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Who is John the Baptist?

The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived

Scripture: Matthew 3:1-12

Sermon Series: *Matthew*

Topic: John the Baptist, Singleness

Introduction

This morning our question is Who is John the Baptist?

We return to chapter three to answer this question. Last week we focused on the portions of the chapter that dealt with baptism and in particular the baptism of Jesus.

The Baptism of John

Last week we learned that the baptism of John was completely unique, for he called everyone to be baptized, including the Jews. This had never happened before. There was proselyte baptism for Gentiles who wanted to convert to Judaism, but before John there was nothing like the practice of baptism for ethnic Jews. Many Jews assumed they didn't need to be baptized since they "*had Abraham as their father.*" They were God's people by birth, right? John said, "No." He taught that entrance into the kingdom was not automatic because of genealogical descent. Salvation is not mechanical. Admission into the kingdom of heaven came to those who were willing to *confess* and *repent of their sins*. They did this in response to the news that "*the kingdom of heaven was at hand*" (v.2). The King of heaven is holy king, thus if one would join this holy King in his holy kingdom, then one must certainly embrace and welcome holiness. Confession of sin and repentance of sin is the beginning of embracing holiness. The act of baptism was a sign of turning away from all sin and wholeheartedly embracing holiness, as one prepares to meet the great and holy King of heaven. Thus, the only people who ought to be baptized are those who know they are sinners in need of a savior, those who are willing to repent of those sins, and those who desire to receive cleansing from their sins.

The Baptism of Jesus

This fact then raises questions, because Jesus was baptized. Jesus was not baptized because he was repenting of and confessing his sins. Jesus had no sin (v.14-15). Yet he was baptized.

Jesus explained that, though he was sinless, he needed to submit to baptism in order “to fulfill all righteousness.” We explained that this meant several things.

First, Jesus was being baptized because it was will of God the Father that he do so, and we see this in the verbal affirmation of God as Jesus was baptized when the Father said, “*This is my Son with whom I am well pleased*” (v.17). **Second**, Jesus was affirming that the message John was preaching was good and right. It was right for John to call all people to repent of their sins since repentance is the doorway into the kingdom of heaven, not family lineage. **Third**, Jesus was establishing the standard to which he would call all who would follow him as his disciples. **Fourth**, Jesus was identifying with sinners by symbolically entering into the muddy mess of the river of life. He symbolically entered into our sin with us so that he could actually lead us up out of it. **Fifth**, Jesus’ baptism was kind of spiritual coronation, by being anointed with the Holy Spirit—who descended upon him like a dove—and thus he was revealed¹ to John to be God’s only chosen messiah (v.16). John did not know that Jesus was the messiah² until the moment of his baptism. Upon seeing fulfilled in Jesus what God the Father had spoke to him beforehand, John then thereafter proclaimed that Jesus is both the “Son of God”³ and the “lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.”⁴

This morning we want to turn our attention to John. Who is he? All four gospel authors begin telling the story of Jesus by starting with John. Obviously he is important. Apparently God does not want his people to miss John. If John the Baptist was important enough for all four gospel authors to introduce us to him, then we should think about him.

As we consider chapter three and ask the question, Who is John the baptist, we can offer at least three answers; John is a preacher, a prophet, and a pointer.

A Preacher (v.1-3)

First, John is a **preacher**. We see this in the first three verses.

Matthew 3:1-3 (ESV) ¹ In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ² “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” ³ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said,
“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.””

¹ Before Jesus’ baptism, God the Father had spoken to John telling him that “he on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit” John 1:31-33.

² See John 1:31.

³ John 1:34.

⁴ John 1:29, 36.

In those days. Matthew's opening phrase doesn't tell us much, since Matthew cares little for dates and times. However, Luke tells us that John began preaching "*in the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar*,"⁵ which places this around A.D. 29⁶, give or take a year. Thus, a span of about 27 years separates the close of chapter two—with Joseph resettling his family in Nazareth after leaving Egypt—and the opening of chapter three.

