



+ **YOU**

## **Risk-Takers: The Adventure of Walking by Faith**

**Sermon Title:** Faith's Testimony

**To be used with Session 5:** John the Baptist: A Faith That Challenges Others

**Date of First Use:** June 29, 2025

**Text:** John 1:6-9, 14-42

**Connection with the Study:** This week's Bible study of John the Baptist helps believers embrace a faith that impacts other people. Such a faith must be based on the only absolute truth – God's Word. It also teaches that truth has a purpose: to transform lives through Christ. Today's sermon reaches into John's testimony about himself, God's Word, and the focus of both: Jesus. Its application leads people to understand who Christ is and how we relate to Him. Some references in the sermon include the Bible study passage from Matthew 3:1-12 that aid context and purpose to the text in John 1.

### **Introduction:**

Popularity can be a trap. What is popular is not always true and what is true is often unpopular. Although he preached in the wilderness, John the Baptist became extremely popular among the people of Israel. They came from great distances to hear Him speak and to be baptized by him. His popularity also produced conflicting results. Some religious leaders wanted to be identified with John to enhance their standing with the people. John pierced their façade of faith with a stern call to genuine repentance. He refused to allow popularity to determine the truth.

John remained focused on his calling. God determined before John's birth that he would prepare the way for God's Son, the Messiah. John's demand for repentance and determination to point the way for Christ fulfilled prophecy (Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1). Just as John testified that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus proclaimed that John had fulfilled the promise of God's Word (Matt. 11:7-10).

From John's story of faith, we can glean principles for our lives. Just as John's testimony of faith led others to trust and follow Jesus, even so we can be faithful witnesses for Christ.

### **1. Called to testify. (John 1:6-9)**

I once served on a jury in a civil trial. It was interesting to hear each side call witnesses to testify. Every person promised to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Hearing conflicting testimony, it was obvious that someone was not fulfilling that promise. Just like John the Baptist, you and I are called to testify about the truth – the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- a) **The source** (v. 6). John didn't wake up one day and decide to testify about the Messiah. God sent him. Six months before the birth of Christ, John was born to an elderly couple who had been childless. His parents were promised this boy would prepare the way for the Messiah (Luke 1:5-25, 57-80).

We also find the source of our calling in God. We don't witness because we want to persuade someone to accept our ideas. We witness because God has called us, saved us, and commissioned us.

- b) **The purpose** (vv. 7-9). God sent John with a prime directive: to testify about the light (Christ). He knew he was not the focus. He was not the light, but a witness for the light. You and I also have a God-given purpose. The moment we received Jesus as Savior, we also received God's commission to be His witnesses so people everywhere could come to Him and be saved (Matt. 28:18-20).

## 2. Confessing the truth. (John 1:19-23)

- a) **Truth has no ego** (vv. 19-23). John could have accepted the people's opinion that he was the Messiah, Elijah, or another prophet. Instead, he laid no claim to another's fame. John was secure in who he was.

The truth is sufficient. You and I need not seek to be more than we are – witnesses for the truth. It's not about us. It's all about Jesus.

- b) **Truth understands its purpose** (vv. 24-23). John was also secure in what he was supposed to do. His purpose was not to attract followers for himself, although many people became his disciples. He could have had many more if he had not demanded evidence of true repentance (Matt. 3:7-12). John was merely a voice in the wilderness preparing the way for the Messiah, calling people to repent and believe. His purpose in life was to point people to Christ.

Believers share John's purpose. Our success in life is not amassing fame or fortune. It's not even found in having a nice family, as important as that is. Our success depends on living and speaking in such a way that points people to a saving relationship with Jesus.

## 3. Confirming the trust. (John 1:24-42)

- a) **The sign of baptism** (vv. 24-28). John had faith in God's word and acted on it. God gave John two reasons for baptizing. First, his baptism focused on repentance. One way John prepared the way for the Messiah was to call people to repentance. Second, through his baptism, John would see a sign confirming the identity of the Messiah.

One day, someone came for John's baptism who had no sin for which He should repent (Matt. 3:13-14). Jesus's purpose for being baptized was to fulfill all righteousness. In this case, it was the sign God gave John. When the Spirit alighted on Jesus as He came up from the water, John knew He was the One (Matt. 3:15-17; John 1: 25-34).

When we repent of our sins and place our faith in Jesus, we receive Him as our Lord and Savior. We follow Him in baptism by immersion as a sign – a testimony to Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection. We are buried with Him in baptism and raised to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3-5). Countless times as a pastor, I’ve seen the effect someone’s baptism has on people who see this testimony of faith and transformation.

- b) The significance for believers** (vv. 29-42). John confirmed the trust God placed in him when the Lord commissioned him to preach and baptize. Having witnessed God’s confirmation, John led people to follow Jesus. He declared, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” Two of them immediately left John to follow Jesus. One of these was Andrew who then brought his brother Simon to meet Jesus.

As believers, we confirm God’s trust in calling and commissioning us by telling other people about Jesus. By the testimony of our words and our lives, family, friends, and even strangers can be brought to Jesus.

I asked a young man what helped him to experience life transformation through Christ. He told about the testimony of an older friend whom he greatly admired. His friend’s witness for Jesus had been demonstrated through his changed life. This young man wanted that same change for his life. By faith, he received a new life in Christ.

### **Conclusion:**

John fulfilled his life’s purpose when he testified about Jesus. That should be the goal of our lives as well. Standing before Christ, we won’t impress Him with our earthly achievements. Our faith in Him is enough. That faith is demonstrated by how we live for Him and what we say about Him. Will we stand before him empty-handed, or will we be surrounded by others who have come to faith in Him through that testimony?

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