

@thenameofJesus

"THE LAMB OF GOD" JOHN 1:29-34

This Week's Core Competency

Salvation by Grace – I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by his grace, through faith in Jesus Christ. Ephesians 2:8, 9 *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.*

Humanity's problem is sin. According to the creed, "all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior." We human beings need Jesus Christ as our Savior because we need someone to "take away" our sin. God is sinless; we are sinful. Therein lies the problem. On humanity's plight one author eloquently writes:

"We confess that humans are the good creation of God and 'fearfully and wonderfully made' (Ps. 139:14, KJV). Repeatedly people reflect this goodness by doing good acts, engaging in self-sacrificial actions, and caring for others. More significantly, as God's creatures, we are capable of being co-creators with him. Our creative capabilities surface through various human cultural expressions, including art, music, and literature, but even the development of language itself. Above all, God designed us to be his image, to reflect to all creation his own character.

"At the same time, we also confess that humans show forth the workings of evil. Although created to respond to God and to others, we readily grow

***Very God of Very God . . . He
suffered under Pontius Pilate.***

- Nicene Creed

self-centered and apathetic, closing ourselves up within our own little universes. Designed to imitate the Creator though our creative abilities, we readily misuse the good gifts God has bestowed on us, destroy what others have constructed, and plunder the good world God made to nourish us. Above all, rather than reflecting God's own character, we display the malice of the evil one. In short, we whom God intends to be the crown of creation are fallen creatures. This dark side of the human situation is what the biblical authors term 'sin.' They forthrightly declare what human experience through the centuries confirms, namely, that something has gone wrong in the universe and humankind stands at the center of the derailing of God's good intention" (Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 181, 82). Humanity may not be as evil as it could be, but that's not saying much; all humans have the evil disease, and it's terminal!

Humanity's savior is Jesus Christ. According to the creed, "a person comes into a right relationship with God by his grace, through faith in Jesus Christ." John the Baptist called him, "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29, 36). In other words, he is the sacrifice provided by God to give forgiveness from sin and a right relationship with him. The idea that Jesus "bore," "carried away," or "atoned for" our sins is found elsewhere in the New Testament. For example, the writer to the Hebrews says, "Christ was sacrificed once to *take away* the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to *bear* sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him" (9:28 italics added). And then he

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goes on explain that "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to *take away* sins" (10:4 italics added), but what the sacrifice of bulls and goats could not do the sacrifice of Jesus Christ did do. "We have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all," he writes. "Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never *take away* sins. But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God" (vv. 10, 12 italics added). John, likewise, echoes the Baptist's original words when he says, "Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the *atonement sacrifice* for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world . . . you know that he appeared so that he might *take away* our sins" (1Jn 2:1, 2; 3:5 italics added). Once we believe in Jesus Christ our sins are taken away and we can approach a Holy God, whose "eyes are too pure to look on evil" and who "cannot tolerate wrong" (Hab 1:13).

For Discussion

Two Christians were talking about salvation. One expressed his view that people don't seek salvation because they don't believe in sin. The other disagreed. He argued that people believe in sin. What's more, they know in their hearts they are sinners, even though many may deny it and many more refuse to talk about it. What do you think?

day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

John 1:29-34

29 *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' 31 I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."*

32 *Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. 33 I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' 34 I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God."* NIV(c)1984)

Cf., another translation

1:29 *On the next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! 1:30 This is the one about whom I said, 'After me comes a man who is greater than I am, because he existed before me.' 1:31 I did not recognize him, but I came baptizing with water so that he could be revealed to Israel."*

1:32 *Then John testified, "I saw the Spirit descending like a dove from heaven, and it remained on him. 1:33 And I did not recognize him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'The one on whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining—this is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' 1:34 I have both seen and testified that this man is the Chosen One of God."* (the NET Bible)

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

* Underline "the next day" in v. 29.

* Circle "lamb" in v. 29.

* Bracket "of God" in v. 29.

* Circle "takes away" in v. 29.

* Bracket "of the world" in v. 29.

* Box "because" indicating *reason* in v. 30.

* In the margin next to v. 30 write, "Cf., v. 15."

* Circle "before" in v. 30.

* Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 31.

* Circle "remain" in vv. 32, 33.

* Box "as" indicating *comparison* in v. 32.

* Circle "baptize" in v. 33.

