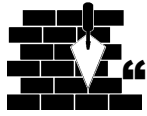


JOHN THE BAPTIZER - “More of Him...Less of Me”

**“Building Blocks”**

1. **(Q1)** To “glorify God” is a very fuzzy thing for most Christians. We talk about it often, but rarely know what it means. It is a word that basically means to point others to God in a way that accurately describes Him for who He really is. It demands first a knowledge of what He is truly like, so that the “pointing” is accurate. Also, it is impossible to “glorify” God without speaking or acting. It always involves Christians doing and saying, not merely “being” (cf. Matt. 5:16; 1 Cor 10:31)
2. **(Q3-Jn 4)** Jesus is *not* saying he can simply do without food. The point here is that his own personal desires were set aside for the sake of doing God’s will. And, in this context, that involved sharing the Gospel with a marginalized, Samaritan woman.
3. **(Q4 Jn 3)** If we understand the word “glorify” to refer to the pointing someone properly toward God, then John gave his entire life and ministry to “glorifying” Jesus.
4. **(Q4 Phil 2)** It is very significant when looking at Paul’s description of Timothy, to also know that the phrase *before* this passage, “...no one else like him” is from the Greek work, *isopsuchē*, which means “same soul.” Paul and Timothy were “kindred spirits,” to use a more modern phrase. On the issue of what was most important to both of them, the “interests of Jesus” were their one holy passion. (Paul states this implicitly by contrasting those who *don’t* care about the “interests of Jesus” with he and Timothy).
5. **(Q5b)** It is a not-so-obvious statement here that we are *already* living for ourselves (i.e. “*might no longer...*”). One of the express purposes of Jesus’ death was to free us from a lifestyle that is total-ly inwardly-directed, for one that is outwardly-directed, towards others.
6. **(Q8 Jn 12)** The whole idea of “reputation” is not fully understood until we acknowledge that its supposed value comes from what others think of me *in comparison to others*. If my reputation is vital to me, then I have to, by definition, also be comparing myself with others rather than with Jesus, because He sought no status at all. If He were truly my role model or standard, I would be doing the same!

**“Stumbling Stones”**

1. **(Q4 James)** The idea of “God’s will” is typically misunderstood to mean *His* thoughts about *my* ideas or plans. In other words, we find ourselves asking, “*Is it God’s will that I do such and such a thing?*” The bigger and often neglected truth is that God has a plan for all mankind for all eternity. *That* is the “will” I should be concerned about. As His child, I should be eager and careful to know as much as I can about *this*, and then adjust my life to match it, rather than reduce “God’s will” to merely His approval or disapproval of *my* life!
2. **(Q4 1 Pet)** We have to constantly examine our perspective on God’s servants. Do we ascribe “celebrity” status to some Christians for their singing, writing, preaching, etc.? One writer said if Christians ever start to think of themselves (or anyone else) as being “somebody” in the Kingdom, it would be similar to the donkey believing people were cheering for *him* on Palm Sunday!
3. **(Q8 1 Cor 6)** Paul is speaking here of much more than merely sexual sin. He prohibits *that* in vv. 15-18. But, his reason is found in these two verses. I can (and should) use my *body* to “point people properly towards God” (i.e. “*glorify God in my body.*”). I can also always ask myself if my body is doing that as best I can, or is it drawing people’s focus in another direction?

4. **(Q8 1 Cor 10)** This of course has some application to how I live among believers of varying convictions (e.g. spending, alcohol, etc.) but Paul's *primary* focus here has to do with one's testimony before the watching *unbelieving* world (cf. vs. 33). Sometimes, our convictions among each other actually *prevent* God from being "properly pointed to" (i.e. "*glorified*") in the world.



"Going Deeper"

1. **(Q3 Jn 4)** When was the last time you missed a meal, a night's sleep, or a TV show because of the Kingdom of God?
2. **(Q4 1 Pet)** What does this verse have to say about the American idea of "celebrity" or "famous" Christians? (e.g. Dove Awards, Gold Medallion Book Awards, talk radio, etc.)
Do you "rank" Christians in your own mind, based on success or Christ-likeness? (Be honest!)
3. **(Q5b)** What is the unstated assumption on Paul's part, regarding what we *will* be living for, if left to ourselves?
Have you ever thought of one of the main purposes of Jesus' death being the *reversal* of the very direction of your life's motivations from inwardly to outwardly?