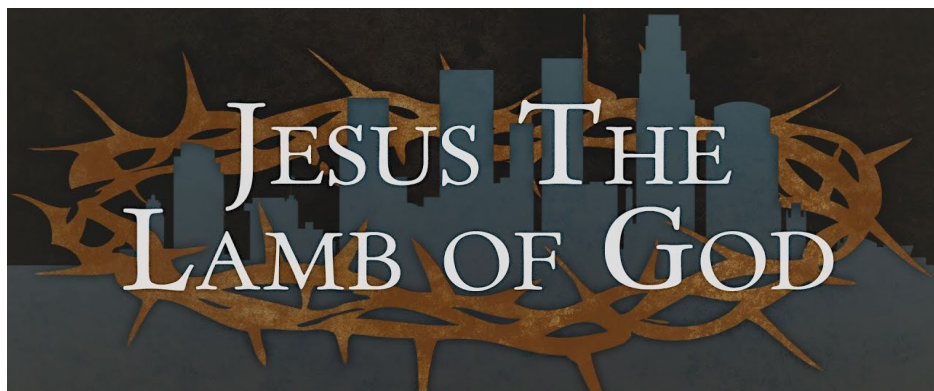


## The Lamb, the Spirit, and the Son

John 1.29-34

Everyone today wants Jesus on their team: Activists for everything from gay marriage to climate change invoke His name. But the way John the Baptist introduced Jesus reveals a different emphasis: He is the Lamb of God, baptizes in the Holy Spirit, and is the Son of God.

- Jesus is the Lamb of God
  - *Understanding the need for a sacrifice*
  - *The significance of Jesus being 'God's Lamb'*
- Jesus is the Baptizer with the Spirit
  - *Understanding baptism: Water vs. Spirit*
  - *New life in the 'body of Christ' (1 Cor. 12.13; Titus 3.5)*
- Jesus is the Son of God
  - *Identity, not progeny!*
  - *This is 'God with us'!*



1. In the opening narrative about the witness of John the Baptist in John 1.19-28, he is intent on taking the spotlight *off of* himself. He was looked upon as a prophet or even the Messiah, but he doggedly diminished his own significance: He was just a ‘voice’ for someone else – a man whose shoes he wasn’t worthy of tying! John 1.29-34 moves to “scene two,” where Jesus comes to John. Contrast John’s references to himself with his statements about Jesus. See John 3.30. How can we apply this in our lives?
2. John’s introduction of Jesus as “the Lamb of God” in v29 (and v36) is a common way to refer to Jesus today, but this is the only time Jesus is ever called this in the Gospels, and it never again appears in the New Testament. (Jesus is like “a lamb” in Acts 8.32 and 1 Peter 1.19, and is “the Lamb” throughout Revelation, but not “the Lamb of God.”) Question: What would John’s hearers have thought this title referred to? Some suggestions: The Passover Lamb; the “lamb led to slaughter” (Isa. 53.7); the lamb of the daily sacrifices offered at the temple; the “gentle lamb” of Jer.11.19; the lamb “God would provide” of Gen. 22.8; the ‘scapegoat’ (Lev. 16; but this wasn’t a lamb); a guilt offering (which was sometimes a lamb; see Lev. 14). Sacrifice was a big part of Jewish history and religious practice, and lambs were often the victims, so what do you think it referred to?
3. John baptized in water to call people to repentance and reveal Jesus as Israel’s Messiah. Jesus “baptizes in the Holy Spirit” (33). What does this mean? The ‘baptism of the Holy Spirit’ is confused with ecstatic experiences today, but is this biblical? The ‘baptism of the Holy Spirit’ is mentioned seven times in the New Testament: Five are prophetic (Mt. 3.11; Mk. 1.8; Lk. 3.16; Jn. 1.33; Acts 1.5); one is historical (Acts 11.16-18); one is doctrinal (1 Cor. 12.13). Are all Christians baptized in the Holy Spirit? Into what are we baptized? What does it mean to you to be ‘immersed in’ the Holy Spirit?
4. John’s final declaration is that Jesus is the Son of God (34). What kind of impact would this have had on his hearers?! What kind of impact does it have on anyone who believes in Him (John 20.31)?