

## JESUS THE LAMB OF GOD

John 1:19-51

Key verse 1:29

**„The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”**

Thank God for the past leadership conference and Nehemiah Bible study. We are very encouraged that Nehemiah carried out the reconstruction of the walls in an impossible situation. He did not remain inactive in prayer, but mobilized for the work of God the Persian Great King, many co-workers and even the people in Jerusalem who were paralyzed for 38 years. During this time we learn that many spiritual walls have been broken down and terrible things are happening. But we need not be depressed. May God use you as spiritual leaders, prayer leaders and mobilizers like Nehemiah for the reconstruction of the spiritual walls of Bible study, the work of raising up disciples through the community of life, the mobilization of the next generation and the world mission for spiritual revival.

In the prologue of John's Gospel, John introduced Jesus to us as the eternal Creator God and the light of men. In today's section we would like to study the testimony of John the Baptist, who testified that Jesus is the Lamb of God. We also want to know the testimony of the disciples who met Jesus personally and followed him. May God bless each one of you to accept Jesus as the Lamb of God personally and to get to know Jesus personally and bear witness to Jesus.

### I. Jesus, the Lamb of God (19-34)

Let's look at verse 19: "Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was." John the Baptist was the son of a priest, Zacharias. He spent his childhood and youth in the desert, where he became strong in spirit. He was not a delicate apparition; he wore a robe of camel hair and a leather belt and fed on locusts and wild honey. He did not speak

beautiful or sweet words, but preached the baptism of repentance in the desert by the Jordan: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance." He also said: "The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit, will be cut down and thrown into the fire." The life and the clear message of John the Baptist were so powerful that the whole Jewish land came to him at the Jordan. People, tax collectors and soldiers came, confessed their sins and were baptized in the Jordan River as a sign of repentance. John was only a lay preacher, but his work was spiritually very influential and full of the living work of God. In contrast, the Pharisees were established in Jerusalem under the leadership of Annas and Caiaphas; they were the official spiritual headquarters. But they were spiritually without influence. The Pharisees sent a commission of inquiry to John to question him about his identity and work. Their intention was to criticize his work and to impose their political ideas on his work so that John's work would become as spiritually uninfluential as their own. They asked him, "Who are you?" The answers of John the Baptist were above all short. He did not engage in theological discussion with them. He said, "I am not the Christ." John wanted to draw their attention to the Christ. But the members of the commission of inquiry did not understand. So they asked: "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" "I am not!" "Are you the prophet?" "No!

Let's look at verse 23: "John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the desert. 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'" John had a clear identity based on the Word of God. John's clear identity based on the Word of God came out of his life, namely from Bible study and spiritual training in the

desert. In contrast, the headquarters of the Jews did not know who they were and what they were supposed to do. They were not concerned with Christ, but had become politicians and were engaged in political power struggles. But John clearly knew who he was, and he did not forget his mission, namely to prepare the way of the Lord for Christ by serving the baptism through the preaching of repentance.

The commission of inquiry still did not understand that John wanted to speak about the Christ. Instead, they were very focused on the work of John's baptism. They wanted to check if John's work of baptism was in accordance with their guidelines. So they asked, "Why then do you baptize, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John the Baptist remained friendly but clear and helped them spiritually. He took up their question about baptism by saying only about himself: "I baptize with water". Immediately he began again to speak about Christ: "But among you stands one you do not know. He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie." Now the envoys of the commission of inquiry had finally understood that John wanted to talk about the Christ instead of human things. They now had no more questions and left him.

Here we can learn some important things: 1) It is very important for us to have a clear spiritual identity. In our time we see many people who do not find a clear orientation of life and do not have a clear mission for their lives. Some try to give meaning to their lives through success and recognition in the world, through a life addicted to pleasure or simply through some crazy action. John found his mission and orientation of life by accepting a word of God personally. He accepted the mission to be a pioneer for the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, and he lived consistently with this calling. May God help us and the next generation to have a clear identity in Jesus and to live according to God's calling as a kingdom of priests, through which God's good deeds are proclaimed first in Bonn, then at 1,700 colleges and universities in Europe and throughout the world.

2) John also had a very good attitude towards the Messiah. He was very humble. He knew that he was not worthy to untie the sandals of the Messiah. Because of this attitude, he was able to recognize Jesus when He finally came to Him and to receive and testify of Him as the

Christ. It is also very important that we help people to have the right attitude toward the Messiah so that they can receive and witness the Christ.

3) We may be used as pioneers for the work of the Christ. God is using the work of forming 10,000 one-to-one Bible study teams and living together, mobilizing the next generation as spiritual leaders through GLEF and establishing three spiritual bases in the Muslim world to prepare the way for spiritual revival.

Let us look at verse 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!" When John the Baptist fulfilled his mission as a forerunner of the Messiah under many temptations, he was visited by Jesus the next day. When John saw Jesus, he gave a clear testimony that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. What does John's testimony about Jesus mean: "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"?

The Lamb had great significance in the culture and faith of the Jews. When the Israelites cried out to God under the relentless rule of Pharaoh, God sent Moses to them. On the day before the tenth plague, God commanded them to slaughter a lamb and to smear the blood of the lamb on the doorposts of their homes. The blood of the Lamb was the sign that saved them from the plague of death, namely, the death of all firstborn. In the same way, Jesus became the Lamb of salvation for us, saving us from the consequence of sin. Let us reflect on this briefly in three points:

1) The true face of sin. Sin is not just a transgression or bad deed. Sin is rebellion against the best love and authorship of God. It is the way people separate themselves from God. They make themselves enemies of God. The separation of men from God is very serious and the cause of all misfortune of men, finally of eternal death. Sin is so serious that it can only be forgiven through the shedding of blood (Heb 9:22). The Israelites had to bring sacrificial animals for their sin. But God already promised the Messiah as the true sacrificial lamb in the Old Testament. Through his sacrifice the problem of sin or separation from God was overcome once and for all (Heb 9:12).

