

# THE LEAST IS GREATER

Anyone who sees me should see Jesus.

## KEY POINTS

- ❖ John the Baptist is an interesting and unique biblical character. He was Jesus' cousin, older by about six months, and also had a miraculous birth (see Luke 1).
- ❖ A rough man living in the wilderness near the Jordan River, he wore a tunic made of camel's hair held together by a leather belt.
- ❖ He had neither riches nor power. No nice home. No chariot. We read of no wife or children to support and/or encourage him. He ate what was close at hand – locusts and wild honey.
- ❖ He performed no recorded miracles and no Bible book bears his name. He knew his whole ministry was one of decline as he prepared the way for the One who would ascend (John 3:30). He had only one two-part message:
  1. Repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins (Mark 1:4).
  2. Look for the one who comes after me who will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire (Matthew 3:11).
- ❖ In Matthew 14:1-12, John sat in a prison cell after his righteous preaching made him some powerful enemies in the palace.
- ❖ In a state of doubt (and possibly depression), he sent two of his disciples to Jesus with a question: "Are You really the one we are looking for? When I pointed you out to my followers and said, 'Behold the Lamb of God,' was I right or was I deluded?" (See Lk. 7:18-20.)
- ❖ Jesus received the disciples of John, performed a great number of miracles, and sent them back to tell John what they had seen and heard.
- ❖ But after John's disciples had departed, Jesus said: <sup>26</sup>But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. <sup>27</sup>This is he of whom it is written: "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You." <sup>28</sup>For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he... (Luke 7:24-28a).
- ❖ John was a miracle-less, reclusive, rough and rugged desert preacher who had only one prophetic message. And yet Jesus described him as being greater than Moses. Elijah. Isaiah. Jeremiah. Daniel. All the prophets of the Old Testament. *Why?*
- ❖ Possibly because John had the privilege of physically pointing to the man Christ Jesus, God manifested in flesh, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world – to make Him known to Israel!
- ❖ And then Jesus made the incredible statement that *the least in the Kingdom of God* is greater than John! (See v. 28b.) Why did He say *that*?
- ❖ In John 14:10-11, Jesus asks, "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?"

**KEY SCRIPTURES:** Luke 7:19-30; Matthew 3:1-12, 5:16; John 14:10-11, 16-17, 20; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Colossians 4:6; Revelation 3:12

- ❖ He follows up with the directive: "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me..."
- ❖ But that is not the end of the story. In vv. 16-17 (italics added), He continues:  
And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— <sup>17</sup>the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, *for He dwells with you and will be in you.*
- ❖ We are temples of God! The Spirit of God dwells in us! We are in Christ and Christ is in us! (See 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 2 Cor. 6:19.) And because of these truths, we must walk in righteousness holiness, and separation from this evil age.
- ❖ The way we speak must display Jesus to the world (Colossians 4:6). Would Jesus speak as you do?
- ❖ Likewise, the way we act must show Jesus to the world (Matt. 5:16). Yes, we must be zealous to perform good works (Titus 2:14).
- ❖ We must trust our heavenly Father to meet our needs (Philippians 4:19).
- ❖ We must forgive (Mark 11:25). In the midst of unfathomable pain, Jesus prayed for His crucifiers: "Father forgive them..." (Lk. 23:34). Stephen did the same (Acts 7:60), as did Paul (2 Timothy 4:16). And so should we.
- ❖ The least and the poorest in God's kingdom must look, speak and act as Jesus would.
- ❖ Those we interact with must see the loving, forgiving Christ through our lives.
- ❖ John the Baptist had the privilege to introduce Jesus to the world. But even the least of us is greater than John as we *live Jesus* in our world!

- DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS**
1. Search the Key Scriptures and consider/discuss what they teach us about a) how Jesus sees us; and b) how we should live as citizens of God's Kingdom. Include additional scriptures for support.
  2. Share examples of when you or someone else a) did, or b) did not demonstrate Jesus in a certain situation. What was the result?
  3. Consider the question: Does everyone who sees me see Jesus? (How will you follow up with your response?)




**Prayer Time**  
Lord, please help me to show You to my world.  
In Jesus' name. amen.




Start-up: If you were to select a personal "mascot" to represent you, which object or animal would you choose, and why?

# WEEK OF SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2019

## NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

 (Reminds me/Confirms)
  (New idea)
  (Think about)

 (Do this)
  (Speaks to my heart)
  (Must share)

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## PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

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Go deeper with your Life Group family.  
CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD  
Your Life Group ~ Your Lifeline