John came preaching (v.1). The verb translated '*preaching*,' is a rich verb (*kēryssō* κηρύσσω) "describes the activity of the herald in the discharge of his office; it always carries the basic meaning 'to cry out loud,' 'to proclaim,' 'to declare,' 'to announce.'"⁷ The purpose of the ancient herald was to carry messages on behalf of the king or other dignitary or to go ahead of him to announce his coming and to prepare the roads for his arrival. He often had with him a group of servants who were responsible for clearing, cleaning, and preparing the road over which the king would travel would be suitable for the king's retinue.

Heralds are still with us today. Most recently we saw the heralds go before the coffin of queen Elizabeth in the funeral procession.

Last week we focused on the content⁸ of and response to John's preaching. John preached *repentance* and *confession* of sin. The response to his preaching, was baptism. John's preaching proclaimed the coming of "*the kingdom of heaven*" (v.2). The heavenly kingdom was about to come and John is a herald announcing this and preparing the people. John was not sent to clean up the physical road from debris over which an earthly king would come, but rather to call for the "cleaning up" of human hearts from the contaminate of sin. The heavenly kingdom was not primarily a physical one, but rather a spiritual one. Thus, spiritual preparation was necessary. This is why John came preaching repentance from sins.

He whom Isaiah spoke of (v.3). Matthew understands John and his preaching to be the fulfillment of what God had spoken beforehand through the prophet Isaiah (who ministered c. 740 B.C.). Matthew here quotes from Isaiah (40:3).

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight."
Matthew 3:3 (ESV)

This quote helps us understand one of the more unique aspects of John's ministry, which is the location of his preaching. If you wonder why John was preaching out in the wilderness of Judea

⁵ Luke 3:1.

⁶ *ESV Study Bible* note at Matthew 3:1.

⁷ Gerhard Friedrich, "Κήρυξ (ἱεροκήρυξ), Κηρύσσω, Κήρυγμα, Προκήρυσσω," ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 697.

⁸ See Mt. 3:7-10; Luke 3:10-18.

and not in Jerusalem Center or in some other major Jewish city, then this prophecy explains it. John understood God's call upon his life was that he be the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. We might say Isaiah 40:3 was John's "life verse." John was preaching in the wilderness because that's where the word of God spoken through Isaiah had indicated the preaching of "*the voice crying out, 'prepare the way of the Lord,'*" would take place. *John was preaching in the wilderness to fulfill this prophecy.*

John understood who he was and what God had called him to do, because when he was asked, "*Who are you,*"⁹ by the priests and Levites from Jerusalem, he responded by quoting this verse (Jn. 1:23). John knew God's call upon his life and it was to be fulfilled in the wilderness, not in the city. At some point, when John was old enough to strike out on his own, he did not set his sights on the big city, but rather on the barren Judean wilderness. Luke tells us this about John.

Luke 1:80 (ESV) And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

John went into the wilderness and waited until the time was right for him to begin his ministry. John was six months older¹⁰ than Jesus and Jesus started his ministry "*when he was about 30 years old.*"¹¹ John also would be around 30 or 31. Thus, it very well could have been that John spent 10 or more years alone in the wilderness waiting for God to reveal to him when it was time to begin preaching. But, the main point here is that John went into the wilderness to preach because he understood that to be the place from which he would begin to fulfill God's calling upon his life. John preached in the wilderness out of obedience to God's word.

Summary

Who is John the Baptist? John was a preacher who preached in the wilderness because that was what God's word called for in Isaiah 40 and because it would be in the wilderness that God would begin to reveal his Son as messiah and king.

A Prophet (v.4-10)

A second answer to the question, Who is John the Baptist, is that John is a **prophet**. We see this in verses 4-10, but particularly in v.4.

Matthew 3:4 (ESV) Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey.

⁹ John 1:19.

¹⁰ See Luke 1:24-27.