* Bracket "with the Holy Spirit" in v. 33.

day 2

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. When did John the Baptist testify regarding the identity of Jesus?
2. Jesus is a man, not a sheep. "Lamb" is clearly a figure of speech like "bread" (6:35), "light" (8:12), "gate" (10:7), "vine" (15:1). Explain the point of the *metaphor*, "Lamb of God."
3. John said *after me* comes a man who is *before me*. How so?
4. How could John say, "I did not know him," since he and Jesus were relatives? Explain what John meant in verse 31.
5. How did John recognize that Jesus was the one to be revealed to Israel?
6. Identify the one who told John how to recognize the man who would "baptize with the Holy Spirit."
7. John says the Spirit came down and remained on Jesus (cf., Mt 3:16; Mk 1:10; Lk 3:22). What makes the fact that the Spirit *remained* on him worth mentioning?
8. To "baptize with the Holy Spirit" (v. 33) is to do what exactly?
9. **Discussion:** The NIV reads "Son of God" in verse 34, whereas the NET Bible reads "Chosen One of God." Talk about whether the difference is significant.

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

In the words of one writer, John 1:29-34 "forms something of a bridge. On the one hand, these verses continue the theme of the witness of John the Baptist, begun in the preceding verses (vv. 19-28); on the other, they introduce a lengthy list of titles applied to Jesus, a list that takes up the rest of the chapter: Lamb of God (1:29, 36), the Elect One (the most likely variant of 1:34), Rabbi (1:38, 39), Messiah/Christ (1:41), Son of God (1:49), King of Israel (1:49), Son of Man (1:51)—not to mention 'the one Moses wrote about in the law, and about whom the prophets also wrote' (1:45)" (D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, PNTC, 147).

The passage contains John the Baptist's testimony regarding Jesus. A delegation of priests and Levites had come to him from Jerusalem to ask who he was (v. 19), and he made perfectly clear who he wasn't. "I am not the Christ," that is, the Messiah, he answered (v. 20). Frustrated to find that he wasn't Elijah or the Prophet either, the delegates pressed him for a direct answer to their question. "Who are you . . . and why then do you baptize?" But John continued to answer in a roundabout way—"the voice of one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the way for the Lord'" he told them, quoting from Isaiah 40:3. And then he explained why he was baptizing, i.e., so that, in his words, "the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie . . . might be revealed to Israel" (vv. 27, 31). Ironically, his testimony was based on what he saw when he baptized Jesus, but the apostle John doesn't include Jesus' baptism in his Gospel.

The Baptist's testimony concerns the identity of Jesus. In verses 29-31, he identifies him as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (v. 29). But what is the meaning behind the *metaphor*? While many contemporary Christians think of the Passover sacrifice when they hear the expression "Lamb of God," the Greek word in John is *amnos*, and "this animal was not termed *amnos* in Greek-speaking Judaism but rather 'the *pascha*'" (Gary M. Burge, *The NIV Application Commentary: John*, 73). This explains somewhat the rise of such

a long list of other suggested meanings. That said, what does the figure signify? While as the same writer says, "It would *not* be impossible for John to have the Passover lamb in mind in the present context" (74), perhaps it's best to understand the figure as a general reference to a sacrifice. After all, a *metaphor* doesn't have to have a *specific* referent to have a *significant* meaning; it can have a *type* of referent instead. Jesus is "the Lamb of God," namely, God's sacrifice. The figure clearly signifies sacrifice as the following clause implies, "who takes away the sin of the world." Two things about God's sacrifice are startling: 1) the sacrifice is a man, Jesus, not an animal, and 2) Jesus existed before John, even though Jesus was born after John.

In verses 32-34, John identifies Jesus as the one to be revealed to Israel (v. 31), the one "who will baptize with the Holy Spirit" (v. 33). Of that he was certain because God had told him to watch for the man "on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain" (v. 33), and that's exactly what he saw when he baptized Jesus (cf., Mt 3:16; Mk 1:10; Lk 3:22). The fact that Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit suggests that the Lamb of God is also the Christ of the Old Testament. Before Jesus ascended to heaven, the Spirit was *with* his followers but not *in* them according to John 14:17. However, that changed following his ascension (Jn 7:39). When he returned to the Father, he poured out the promised Holy Spirit on his disciples, who were waiting in Jerusalem (Ac 1:4). Peter associates what Jesus did with his identity as Lord and Christ. In Acts 2:33, 36 he declared, "Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear . . . Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." John summarizes his testimony in verse 34, "I have seen and I testify that this is the Exalted One of God" and thereby joins Messiah's suffering as the Lamb of God and his glory as the Chosen Servant who will rule the earth (Isa 42:1-4).

