

Jesus, the Lamb of God

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 04 December 2022

Preacher: Shawn Woo

[0 : 00] Good morning, church. Let me pray for the reading and preaching of God's Word. Actually, for those of you who are new, if you don't have a Bible, just raise your hand, and we'll have one of our guests bring a Bible for you that you can use.

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Sean. I'm one of the pastors of Trinity Cambridge Church, and I'm excited. I feel privileged and honored and rejoice in this opportunity to preach God's Word to you.

We're in John 1, 19-42 this morning, just following up exactly where we left off from last week, John 1, 18. So John 1, 19-42.

Let me pray for the reading and preaching of God's Word. Heavenly Father, we have come. And gathered this morning, not ultimately because of what we have to offer to one another out of our own resources, but because of what you offer us.

[1 : 14] We have come to behold the risen Christ, the Lamb of God, that was slain and is now alive again.

Grip our hearts this morning with your love, Father.

With the preciousness of Jesus' sacrifice. That we might stand in awe again.

And worship you all our days. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. If you are able, please stand. And I will read John 1, 19-42.

And this is the testimony of John.

[2 : 27] When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who are you? He confessed and did not deny, but confessed, I am not the Christ.

And they asked him, What then? Are you Elijah? He said, I am not. Are you the prophet? And he answered, No. 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? 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.

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ nor Elijah nor the prophet?

John answered them, I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know. Even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.

[3 : 36] These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

This is he of whom I said, After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me. I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.

And John bore witness. I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.

And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God. The next day again, John was standing with two of his disciples, and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, Behold the Lamb of God.

The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, What are you seeking?

[5 : 01] And they said to him, Rabbi, which means teacher, Where are you staying? He said to them, Come, and you will see. So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with

him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, We have found the Messiah, which means Christ.

He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, You are Simon, the son of John. You shall be called Cephas, which means Peter. This is God's holy and authoritative word.

Please be seated. As some of you are aware, I had the jarring experience this week of being impersonated by an internet scammer.

Someone created a new email address, sean.trinitycambridge@gmail.com, and then started emailing our church's community group leaders, whose emails are listed on our website, pretending to be me, asking them to purchase gift cards worth hundreds of dollars, and send him pictures of the pin numbers, promising reimbursement, and saying that he needs the gift cards for ministry.

[6 : 26] Thankfully, all of our CG leaders are bright, and they caught on, and none of them sent the scammer any money. But it feels really strange to see emails sent in my name that I did not compose.

And then to see your friends interacting with this person that is not you, but is pretending to be you. It's a really strange feeling.

It's not quite an out-of-body experience. I've never had one. I wouldn't know what that would be like. But it kind of feels like it, because you're observing from an outside vantage point, like, you interacting in some way.

It's very strange. And I think that's why it kind of felt like someone took over my life for a minute, you know? Took over my identity. And I think that's why false personation, or impersonating someone for the sake of defrauding someone, is a crime in and of itself, even if the defrauding is not successful.

It has the potential to do great harm, because both to the person that's being impersonated, because they're being used to do something that they don't intend to do, and also to people who are being deceived by the impersonator.

[7 : 44] Identity is important. It's a foundation for relationships, to society. And this passage is all about identity. The first half answers the question, who is John?

And the second half answers the question, who is Jesus? And we're going to talk about those two things in turn. In the first half, John strenuously denies that he is the Christ.

People suspect him of being the Christ. They ask him, are you the Christ? And John says again and again, no, I am not the Christ. He refuses to impersonate Christ, even though he knows full well that when he admits who he really is, and points people to the true Messiah, that all the spotlight that's on him will leave him.

All the following that he has will leave him. And yet, he bears witness, because he does not have his own personal agenda, but he does not want to deceive or manipulate. He just wants to tell people who Jesus is, who the Messiah is.

So he humbly points to Jesus, and then gracefully steps aside to make way for Jesus. And through John's example, this passage exhorts us to follow Jesus, who is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

[9 : 00] That's my main point for this morning. Let's first look at who John is, so that we can see and appreciate who Jesus is in the following passage. In verses 19 to 28, there's a Jewish delegation that has been sent out from Jerusalem to make a formal inquiry into John the Baptist, to investigate him and find out who he really is.

