

THE LORD'S SERMONS

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Sermon 3

John's Testimony

John 1, 1-27: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before Me. And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not: but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? and he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered: No.. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose."

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This chapter deals with John the Baptist who, as a forerunner and preacher, was to pave the way for Me and draw the attention of the Jewish people to My coming and My teaching. This accounts for his answers to the messengers from the temple, his assurances that he was not Christ, nor Elias, nor a prophet, and that he was not even worthy to unloose My shoes' laces.

Concerning this point, John was quite aware of his mission and, besides, he was among the Jews the only example of humility and submission to My will.

John the Evangelist begins his Gospel with the words: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Behold, this first sentence from the Gospel of My favourite disciple John proves to you the position John held among his brothers as well as with Me. What John the Baptist wanted to express through his material baptism, is spiritually expressed by My apostle, when he openly confesses that the Word or Idea of God had poured out the spiritual baptism over him, so that he was the first among all the apostles to comprehend the depth of My Spirit. He was the first to comprehend that all visible creation had come into existence through the Word (the expression of an idea, a thought or will), and that the Word, spreading life, created light, the very light which was at that time comprehended by only few.

It was he, My favourite disciple, who first comprehended with the heart what is inconceivable to the intellect on its own and gives life and light only to him who possesses that love which I am spreading, supporting and insisting upon throughout the universe. He loved Me in spirit, whereas the other apostles comprehend Me in truth. That explains his first words in the Gospel, testifying to My might, My love and My creation and how I was not recognized in what was My property when I appeared as Christ.

To these words of his that prove his deep understanding of My teaching and mission, the confession of his namesake, John the Baptist - who was sent before Me to pave the way and prepare the Jewish people for the reception of My teaching has contributed quite considerably.

A step like the one taken by Me had to be prepared. Just as the blind, after recovering their eyesight, have first to be kept in a subdued light, since they could not bear the bright sunlight right away, John the Baptist had to awaken and prepare the hearts to make them receptive for something nobler. That is why John exclaimed: "He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me." He was speaking of the Word that created the entire universe. It is this Word, or the mighty willpower, that felt the need to clothe Itself in a human form and - as once the material - now bring spiritual light and life personally to those who were walking in darkness.

For John's words: "In the beginning was the Word. ..and the Word was God!" mean to say: In the beginning there was God, the mighty Creator, Who spread living light through the vast expanses in order to awaken life. And now in Christ it is the same God, Who once again sends His Word as light through the vast expanses of the spiritual universe there to spread light, love and life.

And as the morning star is the herald of the sun, John was the forerunner and preparer of the way for Christ. John the Baptist recognized his Lord when he first saw Him, for he was given spiritual vision, and he saw Christ's connection with the spiritual world in the form of a dove (spiritually the symbol of innocence). John performed on Me the external baptism, whilst I performed the inner baptism on him.

His disciples, too, soon recognized who was actually the master and who the servant. Therefore, they left John and followed Me. And Nathanael was won by Me when I revealed to him things which he thought only he alone knew. It was then that I spoke the prophetic words: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man!"

Everything that happened in those times, at the beginning of My ministry, My spiritual birth on your earth, will repeat itself now and is already doing so daily.

Now, too, there are John the Baptists and Johns as My favourites and apostles, only the procedure of their activity is different.

At that time only Moses and the prophets counted with the Jewish people. They were not to be revoked, but their words were to be protected from disparagement - the ore freed from slag - and it was to be proven that I, as Christ, did not want to bring a new teaching, but only wanted to interpret spiritually and apply in practice that which was taken literally.

At the present time, however, on the eve of My Second Coming to this earth, men's cultural and intellectual level is quite different. Now I am faced with reasoning philosophers and bookworms, or with fanatical sticklers to the word in its literal sense, with people who are too fond of a pleasant life to submit to a religion that demands of them sacrifices and self-abnegation instead of pleasures and entertainment.

I am now coming again among you people as I did once. "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."

