

WHO IS JESUS?

JOHN 1:29

# JESUS IS OUR SACRIFICE



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**FIRST BYRON CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**

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MAY 16, 2021 (AM)

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# INTRODUCTION

We live in a selfie society. At no time in human history has there been a culture which spent so much time, energy, and money on getting people to look at ourselves. People live 'look-at-me' lives, and measure their lives by how many follows and likes they get for themselves. But selfie-centeredness has not produce self-satisfaction. One scientific study found that the "culture of selfie taking in some cases has resulted in some forms of obsession with self (narcissism), low self-esteem, depression and its' associated suicidal ideations, Body Dysmorphic Disorder and even actual deaths."

**How do we stop selfie-centeredness?** Let's ask the least self-centered man that ever lived (apart from Jesus), John the Baptist.

## BACKGROUND

- Jesus is the Word of God (John 1:1-2)
- Jesus is our Creator (1:3)
- Jesus is our Light and Life (1:4-9)
- Jesus is our Big Brother (1:10-13)
- Jesus is our Tabernacle (1:14-17).
- Jesus is our Preacher (1:18)
- Jesus is the Messiah (1:19-28)
- Jesus is our Sacrifice (1:29)

In contrast to our 'look-at-me' culture, John the Baptist encouraged a 'stop-looking-at-me' culture. Whenever people focused on him and started talking about him, he discouraged and diverted it. Whenever people puffed him up, he deflated himself.

- He was not the light but came to bear witness about the light (1:8).
- He ranked Christ above him because Christ was before him (1:15).
- He insisted he was not the Christ (1:20).
- He saw himself simply as a voice in the wilderness and as a prepared for the Christ (1:23).
- He only baptized with water, whereas the Christ would baptize with the Holy Spirit (1:26).
- He did not consider himself worthy of performing the most menial task for Christ (1:27).
- He was delighted when Christ was drawing bigger crowds than himself (3:26-27).
- Christ was the bridegroom, John was simply the bridegroom's friend (3:29).
- He wanted Christ to increase but himself to decrease (3:30).



How did John remain so unselfie-centered?



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# 1. LOOK AT YOUR SIN (1:29)

Repentance was the major theme of John's ministry. As we saw last week, his appearance and his words communicated that he was all about mourning over and turning from sin (Matt. 3:2,8,10). The word John used for 'sin' in John 1:29 can mean missing the target or turning aside.

## We've missed the target

In the ten commandments, God has set out ten targets for us to aim at. If we hit the bullseye in each of them all of the time, we will live forever. But some aren't even aiming at God's targets, having made up their own. Others are aiming in the right direction, but, although they hit the targets now and again, they never hit the bullseyes. In the Bible, we've got a book full of instructions about how to hit the ten bullseyes, and yet we have never hit one.

I remember watching a documentary about sniper training in the Marines. It was incredibly technical and complicated. They used computers, calculations, and assistants to measure distance, wind direction and speed, and so on. They started shooting from 100 yards, then 200, then 400, and so on. By the end of the training they could hit the bullseye from 800 yards 99% of the time. Truly amazing accuracy!

But, while 99% is good enough to become a Marine sniper, it's not good enough to get to heaven. God is too holy to accept anything less than 100% perfection. Miss the target once, and we're rejected. We've all missed far more than once.

## We're on the wrong road

Changing the picture, God calls us to travel towards him and has given us ten signposts to guide us on our journey. We can have no excuse for not getting there. But none of us get there. We all disregard the signposts and choose to follow our own way or the more popular way. In fact, many of us are traveling deliberately in the opposite direction thinking we can find life elsewhere. Others plan to return to God's path some time in the future, but each day takes them further and further away making it more and more difficult to return.

## CHANGE YOUR STORY WITH GOD'S STORY

**Look at the targets.** How close are you to the bullseyes? How many misses? A selfie-centered life is a sin-centered life. And remember, you don't need to take selfies to live a selfie-centered life.

**Look at the signs.** Are you following God's directions, ignoring them, or rejecting them? Every step we take is taking us further from or closer to God.

A MISS IS AS BAD AS A MILE



Is there anything better to look at? Anything that can stop me seeing my sin?



