

Lenten Devotional February 23, 2023

Scripture

John 1:29-34

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' 31 I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel." 32 And John testified, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. 33 I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' 34 And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God."

Devotional

The Rev. Canon Eric McIntosh '12

Ok, straight to the point. John the Baptizer commands all to see what God has allowed him to see! Sometimes reflecting is an exercise of seeing. Poetically we are being asked to hold with our eyes, and deeper still, our mind, heart, soul, and spirit. For me, *see* is poetically bearing the weight of something with the inner me. I ponder what it was like for John the Baptizer to be given the privilege of seeing what the Holy Spirit looked like. God gave him the gift of seeing what no human has since declared seeing, The Spirit of God! John saw, beheld, took it all in, received and understood, in his mind, soul, heart, his inner man, his spirit! The magnitude and weight must have been overwhelming. The one who gave the Baptizer his calling and his sending, gave him the gaze of his Holy Spirit and the promise that this Jesus would be a baptizer of this Spirit! If that was not enough, John beheld, saw, understood, discerned that this Jesus was not only the Lamb of God, but the Son of God! This one takes away the sin of the world. John after seeing, proclaimed it!

What keeps us from proclaiming it today? This Jesus, who is the Lamb of God, takes away sin, and can do so because he is also the Son of God. Could it be that we do not see our sin? Could it be that we do not believe we sin? Could it be that we have let go of eternal punishment? Could it be that we are just so entitled that we are blind and cannot see? Maybe we have yet to behold him! How about we behold him this Lenten season.

Prayer

God almighty, stop us in our tracks and make us to see you, to see your only begotten Son, our savior who takes away our sin. Give us the capacity to hold with our hearts, with our eyes, with our spirits, who he is. Make us to humble ourselves to see our sin and with gratitude rise to proclaim to the world, our worlds, the magnitude of this one who would die for us, Jesus, our Lord and Savior, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God now and forever. Amen.