

Wednesday with the Word

Christopher Jackson, BSW, MSW, MDiv Candidate 21'T
Candler Student Intern/ Teacher

#When The Dust Settles:

John 1:29-34 New International Version (NIV)

John Testifies About Jesus

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! **30** This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’ **31** I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.”

32 Then John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. **33** And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’ **34** I have seen and I testify that this is God’s Chosen One.”^[a]

Moving forward from last week's text, we discussed how the last three verses spoke to a future. Although the text doesn't speak to exactly how many days went by before the initial sighting of Jesus was made by John the Baptist; we can conclude that the words spoken by John to the Pharisees were revealed to be true. John's motive, and actions have manifested the God given vision he was called to produce in making straight the path, and preparing the way for the Lord...

How remarkable is it that we can find and lean on the many occurrences throughout the bible and life itself to reveal to us the TRUTH. After all that has been said and done in attempt to distract us from the truth we know that #WhentheDustsettles... the root or fruit (as previously discussed) will ALWAYS reveal itself.

As we dive deeper into the text, I want to highlight the significance in not just the sighting of Jesus by John the Baptist... but the working of the Holy Spirit in this interaction.

If you can recall in: Luke 1:41 Mary visits her pregnant cousin Elizabeth and upon the sound of Mary's voice, Elizabeth's baby immediately leaps for joy. The text then states that she is filled with the Holy Spirit... Elizabeth then goes on to explain to Mary that not only is she blessed but the child she will bear is too.

Can I tell you, that you don't have to wait for something to manifest outwardly before the leaping takes place inwardly! Before the dust was even settled, John the Baptist knew just whom it was he called to, because he was informed by the Holy Spirit. Fast forward to this part of the text and we see once again that John has identified Jesus immediately by the Holy Spirit... and it is here that we can identify that the fruit currently is bearing itself bountifully from his previous questioning by the Pharisees. Much of what John replied when being questioned couldn't be explained because John never knew Jesus by his face, only by his Spirit! This matters, because some foggy seasons will arise that will not make sense until the dust has settled. But you must continue to trust and walk in SPIRIT.

Have you ever been in a situation where you HAD to wait for the dust to settle for everything to become clear spiritually?

Let's focus on the importance of what John states when he spots Jesus ...

John 1:29-30

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! **30** This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’

Definition to review:

Lamb:

286 *amnós* – a sacrificial lamb (used for *sacrifice*); a young sheep *without blemish* (especially a *one-year* old lamb), as a type of innocence, and with sacrificial connotation).

John says “ Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world!”

With our new found understanding of Lamb in this text let's put into context just what it is that John the baptist is saying: Look it's the “Sacrifice of God” who takes away the sins of the world...

I'm sure at the time many had no clue of the prophetic nature in which John words were referencing and although he was speaking to a future that hadn't manifested yet, he believed strongly in God's word, and the Messiah.

After those words were spoken , John gave a humble regard for his understanding that someone greater was coming after him.

What are you preparing to leave behind #WhenTheDustSettles?

John 1:31

31 I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.”

Definitions to review:

Mayim

1) water, waters

1a) water

1b) water of the feet, urine

1c) of danger, violence, transitory things, refreshment (figuratively)

People won't get why you're doing what you're doing until it happens. You may look crazy, they may call you rebellious, you may even be ostracized and excommunicated because of their spiritual blindness. But trust and know #WhenTheDustSettles the motives will be revealed and God's will shall be fulfilled.

There is a lot to be said about the courageous character of John the Baptist. Here we have a man who speaks of Jesus being the “Lamb of God” while simultaneously serving as a “Sacrificial Lamb” too... (**Matthew 14:1-12**)

John knew the target this would make him, but he also knew the greater purpose being served. John reveals in this text that he in fact was told by God to Baptize with water so Jesus could be revealed.

Can you think of a time that God has asked you to do something out of the norm?

Many people questioned why John was baptizing, if he wasn't the Messiah. What made him so different from them? Yet, here we have John revealing to us what

God had specifically told him to do. There will be times where God will call us to do what's not popular, what's not liked by the masses and people will crucify us just to have their mock trials. Although their intent is to burn us at the stake.. OH WHAT A MIGHTY GOD WE SERVE!!!! Because #WhenTheDustSettles the fruit, the physical manifestation, or lack thereof will speak for itself...

