-15; 35:9-12).

Scripture says Abraham did as God requested. He went out not knowing where to go (Heb. 11:8). He completely and unquestionably trusted God and took God at His word.

Now note: it was not Abraham's keeping of the law that pleased God. In fact, the law had not yet been given (Gal. 3:17). What pleased God and what caused God to justify Abraham was Abraham doing as God said. Abraham simply *believed* the promise of God that God would give him a new life — *in* a new nation — *with* a new people. (See Gal. 3:8, 16; Heb. 11:8-10; 11:13-16; 11:17-19.)

Note several things.

1. Abraham and his "seed" or "offspring" were the only ones to whom God gave the promises. This is emphatically stated (Rom. 4:13-25; Gal. 3:6-16, 26, 29).
2. Only a promise was given to Abraham (Rom. 4:13-21; Gal. 3:14, 18-21, 29). No other information whatsoever was given. God did not identify the country nor tell Abraham where he was to go. Neither did God tell Abraham when his wife (Sarah) would bear the seed (the male child) from whom the promised nation would be born. God made a simple promise, and all Abraham had to go on was that simple promise, that is, the sheer Word of God.
3. Only one condition was attached to the promise. Abraham had to believe God. No works whatsoever were involved.
4. Abraham did believe God (Gen. 12:4-5; Rom. 4:3, 11-22; Gal. 3:6; Heb. 11:8f).
5. Abraham was *counted righteous* because he believed God (Rom. 4:3-5, 9-13, 19-22; Gal. 3:6; see Gen. 15:6). God did not count him righteous because of who he was or what he had done. He simply believed God. Therefore, God took his faith and *counted* his faith as righteousness (See Rom. 4:1-3; 4:22; 5:1).
6. The proof that Abraham really believed God was that he did what God had said. His faith *preceded* his obedience. He believed God and then he obeyed God. If he had not believed God, he would not have left his home or his employment. He would not have left his familiar surroundings and meaningful relationships and personal attachments. The fact that he did as God asked was evidence that he believed the promise of God.
7. The man who believes God is the man who receives the promises of God (Rom. 4:5-12, 16-17, 23-25; Gal. 3:7-9, 14, 22, 26, 29). Paul argues that neither heritage nor nationality, neither merit nor works, neither the law nor the rules

of the law have anything to do with the promises of God (Gal. 3:6-7). The true children of Abraham are those who believe God — any person of any nation. In fact, God’s promise that a nation would be born to Abraham and “his seed (offspring)” was the promise of an eternal nation. This eternal nation is to be of another world, of another dimension of being: the spiritual dimension, a dimension just as real as the physical dimension. But it is to have one distinction: every citizen is to be a believer — one who has believed God and His Word. This is exactly what this passage is saying: “They who believe are the children of Abraham, the children of God’s promise. They are to be blessed along with faithful Abraham. They are to be the citizens of God’s Kingdom, of ‘the new heavens and the new earth.’ (See Heb. 11:8-18; 2 Pet. 3:10-14.) □

IV. *John 01:24–26 The Baptism of John the Baptist*

The messenger was a baptiser. John was asked why he baptised.

1. His baptism shocked the Jewish nation, for Jews were never baptised. Baptism was only for non-Jewish persons who were converts to the Jewish faith. The Jews considered all Gentiles unclean, so they had to be baptised when they became converts (all males were also circumcised). However, Jews were thought to be clean and acceptable to God no matter how they lived. Why? Because Jews were “a descendant of Abraham,” (Rom. 11:1) of his heritage. They were his seed, his descendants, the people promised to Abraham.
2. The religionists wanted to know if John were the Christ. They believed that when the Christ came He might institute the practice of baptism.
3. The religionists wanted to know if John were a prophet. In theory a true prophet was said to have the right to institute new practices and to change some laws.

John’s baptism was radical, most unusual, a shocking practice. It was a “baptism of repentance *for* the forgiveness of sins” (Lk. 3:3). What does this mean? Simply this: when a person wanted God to forgive his sins, the person made the decision to repent, to turn from his sins, and to change his life. Then he was immediately baptised, thereby proclaiming that he was becoming a follower of the Messiah whom John preached. (Lk. 3:3). Baptism was the sign to his neighbours and the world that he was changing his life (repenting) because he wanted God to forgive his sins. The order is this:

⇒ A man wanted God to forgive his sins.

⇒ The man therefore made a decision to repent, to turn from his sinful ways, and to change his life.

⇒ The man was immediately baptised.

Note: It was baptism that proclaimed to everyone that the man wanted forgiveness and was turning from his sins (repenting). Baptism was the act, the sign, that said to

the world that the man was thereafter going to live a changed life so that God would forgive his sins.

Two simple facts are being stated.

