

John's Mandate and Mission

John 1: 6-8

Joh 1:6 There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John.

Joh 1:7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe.

Joh 1:8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

Outline:

1) His Mandate - verse 6

2) His Mission – verses 7-8

1) His Mandate - verse 6

Joh 1:6 There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John.

Note:

We have three things in this verse regarding John the Baptist:

I) His Apparent Insignificance

II) His Absolute Importance

III) His Accepted Identity

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I) His Apparent Insignificance

“There was a man”

Augustine:

God sent a man, not an angel or other heavenly being, to testify to his Son's humanity

But, what a man!!

Compare:

Mat 3:4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

Mat 3:5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan,

Mat 3:6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

Mat 3:7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

Mat 3:8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

Mat 3:9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

Mat 3:10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Mat 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire:

Compare:

The words of the Lord Jesus concerning John:

Mat 11:7 And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

Mat 11:8 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft *clothing* are in kings' houses.

Mat 11:9 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.

Mat 11:10 For this is *he*, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.
Mat 11:11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist:

II) His Absolute Importance

Is rooted in the fact that he was,

“sent from God” = απεσταλμενος παρα θεου

A) John was consciously aware that he was sent by God

Joh 1:33 And I knew him not: **but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.**

B) He was also acutely aware why he was sent

Read John 3: 22-36

III) His Accepted Identity

“whose name *was* John”

Q. Why was his name John?

Compare:

Luk 1:13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and **thou shalt call his name John.**

Luk 1:59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.

Luk 1:60 And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John.

Luk 1:61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

Luk 1:62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.
Luk 1:63 And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.

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2) His Mission – verses 7-8

Joh 1:7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

Joh 1:8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

Here we have:

I) The Simplicity of His Mission

II) The Focus of His Mission

III) The Purpose of His Mission

IV) The Qualifier of His Mission

I) The Simplicity of His Mission

“The same came for a witness”

“μαρτυρία”

J.C. Ryle notes:

We see, firstly, in these verses, *the true nature of a Christian minister's office*. We have it in the description of John the Baptist-- "He came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe."

Christian ministers are not priests, nor mediators between God and man. They are not agents into whose hands men may commit their souls, and carry on their religion by deputy. They are witnesses. They are intended to bear testimony to God's truth, and specially to the great truth that Christ is the only Savior and light of the world. This was Peter's ministry on the day of Pentecost. "With many

other words did he *testify* ." (Acts 2:40.) This was the whole tenor of Paul's ministry. "He *testified* both to the Jews and Greeks repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts 20:21.) Unless a Christian minister bears a full testimony to Christ, he is not faithful to his office. **So long as he does testify of Christ, he has done his part, and will receive his reward, although his hearers may not believe his testimony.**

Illus - A witness in court is expected to simply say what they know!!

Compare:

Mar 5:19 Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

Mar 5:20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all *men* did marvel.

II) The Focus of His Mission

“to bear witness of the Light”

As we saw in John chapter 3:

Joh 3:30 He must increase, but I *must* decrease.

Like the words of that great man of God, Whitefield:

"Let the name of George Whitefield perish, so long as Christ only is exalted."

Also:

Joh 1:26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

Joh 1:27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

Paul confessed:

2Co 4:5 For **we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord;** and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

2Co 4:6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of **the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.**

III) The Purpose of His Mission

“that all *men* through him might believe.”

Note 1,

We are not only saved by Christ alone but we believe through Christ alone!

Compare;

Heb 12:2a Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith

Also:

1Pe 1:21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

Gill:

“Christ, as God, is the object of faith; as Mediator, he is the way to the Father, by which men come to him, believe in him and lay hold upon him, as their covenant God and Father; and is also the author of that faith by which they believe in him; **and all their encouragement to believe is taken from him”**

Note 2,

Every Christian and especially every Christian minister is to long for and pray for the salvation of souls!!

Compare:

Rom 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

IV) The Qualifier of His Mission

Joh 1:8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

This needs to be qualified for even our Lord said of John:

Joh 5:35 He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

Mat 11:11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist:

Consider:

If John were that great, how great is our Saviour?

May God bless His word to our souls. Amen.