Behold the Lamb of God

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Preacher: Rev John Maclean

[0:00] Turn with me to the passage we read in John's Gospel, chapter 1. And the words we have in verse 29. The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Amen. In verse 36 we see the words, And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God.
John, the author of this epistle, in a very vivid way is telling us what took place on the day that Jesus came to where John the Baptist was.
And maybe a decade afterwards, this is still very much impressed upon the mind of the writer. And he is describing the actions of John the Baptist when he saw Jesus.
That is, describing how he acted before he made this great announcement, Behold the Lamb of God. And what John the Baptist is doing, or in the words that John is recording for us here, He is laying equal stress upon the two actions of the Baptist.
[1:51] Notice he says, The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith. The first thing that John saw, or the first thing rather that John did was, He saw Jesus coming.

Now this was not, as it were, John peering into the distance, And fixing his eyes a long time upon the Saviour as he drew near.
But the word that is used, it gives us the idea of just a glance. You imagine John the Baptist maybe speaking to someone.
Maybe he is working at something, and he glances up, And he sees the Saviour coming towards him. It was a glance.
But that very glance, it registered in his mind. The idea of the word gives us that, that it registered.
[2:58] This was the Lamb of God. And while Jesus is still a long way off, John says these words, Behold the Lamb of God.

Now this is a declaration that John is making. And what the writer is stressing is this. First of all, John the Baptist saw him.
And then, John the Baptist made this great declaration. That's what I want us to look at this morning, This afternoon very briefly.
He says, Behold the Lamb of God, Which taketh away the sin of the world. First of all then, The sin of the world.
And in these words, We are being reminded, Of the offense, Of the world. The offense, Of the world.
[4:03] That is, This great reality, This awful reality, That the world, Lies in sin. And it is something that, This is something that, This is something that must always, Be in our minds.

It is something that must, Always grip us. Especially, The people of God. That we are in a world, That lies in sin.
And because of that, We must never forget, The real reason, Why Christ, Came into the world. That he came into the world, As we shall see, In a moment. That he came into a world, That was in sin. To defeat, And to destroy, The power of sin.
And when the expression, Is used, The sin of the world, It really speaks, About the condition of man. Man, In rebellion, To God.
[5:14] Man, Who is fallen. Man, That is corrupt. Man, That sins, Day by day, In thought, In word, And in deed.

Not only sinners, By nature, But sinners, By practice. Born, Into the world, In sin. Born into the world, As sinners.

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And because, Men, Are born, Into the world, As sinners, They sin, Against him. The world, Lies, In sin.
The world, Is day by day, Sinning, Against, A holy God. But then also, Because, This world, Lies in sin, And because, It is, In rebellion to God, Because, We are a fallen people, We are reminded, That, All of us, Are under, The condemnation, Of God.
The soul, That sins, It shall die. And again, John reminds us, Of the words, Of Christ, That we are all, Under this condemnation, Because, Of our sin.
[6:32] That is the state, Of the world, That is the state, Of men and women, Within the world, That they are, Under, The wrath, And condemnation, Of God.

And someone has used, The expression, Regarding this, That it is, The death penalty, That is just waiting, Above us, Waiting, To fall upon us, In other words, We are under, The threat, Of this judgment, We are under, This condemnation, Because, Of our sin.
But then also, Men and women, Are born, Strangers to God. They don't know him. By nature, They have no knowledge, Of him.
By nature, They have no desire, For him. And they see him, As Isaiah points out, They see him, As a root out, Of a dry ground. He has no form, Nor comeliness.
No beauty in him, That we should desire him. That is how, A world in sin, Sees the savior. And when John, Is saying, That the savior, Came into the world, Or he says, That he takes away, The sin of the world.
[7:50] We must always, Have this before us. What is the sin, Of the world? It is a world, A people, Living, Separated, In rebellion, To God.

But then too, It's also, A world, Not just that's, Under the condemnation, Of him. Not just the people, That are strangers to him.
But men and women, Who if they remain, In that situation, Are on their way, To a lost, And to a Christless, Eternity. And again, This is something, That must always, Grasp the mind, Of the Lord's people.
That those, Without Christ, Are on their way, To this lost eternity. But I want us, Just for a moment, To turn this, The other way. That is the condition, Of men and women, Without Christ.
It must always, Be before our eyes. I believe, It is something, That should concern, The people of God, More and more. It is something, That should burden, Our hearts more and more.
[9:00] That men and women, Are in wickedness. That they are, On their way, To a lost eternity. But think about, The situation, The position of God's people.

