

**Week of December 13, 2020**

**John 1:6-8, 19-28**

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

<sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.

<sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

<sup>19</sup> This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

<sup>20</sup> He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah."

<sup>21</sup> And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No."

<sup>22</sup> Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

<sup>23</sup> He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said.

<sup>24</sup> Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.

<sup>25</sup> They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?"

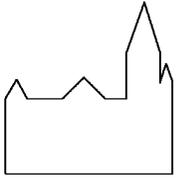
<sup>26</sup> John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know,

<sup>27</sup> the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal."

<sup>28</sup> This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

Note:

"The prophet" referred to in verse 21, is based on a quote from Moses that appears in Deuteronomy 18:15: <sup>15</sup> The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet.



### Group Leader

Remember: you don't need to use all of the questions. Go with what works. Give people a chance to think before answering, but if a question falls flat, move on. Let the discussion go where it needs to go, as long as it remains centered around the lesson. Give the participants page 1. Use this page for yourself.

### Gathering questions:

- A. When you were a student, what subject did you think was useless but later turned out to be more useful than you thought?
- B. When did you participate in a competition and do well but not win?

### Bible Study Questions:

1. What answer do you think the religious leaders were expecting when they asked of John: "Who are you?"
2. In what ways does John's ministry "make straight" the way for Jesus? What does it mean to make his paths straight?
3. How do you think John felt about being the one who was "unworthy to untie the thong" of Jesus' sandals?
4. When have you been the one to start something that someone else finished? How did that feel?
5. Are you a "starter", a "continuer", or a "finisher"?
6. How would you live differently if your focus was on how your life will have an impact 50-100 years from now?
7. What did you do in 2020 that lays a foundation for what you can do in 2021 or beyond?

Closing prayer: particularly invite discussion and prayers about your long-term hopes.