

# “Behold the Lamb”

## 5 responses to the revelation of Jesus

KEY TEXT—JOHN 1:29

### INTRODUCTION

#### Jesus obscured

These days, Jesus is increasingly obscured from the centre of even Christian traditions. He has been displaced by Father Christmas at Christmas time, and He often seems to be overlooked at Easter in favour of Easter eggs and bunnies. Consequently, if Jesus was to appear in front of us, how many of us would know why He is important?

#### Why does Jesus matter?

Imagine you are standing with a group of friends and you suddenly see Jesus walking towards you. What would be the first words out of your mouth? What would you say in response to encountering Jesus for the first time?

#### John's response to Jesus

The first words that spill out of John the Baptist's mouth are significant because they capture the essence of who Jesus is, and why this is important,

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)

### 5 RESPONSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS

John 1:29 is a revelation of who Jesus is, and what He means to us all. Here are 5 responses to John's revelation of Jesus.

#### 1—Relief for gaining freedom

Look again at John 1:29, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" The dominating idea in this short sentence is that Jesus has come to take away sin.

By taking away sin, Jesus removes 3 things from your life:

- **The penalty of sin** The Apostle Paul reminds us about the penalty of sin, "For the wages of sin is death..." (Romans 6:23). Any sin in your life will result in your eternal death if it is not removed. But Jesus can take your sin away—and therefore the penalty of sin—so you may live with Him forever.
- **The guilt of sin** The Holy Spirit will make sure that sin does not enter into our lives unnoticed. Later in chapter 16, the apostle John explains the work of the Holy Spirit, "And when he comes, he will convict the world of its sin..." (John 16:8, NLT). If you are sensitive to the Holy Spirit, guilt for sin will weigh heavily on you. Guilt will

burden your conscience and even depress your physical body if not dealt with. But Jesus came to take away your guilt so you can experience freedom and its relief.

- **The consequences of sin** When sin enters your life it will hurt you. Sin damages and breaks us. So when Paul says that "the wages of sin is death" this death is not just an ultimate death, but a slow death that begins as soon as sin appears your life. You will feel the damage of sin in your mind, thoughts, body, emotions and feelings. But Jesus came to take away the damaging consequences of your sin.

When you realise that Jesus can take away the penalty, guilt and consequences of sin in your life, it will fill you with relief for the new freedom you will experience.

#### 2—Gratefulness for a substitute

In John 1, John uses three symbols for Jesus.

1. **The Word** which creates vs 1 onwards
2. **Light** which illuminates v 4-9
3. **Lamb of God** who removes sin v29, 36.

The term "lamb of God" is unique to John, and like the previous two symbols, is deeply rooted in the Old Testament. Here are two such references.

- **Isaiah 53** "6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7 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 its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth..."
- **The passover lamb** During the 10th plague which heralded Israel's imminent escape from Egypt, God ordered that a lamb must be killed and its blood daubed on the door posts so the angel would not kill their firstborn. They also ate the lamb as their last meal before leaving. The death of this lamb literally saved the firstborn and gave the whole family strength as they escaped from slavery.

**How are you saved from sin?** By a substitute. Jesus, the lamb of God, died instead of you dying an eternal death. When you grasp this concept of substitution, you will be filled with gratefulness for what Jesus has done for you!

#### 3—Amazement at the cost

Even as Christians, we can be fairly flippant concerning the cost of removing sin. Sin removing required a substitute.

Significantly, this substitute could not be any substitute. Your substitute was not simply a good man, or a brave man or a wise man, but the Son of God. God Himself was your substitute.

How do you grasp the fact that God Himself—the Creator and Lord of this universe and perhaps countless, inhabited, parallel universes, died for you?

I don't know, except I pray that the Holy Spirit will open my puny mind to somehow comprehend a little of the costliness of my salvation that required God Himself to die.

Be amazed at the cost of the salvation Jesus offers you!

#### 4—Astonishment at the enormity of it all

John declares that Jesus is going to "take away the sin of the world". His declaration did not actually focus on the personal removal of sin—he didn't turn to his disciples and assure them that Jesus was going to forgive their sins, although that is implied. Rather, John declares something much more dramatic.

The greek word that John uses for "world" in John 1 is kosmos, from where we get the English word, cosmos! (also cosmetic). As the word cosmos suggests, John is referring to the whole created order, the entire universe in which the great controversy between God and Satan is being played out.

Sin has had an impact throughout the cosmos, so John wants you to know that Jesus will remove sin from the entire universe.

That's mind-boggling. Be astonished at the enormity of what Jesus has done!

#### 5—Soberness when recognising the alternative

If it required the death of God Himself to remove sin from the whole world, it stands to reason that without Jesus' death, the world and everyone in it would otherwise be doomed.

In the book of Revelation, the Bible clearly teaches that those who are still attached to their sin will literally be thrown into the fires of hell, "Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire" (Revelation

20:15). So if thousands or millions or billions choose to keep hold of their sin—preventing Jesus from taking it away, there will be a catastrophic, wretched and permanent end for potentially billions of people.

I want to be very clear that salvation is not a fire insurance policy. Beware the temptation to become a Christian or remain a Christian simply because you want to avoid the alternative. But at the same time, hell fire is the reality facing the entire world. Be sobered by this very present reality if you are tempted to hold on to sin in your life.

#### THE ULTIMATE RESPONSE

So as you encounter the revelation of "the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" you may respond in a mixture of relief for freedom gained, gratefulness for a substitute, amazement at the cost paid for you, astonishment at the enormity of what Jesus has accomplished, and soberness at the alternative. But how else might you respond?

Consider the response of John the Baptist's own disciples,

The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. (John 1:35-37)

To respond to this revelation is to enter into a permanent, intimate, relationship with Him. This is Jesus' greatest desire as He looks at you right now.

#### YOUR RESPONSE

Are you burdened by the penalty of sin, its guilt, or the brokenness sin is causing in your life? This revelation of Jesus declares to you that Jesus delights to remove your sin if you ask Him. You don't have to be burdened a moment longer.

If you ask Him to take your sin away, he will give you peace, a genuine sense of gratitude, awe, and amazement.

Why don't you take a minute to respond to this revelation of Jesus?

1

#### LIFE POINT

Today, the real purpose of Jesus coming to earth is often obscured

2

#### LIFE POINT

Jesus came to earth to remove the burden and pain of sin in my life

3

#### LIFE POINT

I don't have to continue for one more moment with the burden of sin

4

#### LIFE POINT

The ultimate response to Jesus' removal of my sin is to follow Him