No longer, Are they in rebellion, To him. No longer, Are they, Those that are, Under condemnation. No longer, Are they regarded, As being strangers, To him. No longer strangers. And these were, These were things, That Jesus was making, Clear to his people.
That no longer, Were they alienated, From him. No longer, Were they strangers, From him. The word of God, The word of God, Reminds us, We are heirs, And joint heirs, With him.
The Lord's people, Are a delivered people. They are not on their way, To a lost, And to a Christless eternity. God's people are, As the word of God, Reminds us, Pilgrims in this world.
[10:06] They are on their way, To that blessed place. This world is not their home. They are only passing through, On their way, To heaven, To be with him.

Now, The word of God, Reminds us, The people of God, In the world, But not of the world. Not really belonging, To the word, In the strictest sense.
Not being motivated, By the things of this world. Not being led, By the things of this world. In the world, But not of the world.
And when we have this expression, The sin of the world, The Lord's people, A separated people, A people delivered, A people that we are being reminded of, Who are to be holy, As he is holy.
A people that are to live, Day by day, To the praise, And to the glory of God. A people that are to remember, We are to remember, Whose we are, And whom we serve.
[11:14] As I said, The other evening, The responsibility, That is laid upon the people of God. Who they are, Whose they are, And whom they serve.

Then I want us to notice, The reason, Or rather the objective of Christ. The reason why, He came into the world. John says, Behold the Lamb of God, Which taketh away, The sin of the world.
He didn't come, Just to give us, A good example. He didn't come, To leave with us, A new philosophy of life.

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He didn't come, Just to show men and women, How to suffer. He came, To deal, With sin. He came to deal, With the power of sin.
And he came to deal, With men and women, Who were gripped, By this power of sin. And he came to destroy, The power, Of sin.
[12:26] And again, As I said earlier, That is something, That we must always remember. The real reason, Why he came. And that is why, He died, Upon that cross.

And you could sum it up, In this way, That he came to do, For man, What man, Could not, Do for himself. When you think of the, Expression that is used here, John says, Which taketh away, The sin of the world.
He is speaking, About, Removing. Not just, That it is being, Laid upon him, Or that, That he is just carrying it.
Yes it is, That he is bearing it, It's been, The sin is being laid upon him. But it is, That he is removing. Literally therefore, The word, The words, Where he is removing.
But look at it, From this point of view. You think of what, Forgiveness, Really is. When a person, All sincerity comes, Confessing their sin.
[13:43] Whatever way you have come, You may have, You may have come saying, Lord be merciful to me, A sinner. The word of God, Assures us, Of this forgiveness.

What is involved, In this forgiveness? It is, The removal, Of the barrier, Of sin. The removal, Of the barrier, Of sin.
As I said earlier, Sin has caused this barrier. Sin separates us, From God. It is this sin, That has made us strangers, To him.
And when, Men and women, Experience the forgiveness, Of God. It is the barrier, Of sin being taken away, Being removed. And no matter, How high that barrier, May be.
No matter how hard, That barrier might be. That barrier, Can be taken away. That barrier, Can be removed. When a person, Experiences, The forgiveness of God.
[14:51] There is forgiveness, With thee, That thou mayest be feared. It is the removing, The taking away, Of the barrier of sin. That which separates us.

But then look at it, From another point of view. The way that the words are put. He is speaking, About a once, And for all, Action. When he died, Upon that cross.
And when he was, Taking away, As it's put here, The sin of the world. It was a once, And for all action. You know, There is a great comfort, For the people of God, In that.
That that, Sacrifice, That was made, That once, And for all sacrifice. There is no need, For another sacrifice. There is no need, For any other death.
Man does not have to make, Atonement for his, Or for their own sin. Christ, Made that atonement. It also means, That we, We don't have to come, Through any mere man.
[16:01] Or through any, Human priest. The one, Who did this, Once and for all. He is our, Great high priest. The one, Whoever lives, To make, Intercession for us.