Verse 19 says that the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask John the Baptist, who are you? So this delegation is made up of Jewish leaders, priests and Levites, who are sent out from the Jewish capital of Jerusalem.

So these are people of influence and standing and authority. And it says in verse 24 later that they were sent from the Pharisees in particular. The Pharisees were a Jewish sect that was known for their strict adherence to Jewish law.

And they will emerge as kind of primary antagonists in Jesus' story. So already at this point, when we see that this delegation was from the Pharisees, that they're Jewish leaders, priests and Levites, and then they're formally investigating John, it's already ominous from the start.

It has the feel of an inquisition. A powerful establishment commissioned a delegation to interrogate a solitary preacher in the wilderness to ask him, who are you? Verse 20 is emphatic.

[10:26] It says, John confessed and did not deny, but confessed, I am not the Christ. The Christ means anointed one. And in the Old Testament, only the priest and the prophet and kings were anointed.

It's a special process, a ritual to mark someone that's set apart for God's service. And so the anointed one is a title, the Christ, for the messianic king that was to come to save God's people. And the messianic expectations were really bubbling over at a fever pitch at this point of Israel's history. And John knows that he's not the Messiah, and he could have simply said, you know, I'm not the Christ.

Well, he does say I'm not the Christ. But the John, Apostle John, could have told us that John simply said, I am not the Christ. But that's not how it's put here. It's not emphatic enough. So John piles on the verbs.

He says, he confessed and did not deny, but confessed, I am not the Christ. It can't be more emphatic. In no uncertain terms, John made it known he is not the Christ.

[11:35] But that simple denial isn't enough for the Jewish delegation because they knew John had influence and a following, and so they expected him to be someone great, or at least to claim to be someone great.

And so they continued the interrogation. They say, what then? Are you Elijah? He said, I am not. In 2 Kings 2.11, we see that Elijah didn't die a normal death.

He was actually taken up straight to heaven, his body and all, by God. And because of that, some people speculated and expected that maybe Elijah will return in his flesh. And this was spurred on further by the prophecy in Malachi 4.5, Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.

So because of that prophecy, there was an expectation that Elijah would return. And so they're asking John, are you the promised Elijah who would come before the day of the Lord? And John answers, I am not.

So they ask him again, are you the prophet? And he answers, no. The question is not, are you a prophet? The question is, are you the prophet? This again has to do with the prophecy in Deuteronomy 18 where Moses prophesies that God will raise up for Israel a prophet like himself.

[12:52] So the messianic expectation was rife with people talking about the prophet like Moses who would come in the end times. And John once again denies that he is that prophet.

It makes sense that John, you know, admits that he is not the prophet like Moses because we find out from other parts of scripture that Jesus is in fact the prophesied prophet like Moses.

But what's interesting here is that he also denies that he is Elijah. And in the other gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus explicitly identifies the prophesied Elijah with John the Baptist.

So John is the prophesied Elijah, but probably John had the expectation that Elijah would return his flesh and he knows he's not Elijah. I'm just, he's John.

So he probably said, oh no, I'm not, I'm not Elijah. He didn't understand that the prophecy had to do with the figure like Elijah, a type of Elijah, who would fulfill Elijah's prophetic role to prepare the way of the Lord in the end times.

[13:56] And he was that figure. John was not aware of the significance of his ministry. And I think that's often the case for us too. You know, we don't sometimes realize the full significance of all the work that we are doing.

It may seem small and insignificant to us, but from God's heaven's eye view, what we are doing in service to God may be much more significant than we deem.

And so he says, I'm not Elijah and I'm not the prophet like Moses and I am definitely not the Christ. And the delegation is exasperated by this point and they ask in verse 22, who are you?

We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself? Their presumptions and speculations aside now, they finally want to hear from John's own mouth, who do you say that you are?

And he says in verse 23, I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness. Make straight the way of the Lord. This is an amazing answer.

[15:06] He's alluding to Isaiah 40, verses 3 to 5, which says, a voice cries, in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord. Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up and every mountain and hill be made low. The uneven ground shall become level and the rough place is a plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Making straight the way of the Lord is a metaphorical description of improving the road system, leveling of hills and valleys and straightening curb roads.