¹¹ Luke 3:23.

Garment of camel's hair and leather belt. Descriptions of physical appearance in Scripture are very rare. However, this description is not simply offered because John had weird fashion sense, but rather because *outward appearance is part of the means of expressing identity*. John's dress code communicated John's identity. John's clothing reflected that of an OT prophet. The "**garment of camel's hair and leather belt**" is almost identical to the description of the prophet Elijah.

2 Kings 1:8 (ESV) They answered him, "He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."

Elijah was one of the most famous and important OT prophets.¹² You'll remember that Matthew is primarily writing his gospel to Jews. Every Jew who knew Israel's history, when reading the description of John the Baptist, would have immediately thought, "Wow, that sounds just like Elijah!" And every Jew would have also known that there was a prophetic connection between Elijah and the coming of messiah, which the prophet Malachi spoke of saying that the prophet Elijah will come before the messianic deliverer. And that is exactly the point Matthew is making. There is a relationship between the ministry of John and the arrival of messiah. Mathew is heaping up more evidence that points to the true identity of Jesus. Matthew does not explicitly connect John to Elijah here, but he will later in chapter 11 as he recounts something that Jesus will teach.

Matthew 11:7-10 (ESV) "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. ⁹ What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is he of whom it is written, "'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.'"

"A prophet? Yes" (v.9). John was not some timid, people fearing prophet constantly bending to the ever-changing winds of public opinion. Neither was John a greedy street preacher looking for easy money. John was a prophet. John was a man particularly anointed by God to powerfully speak the truth to all men, great and small. He did not rush to large public places in order to preach to large crowds so he could then ask for a "love offering" at the end of the speech. John was a prophet of God who spoke truly the word of God. When John preached repentance from sin he was preaching the word of God. John's message came from God, because John was God's prophet. Jesus affirmed that John was a prophet.

¹² 1 Kings 17:1.

John's own father had also said the same. John's father, Zechariah (who had been deaf and mute¹³ because of his disbelief of the angel's message about John's unusual birth announced beforehand), on the day of John's circumcision, the eighth day¹⁴ after his birth, was filled with the Holy Spirit¹⁵ and prophesied saying,

Luke 1:76-77 (ESV) ⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
⁷⁷ to give knowledge of salvation to his people
in the forgiveness of their sins,

The Holy Spirit revealed to Zechariah that John would be a prophet of God who would speak of preparing people for the work of the Lord, of His salvation, and of the forgiveness of sins. This describes the content of John's preaching. *John preached as he did because God had directed him to speak in that way.* That's what prophets do. They speak on behalf of God. This is what John did. But Jesus, back in Matthew 11:9, teaches us that John was "more than a prophet."

More than a prophet (v.9). Jesus affirmed that John was a prophet, but he went on to add that John was more than a prophet. Was John a prophet? Jesus answered,

"Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, 'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.'
Matthew 11:9-10 (ESV)

John is a prophet, but he is also the *more than a prophet*. To explain what Jesus means, he here quotes Malachi 3:1. Jesus is affirming that not only is John a spokesman for God, he is also the fulfillment of something that God had already spoken. Long ago God spoke of John beforehand through the prophet Malachi, who ministered around 460 B.C. John is the person about whom God had spoken of by Malachi. John is the "*messenger who goes before the face of the Lord and prepares his way.*" This of course is what we are told John was preaching. He heralded the coming of the kingdom of heaven and called for people to prepare their hearts and lives to enter into it. John was a prophet, but even more than that he was the fulfillment of Malachi's messenger. But he was even more than that! Jesus continued explaining and even deeper significance of John.

Matthew 11:13-15 (ESV) ¹³ ... John, ¹⁴ and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵ He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

¹³ Luke 1:62-63 explains that Zechariah could not hear since they had to "make signs to him" as to what he wanted to name the child. He wrote, "His name is John," and everyone was astonished at what he wrote. Zechariah clearly had not been able to hear the previous conversation with the mother regarding the name of the child, for if he had, then no one would have cause to be astonished that his answer was the same as his wife's.