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## 2. LOOK AT YOUR SAVIOR (1:29)

Looking at our sin can be as selfie-centered as looking at ourselves. That's why John does not stop with seeing sin, but goes on to see the Savior. "**Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!**"

A **Provided** Lamb. The Lamb *of* God is the lamb *from* God. God provided the lamb just as he did in Genesis 22:8, 14. Like Isaac, the whole old Testament asked, "Where is the Lamb?" John answered: "There's the Lamb." God has provided the lamb by becoming the Lamb,

A **Prepared** Lamb. The Son of God was prepared for this before the world even began (Rev. 13:8), by the Old Testament, and by his life in this world.

A **Perfect** Lamb. As it is God's Lamb, it's a perfect Lamb and therefore can take away sin. His most vicious and malicious enemies could find no fault in him. Even God failed to find a fault.

A **Powerful** Lamb. 'Takes away' means 'lift up and carry off.' He doesn't just lift off sin and carry it beside us or behind us, but away from us until it can never be seen nor found. He takes the sin and spares the sinner.

A **Plentiful** Lamb. The burden of guilt is totally removed not just for one person but for every person in the world who asks for it! There's enough for everyone who wants it.

A **Personal** Lamb. He doesn't just remove sin from *my* world but the world of *my* sins.

A **Priceless** Lamb. Peter says we were redeemed with **the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot (1 Pet. 1:19)**. Last year, a sheep called *Double Diamond* became the world's most expensive sheep after selling at auction in Scotland for \$490,000. The Lamb of God is beyond price.

A **Praised** Lamb. All of this is why John says "Behold the Lamb!" and why the saints in heaven say "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" (Rev. 5:12-13).

### CHANGE YOUR STORY WITH GOD'S STORY

**Look at the Lamb.** 'Behold' is one of John's favorite words. It's used about 30 times in the Gospels and he alone uses it 16 of those times. He wants us to look, look, and look again. Look and don't stop looking at Jesus. Be totally and completely captivated with Jesus

**Look at your sins going, going, gone.** Past, present and future sins; sins of thought, word, and action; big and little sins; known and unknown sins; deliberate and accidental sins; sins against God and against others; sins confessed and sins hidden; sins against all ten commandments. All gone. There's not a sin in the whole universe he cannot take away if you look to him. Behold him and you'll never take your eyes off him again.

YOUR SINS ARE NOT JUST GOING BUT GONE

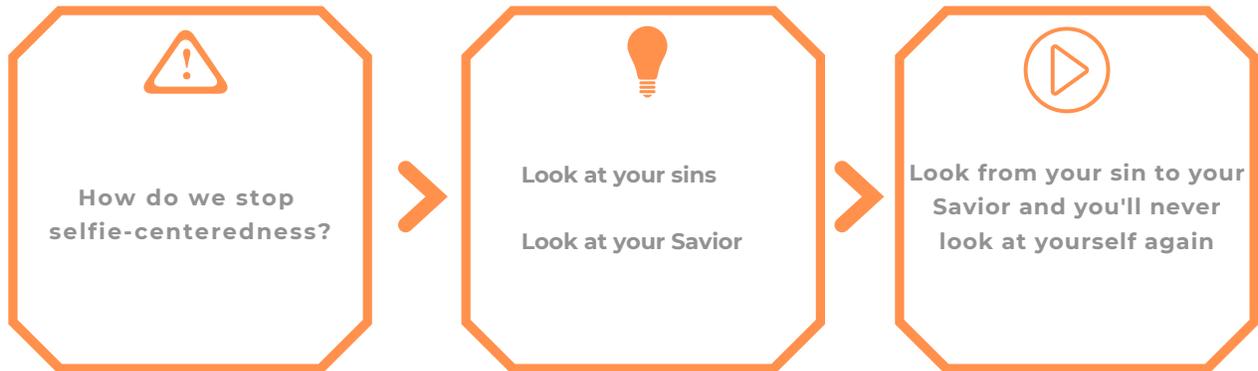


Hear God's Story > Change your story > Tell the story



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# SUMMARY



**PRAYER:** Selfless Savior, turn my eyes upon you so that I see a sight for my sore eyes and heart.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Where else do we see selfie-culture in our world and in ourselves?
2. What other examples of selflessness can you find in the Bible or in your friend circles?
3. How would you reply to someone who says, "If 99% is not good enough for God, then God's not fair."
4. Which of the 8 P's are most precious to you and why?
5. What would you say to someone who said, "If Jesus took away the sins of the world, then the whole world will be saved"?
6. How long does it take between looking to Jesus and seeing our sins totally gone?

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