When the Lord of glory comes, when God Almighty comes, he will not bend to creation, but creation will bend for him.

He will not follow the curves, stoop down to the valleys, or climb the hills. No, the valleys will rise as if in standing ovation. The mountains will fall as if bowing in prostration.

[16:15] And all roads will be straight for the way of the king. Some of you might have visited the Buckingham Palace in London, or at least have seen videos of this.

There's the famous king's guard that's in their uniform and I think a rifle. I'm not sure what it is. Believe it or not, the king's guard is not just a ceremonial tourist attraction. They're actually real soldiers with the real responsibility of protecting the monarch, the British monarch. And so if an unwitting tourist gets in the way when they're doing their patrol on their set course, do you know what they yell?

Make way for the king's guard! And they'll be like, sometimes they'll push you. Make way for the king's guard! And they make way. They push people away. It's really funny. I mean, it's like, I think there are videos of it.

It's a huge waste of time. Don't look it up. But it's similar to the way heralds with loud voices, you know, back in the day, you know, when a king's on his way would go ahead of the king and tell everybody in every town square, the king is coming!

[17:28] The king is coming! Make way for the king! It's their way of rolling out the red carpet. It's their way of moving out everything out of the way so that the king has a straight path. That's how John sees himself.

As a herald who announces the coming of the king and shouts, make way! Right, in chapter 1 alone, we were told seven times that John is merely a witness, someone who bears testimony about someone else.

Earlier in this chapter, we were told of how Jesus, the Son of God, is the Word of God made flesh. And if the Word is the authoritative decree of the king that executes the will of the king, John says he himself is merely a voice, a herald who goes into the town square to proclaim the Word of the king.

If Jesus is the leading actor in a play, John is a stagehand who works behind the scenes, backstage, to move around the props in the dark to set the scene for the lead actor to take center stage.

This is yet another reminder of what we talked about last week. This life is not about us. Our calling, our mission is not about us.

[18:48] In our interactions with family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors, what would it look like if we stopped trying to have our way and instead sought to make way for the Lord?

What if in our conversations, instead of only talking about ourselves or our interests or our experiences, we sought to prepare the way for the Lord to enter into that conversation, to draw others closer to the Lord, to encourage and edify them in the Lord?

What if in our career decisions, instead of only asking and considering what is most lucrative or what is most prestigious, we considered what most honors the Lord, what most prepares the way for the Lord to work in my life and in my family's life?

What if deciding what to do tonight or next weekend or in our budgeting and spending priorities, we did not stop at asking, what do I want?

And then we asked, what does the Lord want? How can I prepare a path for the gospel to go forward? I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord.

[20:13] That was John's posture. And though John was a unique figure in his role as preparing the way for Jesus, we can all emulate him in our role as witnesses for Jesus because we are all witnesses.

But John's insistence that he is a nobody raises a further question for the Jewish delegation. They ask him in verse 25, then why are you baptizing if you are neither the Christ nor Elijah nor the prophet?

The Pharisees were not unfamiliar with the practice of baptism. Some Jewish groups practiced proselyte baptism. So they would take Gentiles who want to become Jews and then they would have them baptize themselves in water.

The key difference here is that John is not letting them baptize themselves. He is himself baptizing them. And then secondly, John's not just baptizing Gentiles, he's baptizing Jews as if Jews themselves need to be converted, as if the Jews also need to repent of their sin.

And so, they're asking this question, if you are not a special end time figure like the Christ or the Elijah or the prophet like Moses, then what authority, what warrant do you have to baptize Jews in this way?

[21 : 30] this kind of special work can be carried out only by someone else who is special. What's the reason? What's the purpose of your baptisms? And then John answers this final question by telling the Jews about the person that he is waiting for in verses 26 to 27.

I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.

This great person that John is waiting for is the reason why John is baptizing with water. John says this explicitly in verse 31, for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.

John's purpose in baptizing people and calling them to repentance is to reveal the long-awaited Messiah and prepare people for him for his coming.