And in his dying, Upon that cross. He opened up, This new and living way, Whereby, We can come to him. The veil of the temple, Has been rent in two.
That barrier, Also has been taken away. He removes, He takes away, The sin, Of the world. And in forgiveness, It's not just, The removal, Of the barrier of sin.
But it is bringing, Into a fellowship. A restoring to a fellowship. And a communion with God. Taking away, That which separates us.
That which blocked you, As it were. That which hindered, Your access to him. That which meant, You had no fellowship, And no communion with him.
[17:09] That has been taken away. And therefore, Fellowship, And communion, Is now restored. He did, For man, What man, Could not do for himself.

But you see, We have to look at this, From another point of view. Yes, This is why he came into the world. This was his objective. To take away, The sin of the world.
But this is what God, Demanded. And God, Demanded, A satisfaction. And the only way, That God's justice, Would be satisfied, Was by, Such a death.
The lamb of God, He was the one, Who would die. The spotless, Lamb of God. Satisfaction. God was satisfied, In this.
Because it was, The one without sin, Who was dying. God demanded, A total obedience. And it was only, The savior, Who could render, Such an obedience, Because of who he was, And what he

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was.
[18:28] God, Was also demanding, Punishment for sin. And he was the only one, Who was able, To bear that punishment.

And he was the only one, Who was able to carry it, Away. But then also, It is not just, That God demanded this, But God saw, God deemed, That Jesus, Was the only one worthy, He was the one, The most, He was the fitting one, Because, Of who he was, The son of God, The only begotten son, Not only the son of God, But he was, The sinless, Lamb of God, The lamb, Which, And the word, The words as they are here, Literally, The lamb, Which belongs to God, The only son, The only lamb of God, The one who was without spot, The one who was without blemish, He was the one, Who was to die, Upon that cross, And he was the only one,
Who could, Deal with sin, Because of who he was, And because of what he was, And Jesus, In John chapter 8, Verse 46, Asked the people the question, Which of you, Who could find sin in him, Who could find fault with him, He was the spotless, The sinless one, Even Pilate said that, Pilate said that he could find, No fault in this man, And his wife could say, Have nothing to do, With this just man, The thief on the cross, Could say, This man, Has done nothing amiss, Even Judas, When he realized, What he did, He said, I have betrayed, Innocent blood, And the guard, That stood around the cross, He put it this way, This was, A righteous man, And Paul, You could say, Sums it all up,
He who, Knew no sin, Was made, Sin for us, The one who, Was spotless, Without sin, Was made, Sin for us, He taketh away, The sin, Of the world, That was his, Objective, And that is what, Every child of God, Will gather around his table, Will remember, That he, Dealt, With their sin, That all the punishment, That was due to them, For their sin, Has been taken away, That his guilt, Has been removed, From them, That all of that, Has been imputed to him, And when we gather, Around the table of the Lord, If he spares us, And when we,
There partake, Of those elements, The broken bread, Reminding us, Yes, Of the broken body, The wine, Reminding us, Of the, Blood that was shed, Reminding, Each, Individual person, The lamb of God, Who took away, The sin of the world, He took away, Your sin, And that you can, Put it this way, In my room, And in my stead, Condemned, He stood, There, For you, That was his objective, For you, As an individual, And that's what you remember tomorrow, When you come to his table, That it was for you, That he died, And for you, That he did all that, Something that you couldn't do for yourself, He did it, For you, Notice thirdly though,
[22:47] The obligation, That is laid upon the Christian, The obligation that is laid upon the believer, And I want just to take the words as they are here, Behold, The lamb of God, That is, Our obligation, That is the duty, That is laid upon us, You imagine John the Baptist, When he saw Jesus afar off, Stretching out his hand, And saying, Behold, Look, Literally, Take notice, Observe him, And really that is what, We shall do, That is what we seek to do, We seek to behold him, Now, When you look at the words, Rather, When you look at the word, A very, Dramatic statement, Look, He wants people,

He wanted the, Those that were, Around him, He wanted their attention, To be fixed on him, Earlier, The writer puts it, The next day, John, Seeth Jesus, Just that glimpse, But he recognized him, He knew who it was, And John, Wanted the people, To, Not just have, A glimpse of him, But he wanted them, To look upon him, To behold him, To observe him, To take notice, Of him, He says, Behold, This dramatic statement, But you know, When you look closer, At this word, It speaks, About a determination, It speaks about, A specific action, Look, Behold, It's not, As I said, It's not just a glance, But you are, To take notice,
The word of God, We are reminded, That in his word, He, Is revealed to us, And when we look, Upon him, As he is revealed, To us in his word, We are not just, We are not seeing him, Only as the babe, In a manger, We are not seeing him, As the great, Miracle worker, Not just seeing him, As one who, Went about, Doing good, But we behold him, As one who died, Upon a cruel cross, One who gave his life, A ransom for many, One who willingly endured, Such suffering, In order to take away our sin, We look upon him, As he is revealed to us, In his word, One who died, One who was buried,
One who rose again, Triumphant over the grave, One who is ascended, Up on high, We look to him, Behold him, We are not interested, In others, We are not even interested, In what others are saying, Or even in the way they look, It is our own look, That concerns us, It is how, We observe him, And how we look upon him, As I said earlier, The child of God, Looks upon him, No longer as a