The Message of the Passage

*Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world
and gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe.*

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James suggests in James 1:22. Try some of the challenges below to apply what you have learned this week.

- **Journal your thoughts on the passage:**

–Write about what God wants you to know . . .

–Write about how God wants you to feel . . .

–Write about what God wants you to do . . .

“The Lamb of God”

(Use the space below for Sunday’s message notes)

notes STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

- v. 29 **next day** "Next day" presumably means the day after John met the deputation from Jerusalem" [v. 19](F. F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John*, 51).
- v. 29 **Lamb** On the meaning of "lamb" one author writes, "The expression 'the Lamb of God' has passed into the general Christian vocabulary. But for all that it is very difficult to know exactly what it means. It is not found elsewhere in the New Testament (though Jesus is sometimes spoken of as 'the Lamb', especially in Revelation)" (Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, NICNT, 144, 45). Then the same author goes on to give nine possible meanings of the term. "Many suggestions have been made, among which we notice the following: (i) *the Passover Lamb*, a suggestion supported by the apparent identification of Christ's sacrifice with the Passover in 19:36. Against it are two main points, the one that the Passover victim was not necessarily a lamb at all, and the other that the proper term in use at the time for the Passover victim was not 'lamb', but 'Passover' (*pascha*) . . . (ii) *The 'lamb that is led to the slaughter'* (Isa. 53:7). This is possible. But there is nothing in the context that points to it, and we can hold this reference probably only if we can feel that there was a widespread acceptance of the view that Isa. 53 applied to the Messiah . . . The evidence seems to be against this interpretation of Isa 53, and the suggested explanation is thus unlikely. (iii) *The Servant of the Lord*. This is another way of seeing the origin of the expression in Isa 53 . . . It is not easy to think that so well known an expression as 'the Servant of the Lord' should be unrecognized, and should be translated by so difficult and unusual a phrase as 'the Lamb of God'. (iv) *The lamb of the daily sacrifices* offered morning and evening in the Temple. Once more we must admit the possibility. But we must add that there is nothing that clearly indicates it. We have no knowledge of the daily sacrifices being called 'God's Lamb'. (v) *The 'gentle lamb'* of Jer. 11:19. This should probably be dismissed, for that lamb was apparently not thought of as taking away sins. (vi) *The scapegoat*. This accords well with the thought of the taking away of sin. But it suffers from the fatal defect that the scapegoat was not a lamb. (vii) *The triumphant Lamb* of the apocalypses. This is undoubtedly the meaning of 'the Lamb' [or "horned ram" (see Bruce, 52)] in Revelation . . . But it is difficult to see this as the reference. The thought here appears to be not so much that of victory over enemies, as of sacrifice for sin. (viii) *The God-provided Lamb* of Gen. 22:8. This draws attention to one important aspect of Christ's sacrifice, the divine initiative. But it does not help with the others . . . (ix) *A guilt-offering*, since sometimes this was a lamb . . . The objection to this view is that a guilt-offering was not characteristically a lamb. Since the victim was so often another animal (e.g. a ram) the allusion would be almost impossible to detect" (144-47). And so he concludes, "He is making a general allusion to sacrifice. The lamb figure may well be intended to be composite, evoking memories of several, perhaps all, of the suggestions we have canvassed" (147, 48; see also Carson, 148-50).
- v. 29 **of God** The expression likely means "provided by God" or perhaps "belonging to God" (Morris, 44). But it can also imply greatness (J. C. Ryle, *Ryle's Expository Thoughts on the Gospels*, 3:60)
- v. 29 **takes away** "The verb *airo* is rightly rendered 'take away' or 'remove' here. Where the bearing of sin is in view, the verb commonly used is *anaphero*, as in Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 2:24. The two ideas, of course, are not mutually exclusive: the bearing of sin by another involves its removal from the one on whom it formerly rested" (Bruce, 53).
- v. 29 **sin of the world** "He is referring to the totality of the world's sin, rather than to a number of individual acts. The expression 'the sin of the world' does not appear to be used prior to this passage. The reference to 'the world' is another glance at the comprehensiveness of Christ's atonement. It is completely adequate for the needs of all men" (Morris, 148). Some take "world" to mean all people without *distinction* of race, religion, nationality, etc.; others take it to mean all people without *exception*, which, of course, would entail the former (1Jn 2:2; 2Pe 2:1).
- v. 30 **was before me** Cf., "he existed before I was born" (GNB); "for before I was born he already was" (NEB).
- v. 32 **remain** "This is a permanent anointing; this is an anointing unlike anything witnessed before in Judaism; this is the messianic anointing" (74). "When Christians read their Bibles (what we call the 'Old Testament') they saw in Jesus the fulfillment of God's promises to pour out his Spirit on the coming Davidic king (Is. 11:1ff.), on the Servant of the LORD (Is. 42:1) and on the prophet-figure who announces, 'The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor' (Is. 61:1)" (Carson, 151); cf., Lk 4:18, 19; Ac 10:38.
- v. 33 **baptize** Jesus will baptize like John not with water but with the Holy Spirit. Following his ascension to the right hand of the Father, he "poured out" (Ac 2:33) the promised Spirit on those who believe (Isa 32:15; Eze 36:25, 26). In other words, he sent the Spirit to indwell them (Jn 7:37-39; 14:17)
- v. 34 **Son of God** Some mss read "Chosen One of God" (cf., the NET Bible, NLT, NEB, NJB). "Chosen of God" is the more difficult reading that many think scribes would be more likely to change to "Son of God" than vice versa, and then there's the affinity to Isa 42:1 (see lengthy explanation in the NET Bible, 85tc on John 1:34; cf., Burge, 75; Carson, 152; Morris, 154).
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Family Time

