

July 16

(Beginning of Jesus' First Year of Ministry)

John versus the Inquisition

The uneven shall be made level,
and the rough places a plain.
The glory of Yahweh shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together. – Isaiah 40:4-5

[John 1:19-34, near Jordan] This is John's testimony, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

He declared, and didn't deny, but he declared, "I am not the Christ."

They asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the prophet?"

He answered, "No."

They said therefore to him, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

He said, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' [Isaiah 40:3] as Isaiah the prophet said."

The ones who had been sent were from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then do you baptize, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?"

John answered them, "I baptize in water,

but among you stands one whom you don't know. He is the one who comes after me, who is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I'm not worthy to loosen." These things were done in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

The next day, he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who is preferred before me, for he was before me.' I didn't know him, but for this reason I came baptizing in water: that he would be revealed to Israel." John testified, saying, "I have seen the Spirit descending like a dove out of heaven, and it remained on him. I didn't recognize him, but he who sent me to baptize in water, he said to me, 'On whomever you will see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.' I have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God."

"Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." ...but among you stands one whom you don't know.

1. Why did John say he wasn't Elijah (see John 7:8, Matthew 7:6, 11:14, 17:12 and 21:25)?
2. What do you do to tell others what you know about Jesus? What will you do today?
3. Lord Jesus, today I will prepare my heart for your glory to be revealed in me by...