



Walking With the Savior

Through An Eyewitness Account of John

John, one of the sons of Zebedee, stood as an eyewitness to the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. He began his journey as a fisherman, leaving behind his nets and the future he had planned for himself to follow a teacher, a prophet, and a miracle worker. At the outset, John did not fully understand who Jesus was or what lay ahead. In faith, he aligned himself with Jesus, drawn by His words and deeds.

As John walked alongside Jesus, witnessing His teachings and miracles, he gradually realized that Jesus was far more than a prophet or a remarkable teacher. John came to understand that Jesus was God in the flesh. This revelation was not just a turning point for John personally, but a moment of eternal significance. By choosing to follow Jesus, John's future was forever changed, and his decision would go on to impact the world—not only in his own time but throughout every generation to come.

Joining John on the Journey with Jesus

Background Matters

For a short time the ministry of **John** the Baptist overlapped Jesus' ministry. Thus **the Judean countryside** must have been alive with the teaching of both these great preachers of repentance and God's kingdom. Both John and **Jesus** had **disciples**, large crowds followed both of them, and both **baptized**. The statement that Jesus "baptized" (vv. 22, 26) probably means He was overseeing the baptizing done by His disciples (4:2). The site of **Aenon near Salim** is unknown today but a likely location is about midway between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea (and about three miles east of Shechem). Both groups were baptizing and thus two "reform" movements were popular. **This was before John was put in prison** (3:24). This statement reveals how the Fourth Gospel supplements the Synoptics. It implies that readers knew about John's imprisonment from reading the other Gospels (Matt. 14:1–12; Mark 6:14–29; Luke 3:19–20) or from common church tradition.



3:25. The zealous **disciples** of John the Baptist found themselves at a disadvantage in **an argument**. **A certain Jew** asked why he should join **John's** group. He (and others; cf. "They" in v. 26) argued about **ceremonial washing**. Since there were Essene lustrations and Pharisaic washings, why should Jews follow another washing, John's baptism? Besides, the group following Jesus was larger (v. 26).

3:26. John's disciples may have been angry and jealous. (They were interested in John's movement and were not committed to Jesus.) They complained that Jesus, of whom **John** had **testified**, had now captured the nation's attention. They longed for the former days when **everyone** went to hear John (Mark 1:5).

3:27. John's greatness is revealed in his reply. He said, **A man can receive only what is given him from heaven**. God is sovereign in bestowing His blessings on one's ministry. If Jesus' movement was expanding, then it must have been in the will of God. This principle of God's sovereignty is stressed in John (cf. 6:65; 19:11) as well as elsewhere in the New Testament (e.g., 1 Cor. 4:7).

3:28. John also reminded his disciples that they were forgetting part of his teaching. For he had clearly taught that he was **not the** promised Messiah **but** was only **sent ahead** by God to do a work of preparation for the Messiah (1:8, 15, 20, 23).

3:29–30. In Jesus' growing influence, John found his own **joy** fulfilled. He illustrated this for his disciples by referring to a custom at Near Eastern weddings. **The friend of the bridegroom** was only an assistant, not the main participant in the marriage. The assistant acted on behalf of **the bridegroom** and made the preliminary arrangements for the ceremony. His **joy** came when he heard the bridegroom coming for his bride. John the Baptist's work was to prepare for the arrival of Christ, the "Groom." John baptized only with water, not with the Spirit. Therefore Jesus **must become greater** and John **must become less**. This was not merely advisable or fortuitous; it was the divine order. John willingly and with **joy** accepted Jesus' growing popularity as God's plan.

3:31. Here John the Evangelist developed the theme about the supremacy of Jesus, which John the Baptist spoke of to his followers (vv. 28–30). Since Jesus has come from heaven, His words surpass those of any religious teacher. Each human teacher is limited by his earthly boundaries (he **belongs to the earth and is from the earth**). But **the Logos from heaven is above all**; He is preeminent (Col. 1:18).

3:32. What Jesus spoke came from His previous vision of and communion with the Father in heaven (cf. 1:1, 14). Yet in spite of this clear reliable witness, mankind as a whole has rejected His message (cf. 1:11).

3:33. The message of Jesus has not been universally rejected as verse 32 by itself might indicate. One who receives it gives his attestation or certification to the fact **that God is truthful** (cf. v. 21). To reject this testimony is to call God a liar (1 John 5:10).