¹⁴ Luke 1:59.

¹⁵ Luke 1:67.

Malachi concludes his letter by explaining that Elijah would come before *“the great and awesome day of the Lord.”* Jesus here, in Matthew 11, explains that John is fulfillment of that prophecy. John’s ministry comes just as did Elijah’s. The question is, would the people believe it? Jesus plainly explains that John is Elijah who was prophesied to come before messiah. Then, as Jesus so often does, he says, *“Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear”* (Mt. 11:15). They, however, do not hear this. They do not understand this. Thus, Jesus has to tell them again on the Mount of Transfiguration saying, *“... Elijah has already come...”* *Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist* (Mt. 17:12-13).

Jesus is not here teaching that John the Baptist is the reincarnation of Elijah, but rather that John’s ministry and life would be similar to Elijah’s. The angel Gabriel announced to Zechariah that John would grow up and *“go before God in the spirit and power of Elijah”* (Luke 1:17).

Similarities between Elijah and John’s Ministries

Elijah’s ministry was relatively short but powerful, he spent a lot of time alone in the wilderness¹⁶ (sleeping in caves and being fed by ravens), he remained single, his life was basically solitary, and he was hated by Israel’s king. Yet, he was one of Israel’s greatest and most memorable prophets. Similarly, John’s ministry was short but powerful, he spent a lot of time in the wilderness, he too remained single, his life was essentially solitary, and he too was hated by Israel’s king, Herod, who eventually had John beheaded (Mt. 14:1-12) because he was unwaveringly faithful to God’s word.

John was a prophet, but he was also more than a prophet. He not only spoke for God, he himself was the fulfillment of what God had spoken beforehand through the prophets Isaiah (40:3) and Malachi (3:1; 4:5-6).

His food was locusts. John had an interesting diet. He ate locusts (ἀκρίς *akris*), which is another word for grasshoppers. This word does not refer to a

An insect of the family Acrididae (in Europe the term “locust” is used for the large varieties of these insects and the term ‘grasshopper’ is used for smaller varieties, while in North America all these insects are generally called ‘grasshoppers,’ and the term ‘locust’ refers to cicadas of the family Cicadadae)—‘grasshopper/locust’¹⁷

Eating locusts was permitted under mosaic law.

¹⁶ See 1 Kgs. 17-19:17.

¹⁷ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 44.

Leviticus 11:21-22 (ESV) ²¹ Yet among the winged insects that go on all fours you may eat those that have jointed legs above their feet, with which to hop on the ground. ²² Of them you may eat: the locust of any kind, the bald locust of any kind, the cricket of any kind, and the grasshopper of any kind.

In the middle east, **locusts are eaten today**. I discovered a [BBC article](#)¹⁸ that revealed that there is still quite high demand for them. Evidently, they are a tasty snack. During locust swarms, one of the ways of dealing with all the locusts, is to eat them.

They can be served in several ways. There is **locust salad**. Which looks soo yummy! Doesn't it?



And **chocolate covered locust**. Some of you may be adventurous and try these. Let me know how it turns out.



A Pointer (v.11)

Who is John the Baptist? A third answer to that question is that he is a **pointer**. John did not want the eyes of Israel upon himself, but rather John pointed Israel to someone much greater than himself. We see this in verses 11.

Matthew 3:11 (ESV) "I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

The purpose of John's life and ministry was to be a pointer. John never pointed to himself, but he relentlessly pointed people to Jesus. John viewed Jesus as "mightier than himself." John did not even consider himself worthy to carry the sandals of Jesus. Thus, John was always pointing people to Jesus and away from himself.

- When the people were questioning whether or not John was the Christ, he responded by saying, "*I baptize you with water, but another coming after me will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.*"¹⁹ He point was clear. Keep your eyes open for the Holy Spirit guy, because I'm merely a water boy.
- When the priests and Levites asked him if he was the Prophet, he replied, "No."²⁰

¹⁸ Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-21847517> accessed 28 October 2022.

