

HIGHLANDS CHURCH

Study Guide

Behold the Lamb

Bob Wade
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Major Points

- 1 The cradle leads to the cross — Christmas is fundamentally about sacrifice, not just celebration**
John 1:29
- 2 Jesus is the Lamb of God, fulfilling the roles of sacrifice, substitute, and salvation**
Isaiah 53:4-5
- 3 Isaiah 53 reveals that Jesus bore our griefs, was pierced for our transgressions, and took our punishment as our substitute**
Isaiah 53:5
- 4 Our response to the Lamb must be humility, worship, and surrender — He must increase, I must decrease**
John 3:30

Key Quotes

- “Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. What an amazing statement that is. In fact, in some ways it doesn't sound like it, but it's the most defining Christmas truth that's ever spoken.”*
at 11:56
- “The baby born in the manger of Luke two and Matthew chapter one was born to be the ultimate sacrifice, the ultimate substitute, the ultimate salvation. The cradle points to the cross.”*
at 19:14
- “He must increase, but I must decrease. Folks, that's what he's talking about. That is the heart of the Christian message right there for us as Christians.”*
at 22:18
- “Religion does not transform lives. Jesus does. Religion you can have in any context you want. Jesus is different. He's capable of changing, transforming you.”*
at 18:36
- “They missed the point. Jesus has done all the work. He's asking you to recognize who he is, trust in him.”*
at 28:27

Discussion Questions

1. Pastor Wade emphasized that 'the cradle leads to the cross.' How does keeping this connection in mind change the way you personally experience the Christmas season compared to how our culture

typically celebrates it?

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2. When John the Baptist said he wasn't even worthy to untie Jesus' sandals — and Pastor Wade explained just how degrading that task was — what does that level of humility tell us about how John understood his own identity in relation to Jesus?

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3. Pastor Wade pointed out three things the lamb represented to every Jewish listener: sacrifice, substitute, and salvation. Which of these three aspects of what Jesus did is most meaningful to you right now in your life, and why?

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4. John's disciples were troubled that people were leaving them to follow Jesus, but John responded with 'He must increase, but I must decrease.' Where in your own life do you find it hardest to let go of your own agenda and let Jesus take the lead?

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5. Pastor Wade shared the story of pilgrims in Santiago de Compostela crawling on their knees to prove their worthiness. How do we sometimes fall into a similar mindset of trying to earn God's grace rather than simply receiving the gift of the Lamb?

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Word Studies

ἀμνός

amnos

Greek

A young lamb specifically associated with sacrificial offering, distinct from other Greek words for sheep, emphasizing innocence and ritual sacrifice.

αἴρω

airō

Greek

To lift up and carry away, implying both the bearing of a burden and its complete removal — not merely covering sin but taking it away entirely.

מוסר

musar

Hebrew

Discipline, correction, or chastening punishment endured for the purpose of instruction and restoration — here borne by another on behalf of the guilty.

Cross References

Genesis 22:7-8

Abraham tells Isaac 'God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt offering,' foreshadowing God's own provision of Jesus as the ultimate sacrificial Lamb — the very concept John the Baptist announces in John 1:29.

1 Peter 1:18-19

Peter declares believers were redeemed 'with precious blood, as of a faultless and pure lamb, the blood of Christ,' connecting the Passover lamb imagery to the New Testament understanding of Christ's substitutionary death.

Hebrews 10:11-12

Contrasts the repeated Old Testament animal sacrifices with Christ's single, final sacrifice — reinforcing Pastor Wade's point that Jesus is 'the final sacrifice' and there never needs to be another.

Philippians 2:5-8

Christ's self-emptying and humility unto death on a cross parallels John the Baptist's posture of 'He must increase, but I must decrease,' showing that humility is central to the gospel from both the Savior's and the servant's perspective.

Isaiah 40:3

The original prophecy John the Baptist quotes about himself — 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness' — providing the Old Testament foundation for his role as the forerunner who prepares hearts for the coming Lamb.

Further Reading

- **The Lamb of God: Seeing Jesus in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy**

by Nancy Guthrie

- **The Cross of Christ**

by John Stott

- **Gentle and Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers**

by Dane Ortlund

Scripture References

REFERENCE	TYPE	TIME	CONTEXT
John 1:19	Read Aloud	2:00	<i>And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews s...</i>
John 1:29-34	Read Aloud	17:06	<i>The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and s...</i>
Isaiah 53:4-5	Read Aloud	14:36	<i>Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sor...</i>
Leviticus 17:11	Referenced	13:00	<i>For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I h...</i>
Exodus 12:1-13	Referenced	13:20	<i>Yahweh spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egy...</i>
Malachi 4:5-6	Referenced	6:32	<i>Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before ...</i>
John 3:22-26	Read Aloud	20:11	<i>After this Jesus and his disciples went into the J...</i>
Romans 10:13	Read Aloud	27:35	<i>For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord wi...</i>
John 1:20	Read Aloud	5:53	<i>He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I ...</i>
John 1:21	Read Aloud	6:11	<i>And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" H...</i>
John 1:22-23	Read Aloud	7:13	<i>So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give...</i>
John 1:24-25	Read Aloud	7:52	<i>(Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) They ...</i>
John 1:26-27	Read Aloud	8:28	<i>John answered them, "I baptize with water, but amo...</i>
John 1:28-29	Read Aloud	11:39	<i>These things took place in Bethany across the Jord...</i>
John 3:27-30	Read Aloud	21:27	<i>John answered, "A person cannot receive even one t...</i>
Luke 2:1-20	Referenced	19:07	<i>Now in those days, a decree went out from Caesar A...</i>
Matthew 1:18-25	Referenced	19:07	<i>Now the birth of Jesus Christ was like this: After...</i>
John 3:30	Referenced	25:55	<i>He must increase, but I must decrease.</i>