

Mark 1:2-8

An Unworthy Trailblazer

On good authority ...

- I. Prophet of the Most High
 - A. Messiah's Messenger
 - B. In the Spirit of Elijah
- II. John the Baptizer
 - A. His Extraordinary Nativity
 - B. His Unique Calling
 - C. His Ominous Message
 - D. His Gospel Cry
- III. Jesus the Lord
 - A. John's View of Jesus
 - B. Jesus' View of John

... he must decrease.

Children, Listen ...

1. What was John the Baptist's calling in life?
2. What is repentance?
3. Why did John believe he was not even worthy to untie Jesus' sandals?
4. Why did John call Jesus "The lamb of God?"

His Name Will Be John

John the Baptizer must have been keenly self-aware. He knew he was prophesied *about* in ages past and at his birth was prophesied over by his own priestly father. He knew he would play a critical role in preparing the way for the Messiah. He would need to resist pride as he became immensely popular – he needed resolve as he would have his detractors. To top it off he would live a lifestyle, shall we say, a little abnormal by the cultural standards of the day (or any day for that matter). He would call out sin in the face of danger and point to salvation in the person of Jesus. He knew his place in light of God's plan and with reference to Christ. John recognized that when he was in the presence of Jesus, he was in the presence of God, so he was not even worthy to stoop before such divinity – he had to place himself even lower. He knew when Jesus arrived it was time for him to decrease. Oddly enough, joy is not an attribute normally associated with John. And yet, we can surely imagine that he experienced intensive joy when he was able to point to Jesus and cry out, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"