¹⁹ Luke 3:15-16.

²⁰ John 1:21.

- When John's own disciples were having a cup of coffee with him one day and Jesus walked by, John said, *"Hey guys. There goes the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."*²¹ John's implication was, *Boys, he's God's messiah, not me. You should start following him.* And so they both of them left John and started following Jesus (Jn. 1:37). One of them was Andrew, Peter's brother, who later become one of the Twelve disciples.
- When John's disciples came complaining to him one day that Jesus and his boys were baptizing more people than they were²², John said, (I'll summarize in my own words Jn. 1:27-30) *Guys, didn't I tell you that I am not the messiah? I'm just the guy who points to messiah and Jesus is messiah, not me. I am his friend and I am filled with joy seeing so many people going to him. "He must increase and I must decrease."*

John never flirted with any misunderstanding about who he was and who Jesus was. He persistently pointed people away from himself and to Jesus. Jesus was infinitely more worthy than himself and only Jesus could take away sin and give the Holy Spirit. John pointed to Jesus because *"he it is who baptizes with the Holy Spirit."* John knew this was the greatest gift anyone could receive.²³ In order to enjoy life with God, one must have within him the Holy Spirit of God. No one can know God as Father without being baptized in the Holy Spirit, that is being immersed into the life of God. Repentance and confession of sins is one side in the coin of salvation, while the other is receiving the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ alone has the authority to pour out the Holy Spirit into the repentant heart, thus all who yearn for salvation must go to God through Jesus. This is why John points away from himself and to Jesus. Only Jesus baptizes with the Holy Spirit.

Who is John the baptist? He is preacher, a prophet, and a pointer; a man persistently pointing people to Jesus, even today!

The Greatest Man who Ever Lived

Now, I'd like to put this question to Jesus. How do you think Jesus would answer the question, Who is John the Baptist? Jesus did answer this question.

Matthew 11:11 (ESV) *"Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist."*

This is an amazing statement. Jesus concluded that up to that point in history, there was no one born of woman—that covers all humans—who was greater than John. John the Baptist was great than every OT personality. Noah was not greater than John. Abraham was not greater than John. Isaac wasn't greater. Jacob, Joseph, Job, Moses, Joshua, Deborah, Ruth, Rahab,

²¹ John 1:29, 36.

²² John 3:25-26.

²³ Luke 11:13.

Elijah, Elisha, Sampson, David, Solomon, Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, etc. None of these great people of God were greater than John. John was the greatest man who had ever lived, according to Jesus.

What makes a person great? Does John qualify for greatness on your greatness list?

Education

He had no formal education. He did not graduate from Philips Academy or The Middlesex School. He had no degree from Harvard or Oxford or Yale. He had no degree at all.

Abilities

He excelled at no sport. He played no instrument. He was not a vegetarian. He ate grasshoppers. He had no known hobby or noteworthy talent.

Wealth

He had no retirement account. His investment portfolio was empty. His didn't have three month's salary in the savings account.

Career

He was unemployed. Technically, he was homeless. He was a good public speaker and preacher. He could definitely draw a crowd, but he could not use that skill to win friends and influence people since it was his use of words in public that got him thrown in jail. He couldn't get a job because he had a criminal record.

Connections

He had no friends in high places. His connections on Linked In profile was 0. He was largely a loner—he did have a small group of disciples, but they lived with him out in the middle of Nowhere. Prior to his public wilderness ministry, he lived apparently by himself in the wilderness, for perhaps a decade or more. He wore weird clothes.

Legacy

He didn't found a school, seminary, orphanage, or hospital. He had no city or even a building named after him. He was executed while in prison.

Family

He was single his whole life. He didn't date. He never married. He didn't have 12 children. He was a "dry tree" and a broken branch. He had no heir to carry on his family name.