Family time will help you take a break from your busy schedule and spend time connecting with your family.
Tips for your Family Time: Keep it simple! Be flexible! Do it often! HAVE FUN!!

For Family Fun this week try having an Upside Down Evening. Make invitations and hang signs that are upside down. Wear pants on your arms and hats upside down. Serve upside down tacos and cupcakes. Spread a tablecloth and eat underneath your table. Walk backwards. Play board games starting at the end and working towards the starting point (Chutes and Ladders, Sorry and Candy Land work great with this!) Don't forget to take lots of pictures! You will want to look back and laugh at this night. Use this Upside Down evening to begin a discussion about what Jesus did when he died on the cross for our sins. He turned everything upside down. The former sacrificial system was turned on its head when Jesus, the "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world", made the ultimate sacrifice. In fact, Jesus changes everything! When we begin to follow Him we spend our money and time differently. We begin to think differently. Our priorities change. We begin to live in an upside down way - one that is separate from the rest of the world. Make a list of ways your family lives upside down for Jesus and post it where you will be reminded of how your topsy-turvy life is bringing glory to God.

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: John 1:29-34

1. What did John the Baptist call Jesus in this passage?
2. What happened when John baptized Jesus?
3. John baptized with water but Jesus baptized with the _____.

What Do You Think

1. How does Jesus take away sin?
2. Look at the Core Competency today. Can a person do good things and earn salvation?
3. What are some ways you can testify that Jesus is the Son of God? (v. 34)

What R U Going To Do

Special note for parents: In this eight week series we are asking kids to memorize the entire passage of Philippians 2:5-11. We are breaking it down into weekly segments. This beautiful passage teaches us about the powerful name of Jesus. Thank you for helping your child work on this passage throughout our series.

MEMORY TIME

Post the kid-friendly Core Competency and the Memory Verse throughout the house.

Core Comp

Salvation by Grace -I believe that I become a child of God through faith in Jesus, not because of anything I do.

Memory Verse

Philippians 2:8 "And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!"

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized CC ____ and Verse _____. Family completed **Say** _____ **Think** _____ **Do** _____

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn tokens by completing the Bible study portion of this page.
 Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians 6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

Tom Bulick (M.A. in Educational Leadership, Eastern Michigan University, Th.M. in Old Testament, and Ph.D. in Bible Exposition, Dallas Theological Seminary). For more than thirty-five years, Tom has served as pastor, faculty member, and administrator. Tom was Vice President for Student Life and Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Trinity Western University (Vancouver, B.C.) for twelve years before accepting the position of Spiritual Formation Pastor at Pantego Bible Church. He and his wife Ruth have been married forty-four years and have one son, Zach.

Wendy Hollabaugh (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is tbulick@pantego.org.