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root, Out of a dry ground, No longer as one, Who has no form, Nor comeliness, And no beauty, That he should desire him, But the child of God, Will look upon him, As the fairest, Of ten thousand, To their souls, The one who is the lily, Of the valley, The bright,
And the morning star, We behold him, As he is in his word, As he has revealed himself there, But then, Think of the fact, That he has revealed, That he has come to you, Remember the words of Jesus, When he said, I am come, That they might have life, That they might have it, More abundantly, That they might have this life, How do we know, That he has come, Because he has come to us, And that is what again, We think of, The fact that he came to us, Yes you can look at yourself, You can look at what you were, What you once were without him, You can remember, The way in which you are going, You can remember, How gripped you were, By the power of darkness, You can remember, How separate you were from him, But you remember,
[27:53] What he did, For you, When he drew you, When he set his love upon you, When he forgave all your sin, That is, What we look, We look upon him, And it has to be, With determination, So therefore the question is, How do you look upon him, As he has revealed, In his word to you, How do you look upon him, How much do you study him, And all that is revealed, In the word concerning him, You know, As we prepare, For a coming Lord's day, I feel that this is important, The way we observe him, As he is revealed to us, In his word, That we have this right preparation, That it is not just a glance, That we have in his word, That we meditate upon his truth,

That we prayerfully consider his word, That we seek, That we wait in quietness, Upon him, Oh there is the busyness, Of this world, We tend to make so many excuses, For our failings, And so on, When John was saying, Behold, He was speaking about determination, He was speaking about effort, And therefore the question is, What will our effort be, What effort are we putting in, To our seeking after him, What effort are we doing, What is our effort, In seeking to really, Prepare our hearts, For his day, The preparation of heart, That belongs to him, But I think of the responsibility, That he has laid upon us, That we seek, For his blessing, To be on us, But then, You know when you notice the words, Later on in the chapter,
In verse 36, And looking upon Jesus, As he walked, He saith, Behold, The Lamb of God, Earlier on this, Earlier on when John uttered those words, Jesus was coming towards him, Now in these words, Jesus is walking elsewhere, But John still sees him, And it is very interesting now, He says, Behold the Lamb of God, He doesn't continue, But I want us to notice, The response that this had, The previous day, Two disciples heard these words, Behold the Lamb of God, Which takes away, The sin, Of the world, They had a lot to think about, And during that evening, And the, The earlier, The earlier part of the next day, They were thinking about this, And now they hear those words again, Now their eyes are directed towards that person again,
And notice their response, And the two disciples heard him speak, And they followed Jesus, It's not just observation, It's not just taking notice of him, It is not just seeing him as he is in his word, But surely, This speaks about obedience, Why did Jesus come, To where John the Baptist was, The previous day, A lot of speculation, But I believe, That one reason, To impress those disciples, Knowing what John the Baptist was going to say, And those two disciples of John the Baptist, Would hear those words, Would have an impression, That they would have an impression, Upon them, And now,
Jesus, Is returning that way again, And those disciples, Those disciples of John the Baptist, Again, Their attention is drawn to Jesus, And now, They want to follow, Now, They want to obey, It wasn't just enough, Seeing him, It wasn't just enough, Observing him, Now, They wanted to follow, They wanted to obey, I wonder if that is how you feel today, You can say in all honesty, That you have observed him, In all honesty, You can say that you have looked upon him, In all honesty, You say, That your desires are for him, You want to live for him, Or maybe you're putting it another way, You want to serve him, You want to follow him, Then, Is there going to be this, Obegence, We are told, And, They followed,
[33:00] Jesus, They followed him, In his way, In the way, In which he, Led them, They were being followed, According to his word, This word, That would direct him, And, Surely that is what we seek to do today, As we seek to obey, We follow in his way, We follow according to his word, We seek to live, In obedience to him, Not just enough seeing him, Not just enough observing, But now, We want to follow, And you feel, Maybe like those two, This irresistible drawing, Out, You feel you're being drawn to him, You feel you're being drawn, To follow after him, Again the next day, After John stood, And two of his disciples, And looking upon Jesus, He walked, To say, Behold the Lamb of