John was sent by God himself to baptize with water for this very purpose, as John 33, verse 33 tells us. John's ministry is anticipatory and preparatory. He's not trying to bring attention to himself or to gain a following for himself.

[22 : 42] He's trying to reveal someone else the strap of whose sandal he's not worthy to untie. That's a startling admission. There's a Jewish rabbinic saying that says this, quote, every service which a slave performs for his master shall a disciple do for his teacher except the losing of his sandal thong.

Everything that a slave does for his master, waiting on him, fetching him water, wiping his sweaty brows, a disciple should do for his teacher except the untying the strap of his sandals.

Removing someone's sandal was considered so beneath the person's dignity that it was a task reserved only for slaves. And yet, John the Baptist singles out this particular humiliating act and says he is not worthy to untie his sandals.

It's a shocking admission. John is not saying, oh, I'm a nobody, I'm only fit to untie his sandals.

That's not what he's saying. He's saying, I'm not worthy to untie his sandals.

In other words, he does not even deserve to be the slave of the Messiah because of how great he is.

[24 : 21] John's humility is instructive for us, but John's humility is not the point of this narrative. The point is not John's great humility. The point is Jesus' surpassing worth.

John's saying that he's not worthy to untie the strap of Jesus' shoes. This is not exaggerated false humility. It's simply reality. C.J. Mahaney, who is a pastor within our denomination, writes this in his book entitled Humility.

Humility is honestly assessing ourselves in light of God's holiness and our sinfulness. When we know ourselves as we truly are, and when we know God as he truly is, the only proper posture for us is abject humility.

Humility is not a denial of one's greatness. forgiveness. It is simply an honest assessment of one's relative insignificance in light of God's surpassing worth.

Do we live with an honest assessment of our insignificance compared to God's surpassing worth? Do we live with humility and gratitude that we get to untie the strap of his sandals?

[25 : 45] or do we live with pride and an attitude of entitlement that scoffs at such menial tasks? Are we willing to suffer for him?

To be ridiculed for him? Are we willing to give up our comforts and pleasures for him? To go and serve where there is no clean water or hot showers?

Are we willing to serve the Lord in places where we will be forgotten? The backstage, the prayer closet? Are we willing to befriend and care for irritable and difficult people?

awkward and overly talkative people? In Acts 5.41, after being unfairly arrested, tried, and beaten for proclaiming Jesus, the apostles are finally released and it says that when they left the presence

of the council, they left rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name of Jesus.

they were not rejoicing because they were insane. They were not rejoicing because they thought being beaten was such a pleasurable thing.

[27 : 05] But because they knew the surpassing worth of Jesus, if I get to do anything for Jesus that is beyond my deserts, if I can suffer for him, be punished for him, doubt, and even martyr for him, if I get to even loosen, untie the straps of his sandals, that is a task far beyond my deserts.

that's how John thought of himself. And this is John the Baptist's answer to the question, quite a sobering answer.

Who are you, John? Me? I'm a slave, not worthy to be a slave. A herald announcing the message of the king, the stage hand moving around the props to make way for the lead actor, someone who is not worthy to untie Jesus' shoelaces.

That's who I am. Why are you asking me who I am? You should be asking some different question. And John's testimony prepares a way for us to explore who Jesus is.

We already know that Jesus is someone who possesses surpassing worth. In fact, we know more than that because in verse 23, John cited Isaiah 40 verse 3 saying that he is the voice in the wilderness crying, make straight the way of the Lord.

[28 : 36] John thinks he is preparing the way for the Lord of glory himself. And this Messiah, he is not just some human VIP, though he is fully man, he is God in flesh.

John makes this even more explicit in verses 32 to 34, I saw the spirit descend from heaven like a dove and remained on him. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, he on whom you see the spirit descend and remain.

This is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. And I have seen and I borne witness that this is the Son of God. Three times the word spirit is repeated in this passage.

And it's significant that spirit of God not only descends upon him, descends, remains upon him.

historically throughout the Old Testament the spirit of God descends upon select individuals like builders of the tabernacle and the temple, the prophets, the priests, the kings, the judges, and the spirit of God comes upon them to enable them to fulfill a particular God given task.

