

December 10, 2017  
Sermon for The Second Sunday in Advent  
St Peter Lutheran Church  
Bowie, TX  
Larry Knobloch, Pastor  
John 1:6–9, 15

*J.J.- Jesu Juva—Help me, Jesus*

John 1:6–9 (ESV)

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

John 1:15 (ESV)

<sup>15</sup> (John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’ ”)

Grace, Mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Amen.

Nadin Khoury was 13 years old, 5-foot-2, and weighed—soaking wet—100 pounds. Nadin's mom had lost her job as a hotel maid and needed work so she had recently moved her family from Minneapolis to Philadelphia.

In 2000 the family had escaped war-torn Liberia in West Africa. Nadin Khoury, then, was a new kid in Philly with a single mom who was an unemployed African immigrant looking for a job at a hotel.

That's the kind of kid bullies spot from 100 miles away.

And they did. The bullies outnumbered Nadin seven to one. For thirty minutes seven teenagers hit and kicked Nadin and rubbed his face in dirt.

Nadin survived the attack and would have likely faced more except for the stupidity of one of the bullies. He filmed it all and posted it on YouTube.

Police saw it and the bullies were thrown behind bars.

A staffer at the morning show *The View* heard about it and invited Nadin to appear on the broadcast. Unbeknownst to Nadin, the producer had also invited three members of the Philadelphia Eagles football team to appear on the show as well.

One was all-pro wide-receiver DeSean Jackson. Jackson said, "Nadin, I'm here for you man, anytime you need me." Then, in full view of every bully in Philly, DeSean Jackson gave Nadin Khoury his cell phone number.

Bullies think twice before they harass a kid who has an NFL player's number on speed dial.

You have your fair share of bullies.      So do I.

Sin and shame, guilt and blame.

But Jesus says in John 8:44 that the biggest bully on the block is a liar and the father of lies—Jesus even calls him a murderer. We know him as the devil and Satan. And Satan hits us with his lies and rubs our face in our dirt. He wants to destroy us.

And so we run.

And we run some more. And then we keep on running.

That's why God sent a man named John—*John the Baptist*.

### **John's Mission.**

*"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him."* (Jn 1:6-7)

John the Baptist's mission is "to witness about that light."

In fact, fourteen times in the fourth Gospel the word witness is connected with John the Baptist.

Fourteen times! The best example is in John 1:29 where John the Baptist sees Jesus and this is his witness, "*Behold, the Lamb of God who takes (present tense!) away the sin of the world.*"

John's witness is "*that all might believe through him.*" Through Christ!

This is the first use of the word believe in John's Gospel. It will occur ninety-six more times.

This is the great goal of John's Gospel! John 20:31,

*"These things are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God and that by believing you may have life in his name."*

On our own, we're all on the run. Satan is chasing us with his lies and seductions and half-truths. That's why God sent a man named John—John the Baptist.

John's mission is to witness so we believe the Light. And who is the Light? In John 8:12 Jesus, says, *"I am the light of the world!"*

### **John's Message.**

*"He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world."* (John 1:8–9)

John's message is simple. He isn't the light.

John isn't the message. John is the messenger. Let me say that again.

John isn't the message. John is the messenger.

John 1:8, *"He was not the light."* John 1:20, *"I am not the Christ."* John 1:21, *"I am not Elijah."* John 1:21, *"I am not the prophet."* John 1:27, *"I am not worthy to untie his sandals."* No wonder John the Baptist says in John 3:30, *"He must increase and I must decrease."*

When the liar is rubbing my face in my sin and shame, guilt and blame, too often I look for help in all the wrong places. It's easy to look to other people. To look to my job; or my accomplishments; or my money. And my vacations. And my stuff. These seem like good lights. They might be very good lights.

But they are not **THE** Light.

There is only one Light of the world who can defeat my demons.

The answer is in John's message. This Light is Jesus.

John 1:1, "*In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.*" John 1:14, "*The Word became flesh.*"

It's this Jesus, true God and true man, who fights the bully on our behalf! In Matthew, Mark, and Luke Jesus frequently casts out devils and demons, but in John there is just one exorcism.

John 8:31, "*Now the prince of this world is cast out.*"

That's called one and done! *One and done!*

And when is the prince of this world cast out?

John 8:32 tells us. When the Son of Man is lifted up on the cross for us.

Jesus fights for your health and for your family.

Jesus fights for your salvation and for your restoration.

And Jesus fights for your final resurrection.

Are the odds against you? Is the coach against you?

Is the boss against you? Is your health against you?

Are your friends against you? It seems difficult, for sure.

But Jesus fights for you. Yes you. You with the broken past.

You with the aging body. You with the absentee mom or dad.

You with the lost job, the broken marriage, the bad back, the bad credit score, the bad grade, and the bad break.

Jesus fights for the yous of the world.

Jesus fights Satan for you.

And Jesus defeats Satan for you too. Hands down...Jesus won.  
It happened on a God-forsaken cross and confirmed three days later in an empty tomb.

Jesus even gives you his number on speed dial.

And what would that be? B-I-B-L-E. Bible! Your greatest little black book, or whatever color it may be.

### **John's Mandate.**

*“John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’ ” (John 1:15)*

Both verbs “witnesses” and “cries out” are present tense verbs.

God mandates that John keeps witnessing and crying out.  
It's that urgent! *‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’ ”*

Here's the point. Jesus is greater than John the Baptist!  
Here's the bigger point. John 4 says that Jesus is greater than Jacob.

John 5 says that Jesus is greater than Moses.  
John 8 says Jesus is greater than Abraham.

Here's the biggest point. John 5:39 says that Jesus is greater than the entire Old Testament—with its prophets, priests, and kings; with its tabernacle, temples, and Torah.

That's why John the Baptist still witnesses and still cries out.  
There's no power, no authority and no one greater or stronger or more loving than Jesus.

Our little dog, Abbi, loves to run. If she gets loose she takes off. She will run to our neighbor, or anyone else that she comes across. She's always looking for someone new to pet her. And she looks so happy as she runs.

She's not scared of cars or other dangers either since she's half blind.

And despite the danger, she runs anyway. She knows that when I catch her, she is going to get into trouble and...maybe that's why she keeps running.

But I don't want to hurt her; I just want to keep her safe.

You should understand why Abbi runs because you run too. So do I.

We all run. And we run some more. Despite the danger, we run. And then we keep on running. Because he's after us. "He?"

You know. The bully on the block—the father of lies, the devil himself. But we don't have to run through life. *None of us has to run through life.* Because God sent a man named John—*John the Baptist*. **John's mission, John's message and John's mandate** are all about Jesus.

And Jesus fights for you. Even though it's our own fault that old scratch, the old devil is after us, Jesus fights for us!

So stop running so frantically and fearfully and instead stop, turn around, look straight into the Savior's tender eyes.

And then fall into His strong and loving arms! He's not even going to fuss. He just wants you safe and secure in His kingdom.

Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Amen.

S.D.G.—Soli Deo Gloria

## **Sermon Outline**

### ***A Man Named John***

*John 1:6-9, 15*

- I. John's Mission.
- II. John's Message.
- III. John's Mandate.

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