2) Jesus' suffering. How did Jesus, the Lamb of God, take away the sins of the world and solve the problem of sin? The prophet Isaiah said about the Messiah: "Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth." (Isaiah 53:4-7) Jesus, the Son of God, was innocent. But he bore the punishment and became poor and miserable because of our sin. He took up our sin willingly and shed His blood on the cross to atone for the sins of mankind. On the cross he bore our disobedience, rebellion and transgression. We have much to say when we are once treated unjustly. But Jesus did not open his mouth even though he was treated like a slaughter sheep to save us.

3) Jesus' power. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews writes: "How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!" (Heb 9:14) Sometimes we think that we are too sinful for Jesus to save us. But everyone is allowed to come to Jesus as he is and receive cleansing from all his sins. Whoever receives the Lamb of God, Jesus, and comes to Jesus with his sins, experiences the absolute love and forgiveness of God in his heart. The one who receives the Lamb of God, Jesus, overcomes the power of sin and begins a victorious life. Jesus, the Lamb of God, is not only a theoretical concept, but a real salvific power. It is stronger than the power of sin.

John did not know Christ at first, but he preached the baptism of repentance to reveal the Christ. As he preached the baptism of repentance, people became ready to recognize and receive Christ, who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. Here, "knowing" does not only mean theoretical knowledge or having heard of it. To know Christ means to receive him as the Lamb of God and to live under his guidance. Then we

experience the life-changing power of Christ, namely baptism by the Holy Spirit. This is why John said, "But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) Through the gospel of John, let us receive Jesus as the Lamb of God for our sins and experience the baptism by the Holy Spirit. Like John the Baptist, let us work well with Jesus so that young people may know and receive Jesus as the Christ and the Lamb of God.

## II. We have found the Messiah (35-51)

In verses 35 to 51 we learn how the first disciples met Jesus and how they began their lives following Jesus. Andrew and another disciple, probably the author John, had previously been disciples of John the Baptist. But when John the Baptist repeatedly said to them, "Look, this is the Lamb of God," they wanted to know Jesus. But they first had to go through an interview with Jesus. Jesus asked them, "What do you want?" This seems to be a simple question. But it was a question of their heart's motive. Did they want to receive any human help or a great experience through Jesus? The answer of the disciples: "Rabbi", "where are you staying?" shows that they wanted to get to know Jesus' life and to establish a personal relationship with him. With this answer they passed the interview with Jesus with the grade A. Jesus invited them to "Come and you will see!" "Come and see!" is Jesus' wonderful invitation to meet him. Getting to know Jesus is not an intellectual matter or an external observation, like you read reviews on Amazon. Rather, we are allowed to help our sheep and children to come, e.g. to Sunday worship service, early morning prayer, one-to-one Bible study and the community, to see and experience the work of God. In this way we can establish a deep spiritual relationship with them. In this way you can also establish the deep relationship with Jesus.

We do not know exactly what the disciples saw with Jesus that day. But this brief encounter with Jesus changed their whole life. Shortly afterwards we see that Andreas had already become a missionary. He first finds his older brother Simon and testifies to him: "We have found the Messiah." And then he led his brother to Jesus. He was a stubborn man and difficult to move. Never had he gone with his brother to John the Baptist. But the testimony of Andrew

and his conviction of Jesus aroused his curiosity. Finally he came to Jesus. What did Jesus say to him? Let us look at verse 42: "And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter)." Jesus looked at him with the hope of God and gave him a great promise that he would be a rock of faith. As an older brother, Peter was used to take responsibility. But basically he had no hope. But Peter was so moved by Jesus' hope for him that he decided to follow Jesus.

The next day Jesus met Philip and invited him to "Follow me." Philip was a calculating and clever man. But when he heard Jesus' calling, he did not calculate, but followed him. Philip immediately began to invite others. The first one he found was Nathaniel. But it was not easy to invite him because he had many prejudices. But Jesus helped Nathaniel through his proud and haughty bowl. At first Jesus encouraged him that he was a right Israelite. Then he told him that he had already seen him under the fig tree. Nathaniel was often misunderstood because he seemed a little arrogant, so that he often spent his time alone under the fig tree, judging alone over the wicked world without being able to do anything. But Nathaniel was overwhelmed by the fact that Jesus knew him. Then he confessed that Jesus must be the Son of God. Jesus knew that Nathaniel was hurt by the injustice of the world and longed for something greater. Jesus encouraged him that this was not all, but that he would see even greater things, like Jacob who had seen the ladder to heaven. Nathaniel left his fig tree and henceforth followed Jesus.

Jesus took care of each of his disciples personally and individually and helped them to get to know him by forming a Bible study team with them and sharing his life with them. Afterwards his disciples could make a clear confession: "We have found the Messiah." (41) "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote. (45) "Rabbi, you are the son of God; you are the king of Israel." (49) God's work is also done today through "come and you will see", namely through the formation of one-to-one Bible study teams and through the community of life. This spring, let us increasingly serve the work of one-to-one Bible study team formation and life communion - and the formation of prayer groups. One student formed a prayer circle with

his classmates. His classmates then confessed that Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus wants to meet each one of us and the people on campus who are full of hope. He invites us to get to know him through his Word until each of us makes a clear confession about Jesus.

In today's lesson we learned that John the Baptist had a clear identity based on the Word of God as Jesus' preparer. We have learned that Jesus is the Lamb of God, who takes away our sin and the sin of the world. We learned that through the work of "come and see" young people can confess Jesus as the Christ. Let us vigorously continue the work of "come and see" by forming one-to-one Bible study teams and life communities.