

Living in Light of God's Truth

John the Baptist

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Ryan Conlon / July 19, 2026

John 1:19-23 “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.’”

I. John prepares us for the King.

Isaiah 40:3-4 “A voice cries: ‘In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.’”

Isaiah 40 pictures God returning to His people after exile. A voice cries out, “Prepare the way of the Lord,” calling for every obstacle to be removed before the King's arrival.

John creates a smooth highway by ruffling feathers. He is going to go along the road and point out all the valleys that separate you from God, all the potholes that trip you, and all of the mountains that obscure your view of Him.

Sin blinds us to Christ, dulls our affections for Christ, and hinders our fellowship with Christ.

John 1:24-25 “(Now they had been sent by the Pharisees.) ²⁵ They asked him, ‘Then why are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ nor Elijah nor the prophet?’”

II. John calls us to repentance.

Mark 1:4 “John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.”

Repentance is a God-produced change of mind about God, sin, and ourselves that results in a changed direction of life.

- Repentance is a changed mind — “I had this all wrong”
- Repentance is a changed heart — “I grieve what I’ve done because it grieves God”
- Repentance is changed steps — “I’m going to follow Christ instead of my sin”

John 1:26-27 “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.’”

John 1:28 “These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.”

III. John points us to the Lamb of God.

John 1:29 “The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’”

A. This lamb is truly spotless.

1 Peter 1:18-19 “... you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.”

B. This lamb was slain for us.

Leviticus 17:11 “For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.”

C. This lamb saves.

1 Peter 3:18 “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit.”

So now what?

John’s ministry before the cross was:

1. Clear the road of sin
2. Turn around (repent)
3. Behold the Lamb

For us today, the order flips. The Christian life after the cross is:

1. Behold the Lamb
2. Turn around (repent)
3. Clear the road of sin