But for the spirit of God to descend upon Jesus personally like a dove and then to remain on him permanently is unique. Jesus is the messianic king from David's royal lineage of whom Isaiah 11 2 prophesied the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him.

[30 : 10] And not only that, Jesus is then able because he has the spirit in fullness always with him. He's able to baptize others with the Holy Spirit. He's able to immerse people in the Holy Spirit, fill them with the Holy Spirit.

that's no mere human authority, that's divine authority. That's why John has no option but to conclude, I have seen and bear witness that he is the son of God.

As we saw already in the prologue of John in the last, earlier this chapter last week, Jesus is the word made flesh, the only son from the father. He is the only God who is at the father's side who makes the father known.

In other words, he is the unique son of God, the only divine son who shares the father's nature, the second person of the Trinity. Now, let's do a little exercise for a moment.

If I stopped you right now and then asked you to picture, choose for yourself an animal imagery to describe the Lord of glory, before whom mountains bow down, before whom valleys stand, the son of God, the messianic king, who baptized people with spirit and fire, what animal would you choose?

[31 : 34] Maybe a fire-breathing dragon? Maybe a regal lion? dragon. But Revelation 20, verse 2, says that the devil is the dragon, that ancient serpent.

1 Peter 5, 8 says that the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Yes, it's true that Jesus is the conquering lion of the tribe of Judah, as it says in Revelation 5, 5.

But that is paradoxical, because in Revelation 5, John hears the voice of the elders saying, behold the conquering lion of the tribe of Judah. He hears the voice, and so John turns to look at this conquering lion.

What does he see? He sees a lamb standing there as if is slain. The lion of Judah conquers by being slain as the lamb of God.

Jesus conquers sin and death by dying on the cross in the stead of sinners. This is why John the Baptist lands on the metaphor of the lamb twice.

[32 : 58] Verse 29 and verse 36, he says, behold the lamb. of God. Look, pay attention, the lamb, the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, a lamb, a symbol of innocence and meekness, a symbol of gentleness and purity.

There's a lot more I can say about this passage, but since this is an Advent series, I'm going to hone in on this identity of Jesus as the lamb of God. Where is John getting this imagery of the lamb?

The lamb is a particularly appropriate image because it recurs throughout the Old Testament in so many significant contexts. In Genesis 22, when the Lord God commands Abraham to sacrifice his only son, his beloved son Isaac, Abraham, despite his grief, steps out in faith and obedience.

They make their way to the mountain where Isaac is to be sacrificed, and then Isaac, being the smart boy that he is, asks his dad a question, my father, behold the fire and the wood, but where's the lamb for the burnt offering?

Can you imagine being a father and having to answer that question? with an aching heart Abraham answers, God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son, knowing full well that it is in fact Isaac that is to be sacrificed.

[34 : 39] But God intervenes. When Isaac is on the altar, when Abraham has given him up for the Lord, the Lord intervenes, and he supplies a substitute, a ram, that can take Isaac's place.

And so Abraham, so grateful, he cries out prophetically, he says, on the mount of the Lord it shall be provided. And on the mount of Calvary, Jesus died on the cross as the substitute lamb in the place of God's son.

God describes his people as his son, Exodus 4 22. The lamb, the substitute, restores the son to his father. Maybe you feel your own responsibility for sin keenly.

Maybe you feel that no one else but you can pay the price. But Jesus has already paid the price.

You already have a substitute who has taken your place so that you can live forever with your God in heaven.

There's more. According to Leviticus 14, a male lamb, a year old and without blemish was used as a guilt offering in order to make atonement for lepers. The original meaning of the Hebrew word for atone is to cover or to wipe clean.

[36 : 03] So the lamb would be killed and the blood would be spilled and then some of that blood would be smeared on the leper to make him clean. By this offering, his impurity, his defilement, his sins were covered.

Jesus was the sacrificial lamb, the guilt offering, and it's his blood that cleanses us so that we might be justified. The cleansing agent for our contaminating disease of sin is the blood that Jesus poured out for us on the cross.

Some of you may have committed sin so grave that you still carry the guilt upon your shoulders.

Maybe you have sins in your life that you're so ashamed of that you have vowed to never tell a living soul about it.