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God,

And the two disciples, Heard him speak, And they followed Jesus, I wonder, Will that be what, You do today, You're going to, Not just take the example, Of others, They have already, Followed, They are already, Obeying, His word, And his command, Will you be, Will you join with them, Will you be like them, Because you have observed him, Because you have seen him, Because of what you believe, He has done within your heart, Because you feel, You're being drawn out after him, You are now, Going to obey him, And the words that he, That he brings to us, This do, In remembrance, Of me, Following, According, To his word, Behold,
The lamb of God, Which taketh away, The sin, Of the world, Just a few points, In conclusion, To, Just apply it a little further, To our hearts, The lamb of God, Behold, The lamb of God, It's not just something, We're doing, Today, It's not just something, We seek to do, On his own day, And as we gather around, His word, And as we gather around, The table, But the very word, Behold, It's speaking about, Something we do, We should be doing, Day by day, Yes, Where we fix our eyes, Steadfastly upon him, Where we never want, To take our eyes, Away from him, But you know, There are so many things, That seek to distract us, The world, The flesh, And the devil, They seek to distract us,
They seek, That they would take, So that they would take our eyes, Off him, And you think of Peter, When he went out, To walk upon the water, As someone said, When Peter began, To take his eyes, Of the saviour, He began to sink, There are so many things, That distract us, So many things, That cause us, To take our eyes, Off him, Let this be our desire, And let this be, Our duty, Not just today, And the next day, But all the days, Of our lives, Seeking his help, That we day by day, Behold him, That we observe him, That we really, Take notice of him, But then also, The expression that is used, Which taketh away, The sin of the world, Remember the writer, To the Hebrews says, Let us lay aside, Every sin, Every weight,
And the sin, Which doth so easily, Beset us, Those little things, That would bring us down, Those little things, That would seek, To take our eyes, Off him, Those sins, For which we make, Many excuses, He taketh away, The sin of the world, That we bring those things, To him, Seeking his help, To overcome, Those problems, Or those difficulties, That we may have, In our own lives, And then, As we are, Preparing for the Lord's day, And as I said earlier, As we are preparing, To meet around his table, And as we seek, To behold him, Then, Surely we learn this, That it should be, Our constant prayer, But especially, As we meet around his word, And at his table, That he, Would reveal, Himself to us, And that as he revealed himself,
[38:06] To john the baptist, And as he revealed himself, To those disciples, That he would come, And in a very real way, Reveal himself to us, And that we would see him, In his word, And that in the breaking of the bread, And in the cup, Our eyes would be fixed, Upon him, That we would be seeing him, Because he, Reveals himself to us, Therefore, Let that be our prayer, And as we seek, To prepare ourselves, That it would be, That we, Would see him, Behold him, And then, Be able to follow him, Let us pray, Gracious, And ever-blessed Lord, We would give thee thanks, For thy word, Which thou hast revealed to us,

We bless thee, O God, For this revelation, We thank thee, In thy word, Thou art, Showing to us, Thy greatness, And thy power, Thou art also, Showing to us, How weak, And how insignificant we are, And yet, Thou art also, Showing, That thou art one, Who cares, For thy people, We pray, O Lord, That we would come to thee, Casting, All our cares upon thee, For thou art the one, Who cares for us, We pray, Therefore thy blessing, Upon all thy people, That thou art continue, To strengthen them, And to encourage them, In thyself, And we pray, O God, That each one of us, For speakers, And for hearers alike, We would know this preparation, That belongs, Alone to thee, Make thy word real,
And make thy word, Precious to us, Make thyself real, And precious to us, We pray, That we would be able, Again to say, It is good, To be here, We pray for thy blessing, To be upon any, Who may be, In distress at this time, Bless those, Who may be anxious, And for any, Who may be seeking, To go forward, In obedience, To the command, Of thy word, We pray, That thou art, Draw very near to them, That thy good hand, Would be upon them, Bless us now each one, And help us, In all that we do, And take away our sin, For Jesus' sake, Amen.

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