- 1) Forgiveness of sins is conditional. A man must repent to be forgiven, and if he truly repents, he is baptised. Baptism is part of the act of repentance!
- 2) Baptism is the immediate witness and sign that a man is repenting and changing his life. If a man is truly sincere in seeking forgiveness, he is baptised and does change his life, turning away from sin and turning to God.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptised, 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.”

Mat 3:11 “I baptise you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.”

Luke 13:3 “I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”

Acts 3:19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

The Old Testament prophets had cried for Israel to wash themselves and to be cleansed of their filthiness. John used water baptism to show that a man was turning from his sins and turning to God, seeking forgiveness of sins.

Isa 1:16 Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong.

Zec 13:1 “On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity.”

Ezek 36:25-26 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

Thought 1. Baptism is critical. The believer is to be baptised, but he is to be baptised because he is truly repenting and sincerely turning to God.

Thought 2. The servant of God is to be a baptiser, a man who proclaims and practices the baptism of repentance in its full meaning.

ACTS 23:08 PHARISEES

The word means *the separated ones*. The Pharisees were strict religionists. Their religious sect arose about B.C. 175. A Syrian king, Antiochus Epiphanes, tried to stamp out the Jewish religion and replace it with Greek customs and practices. A number of Jewish men opposed this threat and determined among themselves to save the Jewish religion. They refused to practice Greek customs and dedicated themselves to practicing the Jewish law in the strictest sense. They felt that by carrying out every little detail of the Jewish law and by teaching others to do the same, they could save the Jewish religion and nation and keep it from dying out.

Several things should be noted.

1. They were the orthodox of their day — a sect or school of religious thought. They were organized solely for preserving the law and the Jewish religion. Thereby, they were to save the Jewish nation.
2. They were strict literalists. The Jewish law was expanded into thousands and thousands of little rules and regulations by the Scribes. These rules and regulations were known as the Scribal or Oral Law. More than fifty volumes or books were eventually needed to hold the regulations.
3. The Pharisees were a body of the most zealous religionists.
4. There were never many Pharisees — never more than 6,000. The strictness and demands of the sect were too hard for the common people.
5. They were in dead earnest — dedicated and zealous, self-denying, and moral. No man could give his life to so desperate and restrictive a task unless he was totally genuine.
6. They were self-righteous, heartless, and hypocritical (Lk. 18:9). They lacked any sense of need or sin (Lk. 7:39).
7. They were bitterly opposed to the Sadducees, hating and despising them, feeling that the Sadducees were traitors to the nation.

However, the Pharisees were forced to quietly cooperate with the Sadducees because the Sadducees were the primary ruling party of the nation.

8. They were the main opponents of Jesus Christ and were unsparing in their denunciation of Him. Their savage attacks were primarily for two reasons. First, He was not a graduate of any of their rabbinical schools, nor a member of any of their religious sects. Second, He attacked their rules and regulations which had been added to God's law. □

V. *John 01:27 John the Baptist, the Unworthy Servant*

The messenger of God was an unworthy servant. Two things demonstrated this.

1. John proclaimed and confessed that Jesus was preferred to him. In Jn. 1:15, John said very simply...
 - Jesus was born “after me” (6 months after).
 - But He has “surpassed me” (mightier; more important in being, rank and dignity).
 - Why? Because “He was before me.”

The words *because He was before me* (hoti protos mou en) literally mean *first to me or first of me*. It refers both to time and importance. Jesus Christ was first in time, existing before John. He existed “in the beginning” — throughout all eternity. John proclaimed, “He was before me”: He always existed; He was the First; He was the very cause for John’s existence. John also declared that Jesus was first in importance. He was first in superiority, Being, Person. His very name is the First and the Last, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.

Isa 44:6 “*This is what the Lord says — Israel’s King and Redeemer, the Lord Almighty: ‘I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God.’*”

Rev 22:13 “*I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.*”

2. John proclaimed that he was not worthy even to untie the thongs of Jesus’ sandals. He confessed the *nothingness of self*. Slaves were the ones who untied the sandals of guests and washed their feet. John said that he was *less* than a slave, unworthy to do even what a slave did.

Thought 1. The same confession of unworthiness must be made by every servant of God.

Luke 22:26 “*But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.*”

Rom 12:3 *For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.*

Phil 2:3-4 *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

Micah 6:8 *He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

VI. *John 01: 28 John the Baptist as Minister*

The messenger was a man who brought honour to a place. John was ministering in Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, which means it was a great distance from Jerusalem. John brought honour to the place. It would not have been known but for John, for nothing else is known about the city.

Thought 1. A servant of God who is faithful in his witness and ministry (like John) will bring honour to a place. In God's eyes a place is honoured because believers are there (Gen. 18:16f). ■