



# DESERT VIEW BIBLE CHURCH

ADVENT: LIGHT JOHN 1:6-13 • 12/10/2023

## MAIN POINT

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We can be witnesses to the light-bearing Savior who has come into the world.

## INTRODUCTION

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What television show or movie that contains a courtroom drama have you enjoyed watching? Why?

Have you ever appeared in a courtroom and provided testimony?

What is the role of a witness?

As John continued writing his gospel, he focused attention on a person who had a reputation for telling the truth, the job of any good witness. John wrote about John the Baptist and his special ministry. John the Baptist was a cousin of Jesus and

recognized Jesus as the Messiah. John the Baptist had a following in first-century Israel, but he quickly recognized the fact that his job was to point to the One who was the true light-bearer.

## UNDERSTANDING

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**READ JOHN 1:6-9.**

**What facts about John the Baptist can we know from these verses?**

**What is John the Baptist's role as a witness?**

**How is John the Baptist's role different to or similar to our role in the world today?**

John the Baptist had a growing ministry in first-century Israel. We even know that he had his own disciples (Acts 19:1-7). For many of us, relinquishing control to someone else is not an easy thing to do. Allowing someone to increase while we decrease at the same time does not come naturally. Yet John the Baptist exercised great humility by lifting up Jesus as the Light of the world. John the Baptist was quick to give Jesus praise, honor, and glory.

During the Advent season, we must follow the example of John the Baptist. He humbly pointed people to the true Savior, Jesus. John knew that he was not the light, but was a witness to the light (v. 8).

**During this time of Advent, how might you and I humbly point others to Jesus, the light-bearing Savior who came into the world to save people from the penalty of their sin?**

**READ JOHN 1:10-13.**

**If you were Jesus, what emotions might you have felt knowing the people you created did not acknowledge you as their Creator (vv. 10-11)?**

**According to verse 12, what gift did Jesus bestow on people who believed the testimony about Him?**

**From the image of “receiving” someone (v. 12), how might you explain what faith is about? What is the result of this type of faith?**

These verses contain a bit of good news/bad news. Jesus, the Creator and the light-bearing Savior of the world, entered into human history. He was sent by His Father to the Jews, God’s chosen people. But in spite of centuries of preparation, the Jewish people did not recognize Jesus as their Messiah. There’s the bad news.

But the good news is that although the majority of people did not acknowledge Jesus as Savior, some did. Jesus has made salvation possible to anyone who believes in Him (v. 12). The good news is that the light-bearing Savior’s message of salvation in Him alone resonated with some people. Those people would become His disciples, who would take on the role of John the Baptist and continue being witnesses to the Truth.

Advent is a time of the year when it is easier to bear witness to Jesus. People’s hearts and minds are more focused on Christmas and its meaning than at any other time of the year. Although we get excited about the prospects of opening gifts and being reunited with family members, we must not squander opportunities to do exactly what John the Baptist did—point others to Christ.

# APPLICATION

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Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

**What does John's focus on the pre-existent, creative Christ mean to you? Is there someone with whom you could share this facet of Jesus' character?**

**How could you and/or your family focus on Christ during this Advent season?**

**Who in your family or circle of friends "has not understood it" (v. 5)? With whom might you share the Christmas story this month?**

# PRAYER

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Thank Jesus for coming into the world to save us. Ask the Lord to help us be witnesses to Jesus, the One who spoke truth and brought His light into a very dark world. Ask God to give us courage to openly talk about Jesus to our friends, family members, and co-workers. As witnesses to Jesus, ask the Lord to help us accurately and honestly tell what we know about Him to others who may never have fully understood the message of the gospel.

# COMMENTARY

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1:1-18 John's prologue presents Jesus as the eternal, preexistent Word-become-flesh (vv. 1,14) and as the one-of-a-kind Son of the Father who is Himself God (vv. 1,18). Jesus culminated God's plan of salvation. Previous to Jesus this plan included God giving the law through Moses (v. 17), His dwelling among His people in the tabernacle (v. 14), and the sending of John the Baptist (vv. 6-8,15). The prologue introduces several themes that are emphasized later in the Gospel, including Jesus as life, light, and truth, believers as God's children, and the world's rejection of Jesus.

1:4-5 The references to life... light, and darkness continue to draw on Genesis themes (cp. Gen 1:3-5,14-18,20-31; 2:7; 3:20). Light symbolism is also found in later OT messianic passages (Isa 9:2; 42:6-7; 49:6; 60:1-5; Mal 4:2; cp. Lk 1:78-79).

1:11 His own people did not receive Him refers to the Jewish people, the recipients of God's covenants, the law, and promises of a Messiah (Rm 9:4). Messiah's rejection by the Jews despite convincing proofs of His messiahship (esp. the "signs") is a major subject in the first half of John's Gospel (cp. 12:37).

1:12-13 Reference to children of God builds on the OT characterization of Israel as God's children (Dt 14:1; cp. Ex 4:22). Born, not of blood... but of God makes clear that true children of God come into being through faith in Messiah, not physical birth or ethnic descent (8:41-47; cp. 3:16). This opens the way for Gentiles to become God's children (11:51-52; cp. 10:16).