Already for quite a while voices are being heard preaching the need for repentance and the searching of one's soul. The sleeping human spirit is being awakened in many ways. But also today the Johns are preaching mostly to deaf ears. Even those who have established themselves as My representatives on this earth are deaf, often even deafer than the others upon whom they want to impress My teaching. Now, too, these leaders are loosing their followers, who are seeking the light, the Word, as the manifestation of their God, - who are seeking what their own leaders are unable to give them. Thus, there arises a general striving towards the light, towards spiritual life, love and a heart-warming and truly spiritual teaching. There is a spiritual tendency in spite of all the resistance from those who, until now, were only concerned with their own interests. The trend is more and more towards freedom of thought, spiritual freedom. And although the open-minded in your world, with the light of their intellect, do not see the spiritual torch burning above their heads, the dusk of scientific life will soon be dispelled by them, and the immature will clearly see what so far has remained hidden to those who think themselves spiritually mature.

It is again the Word that in the beginning created heaven and earth, as Moses expressed it, the Word as actual life and light beaming from on high and pouring warmth and love into your hearts. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was I, and in the end the Word will keep sounding on and on, and I shall continue forever spreading light, life and love and guiding the children that are Mine in spirit.

Once the Word became flesh and those who were then living saw Its glory, but did not recognize it. And the Word shall once more become flesh, that is, spiritualised flesh, and shall be recognized and comprehended by the living in Its glory, and they shall receive grace upon grace of Its abundance.

John once baptized with water, but now there will be baptism with spirit. Streams of heavenly water will be pouring into people's hearts, softening and awakening many of them; but many will also remain untouched or will hide from this rain. Happy he whose heart is still receptive for the water from on high, who is directed upwards and does not resist the heavenly blessings! On all these people the divine light of grace will be poured - as once a ray of the divine light came down onto Christ in the form of a dove -and it will spread peace and tranquillity in their hearts and all their surroundings.

Many will preach and spread My teaching as did once John the Baptist and My favourite disciple, John. Already there is some movement and, as the small breakers on the seashore are the forerunners of greater waves, so the present religious movement is the first beginning of a bigger one brought about by the stirring of the spiritual life which, as it were, squeezed in between matter and spirit, wants to find a way out. The spiritual has the property that it can also be compressed, but it will burst its bonds when the pressure gets too heavy.

You, too, My children, who are called to testify by word and deed that you are guides on the spiritual path of life, will often be asked: 'Who are you? What do you actually want?' The world is not going to believe immediately everything you say, as was once the case with John. But be of good cheer! Sow the seed, give willingly to those who ask you for food, and do not be concerned if often the seed you have sown does not bear the fruit you would wish for! Also in a forest not all the trees grow straight. There are crippled, bent and sick trees, but the forest with its trees still gives thousands of living beings shelter and food and even the bad trees and plants have still some use. The same applies to the spiritual forest of human souls.

John preached in vain for many, as did I later on. My words, however, were still not lost and will remain forever - partly because they were spoken by Me, partly because they are irrefutable truths.

Strive above all else to purify yourselves, to free yourselves from all that is of the world, as John had done. He did not indulge in a pleasant life of the flesh - the transient garment of an imperishable, eternal spirit. No, through a frugal way of life, by the standards of that time, he made his body fit to serve the spirit and its soul.

And thus you, too, should avoid all that is unnecessary and pampers the body. You should concentrate on strengthening spirit and soul and aspire to become worthy of baptism with spiritual, not with material, water, so that you may progressively see and experience greater things and through spiritual vision learn to understand the association of the spiritual with the material world.

You should strive for rebirth in the spirit. Then you will not have to ask as did once the two disciples of John the Baptist: "Rabbi, where dwellest thou?", for then My dwelling will be in your heart. There you will be harbouring the Lord, Who has been the light, love and life from the beginning and Who is going to bestow all this upon those who let themselves be baptized with spiritual water to become His children. Amen.