It seems that our culture says that if you're single, then something is wrong with you. I'm sure you're heard it said, with a wink and a nod, "He's single for a reason."

Sometimes the church has been guilty of communicating that life is meaningless unless your married. The verse often quoted is "*It is not good for man to be alone*" (Gn. 2:18). While this is true for most people, it is not true for all people. It was good that John remain single. It was good for Elijah to remain single. It was good for Jeremiah to remain single. Anna remained single for 84 years²⁴ while she fasted and prayed daily at the temple pleading with the Lord to send messiah, and the Lord answered her prayer for she was there the day Jesus was presented at the temple as a baby. The apostle Paul remained single as did Barnabas²⁵ and most likely so did Timothy. It was good for Jesus to remain single.

Being single does not mean life is purposeless. John was single all his life and yet his life was *filled* with purpose and meaning. Purpose in life is not found by being married, or living for another human, but rather in living your life according to the will and glory of God. John knew his purpose from very early in life and obediently surrendered to God's purpose for him. God's purpose for John's life was that he remain single until his death. John devoted his life to living for God and God's will for him did not include marriage.

Some people are given the gift of singleness for the sake of the kingdom. Jesus explains (Mt. 19:11-12) that some people choose to remain unmarried for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, so "*let the one who is able to receive this [calling] receive it.*" The apostle Paul also praises the benefits of being single for the sake of Christ. In his first letter to the Corinthians, he writes about being single saying,

"I wish that you were all like me, but each one has his own gift from God..."
1 Corinthians 7:6-7 (ESV)

Paul understands that the ability to remain single for the sake of the kingdom had been given to him by God as a gift. He also advises that this gift is only for those who can control their sexual desires. He instructs those who cannot to get married.

He goes on and praises the benefits of being single. He explains that those who are unmarried are free to focus primarily on pleasing the Lord,²⁶ while the married man is "*anxious about how to please his wife.*"²⁷ This is true in the life of John. He lived his life with the single goal of pleasing his Lord. He is an excellent example for those whom God may call to singleness for the sake of the kingdom.

And if you fear being forgotten because you have no children, then may the word of God spoken through Isaiah be encouragement to you.

²⁴ Luke 2:36-38.

²⁵ 1 Cor. 9:5-6.

²⁶ 1 Cor. 7:32.

²⁷ 1 Cor. 7:33.

Isaiah 56:3-5 (ESV) and let not the eunuch say,
"Behold, I am a dry tree."
4 For thus says the LORD:
"To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths,
who choose the things that please me
and hold fast my covenant,
5 I will give in my house and within my walls
a monument and a name
better than sons and daughters;
I will give them an everlasting name
that shall not be cut off.

God promises an everlasting name for those who remain unmarried, and thus childless, for His sake. He will write your name on the inner walls of his house. In God's inner chambers he sets up a monument to the those who remain single for the sake of the kingdom. God will never forget those who, for His sake, chose to live their lives unmarried for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.

When we ask who is John the Baptist, Jesus' answer is that his name is the name of "the greatest man ever born of woman" (Mt. 11:11). That is a title that wifeless, childless John the Baptist will carry forever.

Conclusion

Who is John the baptist?

Is he a weird dude who lived in a weird place, wore weird clothes, ate weird food, spoke weird words, made a bright, momentary flash and then faded forgotten away? He had great potential, but he just didn't amount to much?

Or was a man who totally surrounded his life to the will of his God and contented himself to preach, speak, and point people to Jesus, because Jesus and Jesus alone is able to plunge people into the life of the Holy Spirit? Was he a man who knew God's purpose for his life and unwaveringly lived it, with "fulness of joy"²⁸ as he watched God reveal His saving Son and messiah to world?

Who is John the Baptist? He was a single, unmarried preacher, prophet, joyful pointer to Jesus, who said of him, "among all those born of woman, there is none greater than John."

²⁸ John 3:29.