You see, God never sends us anywhere, to complete a mission or assignment for or with a group of people and leave no fruit to show for the work being done . If God is in it, you cannot lose. It doesn't matter what it looks like in the natural world when dealing with a word from God.

The power and characteristics of the Holy Spirit to guide, to teach, and to reveal, shows the beauty and splendor of operating from spirit and truth. That no matter what people say, you can count on the Holy Spirit to see you through.

John's speech alone demonstrates his faith. #WhenTheDustSettles what will the words you leave behind say for you?

John 1:31-33: The Identity of John

31 I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.”

32 Then John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. 33 And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’

In these next few verses it is imperative to pay attention to John's intentionality in speaking for himself. He uses words such as: I, myself, and I saw. There was a deep level of caution and certainty in his speech. John KNEW himself. His identity

wasn't wrapped in the thoughts of others, nor the lack of "physical manifestation" being shown in HIS WORK.

I want us to begin to focus on the importance of Identity. Last week we spoke in depth about motives and intentions; making it clear that #MotivesMatter... and I would like to echo here that knowing who you are, and whose you are, plays a major role in understanding how you are supposed to live out the call on your life.

There is an extreme level of crazy faith being demonstrated here in the text. God has ONLY given to John the Baptist a clear set of instructions, and prophetic insights to follow. Which John actively, and humbly lives out knowing that he himself would eventually be sought after by his own people.

John 1:32-33

32 Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. 33 And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'

Verses 32-33 are pivotal for a number of reasons but for the sake of time let's hone in on this key one. Why do you think that God parallels the narratives of John the Baptist and Jesus so much so that they're born just six months apart? You see, #WhenTheDustSettles timing ALWAYS matters. Being in alignment with God's timing, takes intentional and sacred alone time. Last week we spoke briefly about the wilderness, and its role in our journey. But, what if I also submitted for your consideration that it was in these moments of the Wilderness that John and Jesus (along with many other characters in the Bible) were able to align their movements with the will of God surrounding their life.

John didn't know Jesus, or notice him but through one way: the Holy Spirit. There is power in knowing the voice of God.

How do you know when God is speaking to you?

“John is saying I myself did not know him” Just because we listen, doesn't mean that we know. This is why the Bible tells us that obedience is greater than sacrifice. It's not because being obedient gives you all the answers, but rather the one who you are rooted IN bears good fruit ! This is always revealed

#WhenTheDustSettles

Closing:

34 I have seen and I testify that this is God's Chosen One.”[a]

A major part of being a Disciple is testifying to the world about God's Chosen One. I am reminded of the scripture **Matthew 16:24-26** where Jesus is speaking “to us” His disciples about denying ourselves and taking up HIS cross and following HIM. Jesus doesn't say “Take up my cross, and follow”, no he's specific in highlighting that we each have our own crosses to bear. We each have our own calls, our own journeys, and purposes to be fulfilled.

When we decide to pick up our cross, and carry it, we must understand that we will be going against the grain. That we too can be sacrificial lambs. In

this christian walk, the Word tells us that we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

(Ephesians 6:12)

I love the honesty of these two texts we have reviewed. It doesn't say that sinners, or non-believers were walking up to John the Baptist giving him a hard time. It

states that the Pharisees who last week we defined as those who strived to be “separated from sin” had a hand in this. This isn’t a coincidence. Sometimes it will be your own people who come against you. Those who “think” what they are doing is right....

But at the end of the day #WhenTheDustSettles what will your today say about your tomorrow? What fruit will you bear ? What will your work say for you?

God is not in the business of confusion, but He is in the business of settling the dust at the appointed time.

In many ways, I parallel the life of John the Baptist to Dr. Ralph B. Watkins. Both men after God’s own heart, focused on doing the work God has called them to do, despite others not seeing or agreeing with the vision that God has given to them. And what I love most about both John the Baptist and Dr. Watkins is that their fixation isn’t on the praise, or the drama, it's on the call. Focused on preparing the way for the NEXT in line. Many thought Noah was crazy when his obedience to the instruction given caused him to build the ark. Moses placed extreme emphasis on being up in the mountains or the sky with God for days at a time and so have many other prophets and disciples that moved only moved off of the voice of God alone. If you have not grasped anything else tonight, please understand **#WhenTheDustSettled** their fruit gave birth to movements, their fruit changed lives, and their fruit LIVES ON...

John The Baptist was preparing the way for a purpose greater than he... Jesus’s life was lived to set free His chosen people.

#When your Dust Settles what will yours reveal?