But we no longer need to be stooped low by the burden of sin. We no longer need to hide our faces in shame. Why? Because the lamb of God has been sacrificed and his blood has covered us.

Similarly, Leviticus 3 prescribes the sacrifice of a lamb for the peace offering. A lamb would be killed and his blood will be thrown upon the altar of the tabernacle so that there might be peace between God and his people so that they might share a meal together, have fellowship, communion with one another.

[37 : 36] Likewise, Romans 5 tells us that we have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ, our Lord Jesus Christ because Jesus died for us while we were still sinners, while we were his enemies.

He died for us and in doing so Jesus satisfied the wrath of God against sinners and he reconciled us to him by his death. That's why we are recipients of his peace rather than objects of his wrath.

Do you feel far away from God? Do you feel that God is hostile towards you, that he is angry with you, that his wrath still rests upon you?

Remember that the lamb has been sacrificed to make peace for you so that you might have fellowship with God, you might have peace with him and enjoy even his friendship.

Perhaps most prominently the lamb of God is in allusion to the Passover lamb in Exodus 12. When God was delivering Israel from their slavery in Egypt, he instructed the Israelites to sacrifice a lamb, to kill a lamb and to daub its blood on the door, the post and the lintel, so that when the angel of death, the destroyer, sweeps through Egypt to kill all the firstborn sons, that the angel of the destroyer would see the blood of the lamb and Passover.

[39 : 08] So God's judgment and punishment can be averted. And so Paul says in 1 Corinthians 5, 7, that Christ is our Passover lamb who has been sacrificed.

It's because of Jesus that we're no longer slaves of sin. Are you living like you're still enslaved to sin? The shackles have been broken. We have been delivered from the dominion of sin.

the Passover lamb was the price of our freedom in the spirit. And finally, Isaiah 53, that we read for the assurance of pardon, prophecies concerning the coming Messiah.

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions.

He was crushed for our iniquities. Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray.

[40 : 13] We have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth.

like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shears is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

This is probably the most poignant image of them all. In order to bring us back, sheep who had gone astray, Jesus suffered and died like a lamb led to the slaughter, like a sheep that before its shears is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

The sheep is silent because it has no idea what's coming to him, but Jesus knew exactly what was coming, and yet he was silent. The conquering lion went silently and submissively to his death, like a lamb to the slaughter, because he knew that by his wounds that we would be healed, that he had to be crushed in order for us to be whole, because he knew that by his death we would gain life, eternal life.

So we ask, who is Jesus? And this passage tells us, behold the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

[41 : 47] All of these images that we've looked at in scripture, and there's still more, they form this what do you call that, the photo mosaic, a composite image, all these little pictures of the lamb throughout the Old Testament, you put them all together and you take a step back and look at it and it's the face of Jesus.

The lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, the fresh, soft, pure, and white wool of the lamb of God, matted down with black suit of our sin, and then pierced, and then stained crimson red with his blood poured out for our cleansing, for our covering, for our freedom, for our reconciliation. That's why Jesus came into the world. In the rest of this passage, and in the passage after that, a couple words and phrases repeat over and over again, and they are come and see and follow. In verse 39, Jesus invites the two disciples of John and the Baptist who are following him, come and you will see. And then later in verse 46, Philip says to his skeptical friend, Nathanael, come and see.

Similarly, the verb follow occurs several times in this chapter. The gospel of John, the word follow means to follow, to become a disciple. So he says the two disciples of John follow Jesus in verse 47, and Jesus saw them following in verse 38, and Andrew follows Jesus in verse 40, and Jesus tells Philip in verse 43 to follow me.

[43 : 33] So if you are not yet a follower of Jesus, then my challenge to you this morning is to follow him. There's only one lamb of God who can take away your sin, and he is sufficient for the sin of the whole world.

The way of the lamb is full of suffering in this life because it is the way of the cross, but it's also full of love and joy and peace. It is the way of the abundant life, and we are promised eternal resurrection life and glory thereafter.

answer. If you are already a follower of Jesus, then go and tell your family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers to come and see. Come and see I have found the Messiah.

Come and behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Come and see my beautiful Savior. Savior.