3:34. Jesus gives the perfect truth of God as He **speaks the words of God**, because He has the full endowment of the Holy Spirit, **the Spirit without limit**. The Old Testament prophets had the Spirit only for limited times and for limited purposes.

The Apostle John referred to Jesus as **the One whom God has sent**. Thirty-nine times the Gospel of John refers to Jesus being sent from God (vv. 17, 34; 4:34; 5:23–24, 30, 36–38; 6:29, 38–39, 44, 57; 7:16, 28–29; 8:16, 18, 26, 29, 42; 9:4; 10:36; 11:42; 12:44–45, 49; 13:16, 20; 14:24; 15:21; 16:5; 17:3,



18, 21, 23, 25; 20:21). This affirms Jesus' deity and heavenly origin, as well as God's sovereignty and love in initiating the Son's Incarnation (cf. Gal. 4:4; 1 John 4:9–10, 14).

3:35. The relationship between **the Son** and **the Father** is one of loving intimacy and complete confidence. The Son is endowed with all authority to accomplish the Father's purposes (5:22; Matt. 28:18).

3:36. Man has only two options: trust **in the Son** or reject **the Son** (cf. vv. 16, 18). Unbelief is tragic ignorance but it is also willful disobedience to clear light. **God's wrath** is mentioned only here in the Fourth Gospel (but cf. Rev. 6:16–17; 11:18; 14:10; 16:19; 19:15). "Wrath," God's necessary righteous reaction against evil, **remains** (*menei*) on the unbeliever. This wrath is future but it also exists now. Endless sin and disobedience will result in endless punishment (Matt. 25:46).¹

This week in "Walking With the Savior," The ministry of John the Baptist briefly overlapped with that of Jesus, creating a vibrant atmosphere in the Judean countryside, where both renowned preachers shared messages of repentance and the kingdom of God. John and Jesus each had their own disciples, attracted large crowds, and practiced baptism. However, a third group—the Jews who believed in the washing of purification—created confusion in the minds of John's disciples, leading to comparisons. As Jesus and his disciples experienced rapid growth and an increasing number of baptisms, the disciples of John the Baptist began to feel jealous. John, however, rejected the negative atmosphere fostered by his uninformed disciples, stating, (paraphrase) "This is not about me, but about Jesus." It is astonishing how Satan, without being explicitly mentioned, seeks to divide those with godly intentions by using human reasoning.

Study Guide 9 *This study guide presents daily assignments that are specifically crafted to enhance your growth in the Word. Embrace each moment to meditate and reflect, and watch as your spiritual maturity flourishes through your dedicated efforts.*

It's Not About Me! **(John the Baptist's Testimony About Jesus)**

¹ Edwin A. Blum, "John," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 282–284.



John 3:22–36

Open It, Mondays. Open your heart and mind to the truth of the Word.

1. How would you feel if a friend received more recognition than you for something you both did?

Explore It, Tuesdays, keep the rhythm of personal study moving.

2. What did Jesus do with His disciples in the Judean countryside? (3:22)

3. What was John doing at Aenon? (3:23)

4. What eventually happened to John? (3:24)

5. What took place between John's disciples and some Jews? (3:25)

6. What news did John receive? (3:26)

7. What did John say a person can receive? (3:27)

8. *Who did John say he was, as well as who he wasn't? (3:28)



Push on Wednesday, keep the rhythm of personal study moving.

9. How did John describe his feelings about Jesus becoming more important than him? (3:29)

10. What did John say about his future status? (3:30)

11. *What did John say about Jesus' future status? (3:30)

12. Who is above all? (3:31)

13. What did Jesus come to say? (3:32)

14. *What did the people do who accepted Jesus' testimony? (3:33)

15. What did the person whom God sent do? (3:34)

Get It Thursdays, keep the rhythm of personal study moving.

16. What has the Father done for the Son? (3:35)

17. What is the result of either believing or rejecting the Son? (3:36)



18. *Why is it sometimes hard to give God credit?

19. How are we like John?

20. What are some areas in which you struggle with being humble?

21. *How can we certify that God is truthful in our lives?

Drive it Home, Fridays, keep the rhythm of personal study moving.

22. How would you describe your relationship with Jesus?

23. How does a person reject the Son?

24. *How can you give Jesus the place of prominence He deserves in your life today?

25. In what area of your life will you ask God to help you to be more humble?

A Journey Through The Gospel of John **2026**

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