

## **John 1:6-8,19-28**

### Gospel Reflection

John's singular ministry was to be a witness to Jesus. John's demeanor was always humble, unobtrusive and unpretentious. Later in the Gospel, John compares himself to the best man at a wedding, who must give way to the bridegroom. "He must increase, but I must decrease". John's ministry was to prepare the way for the Messiah. The priests and Levites sent by the Jews to find out who this strange man was came with some pre-conceived notions. John knew they were looking for the Messiah, so he was quick to correct that and clearly stated, "I am not the Messiah" They continued to dig in, suggesting that John was Elijah. The Jews remembered that Elijah had not died and believed that the same prophet would return to earth to announce the end time. John was quick to dispel that idea, although John was the fulfillment of the prophecy. The Jews wouldn't let go, "Are you the prophet?" John had come specifically to testify about Jesus, but they kept asking him about himself. His responses become more terse, "NO".

The Pharisees continue badgering John and he applies Isaiah's words to explain his ministry, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness. Make straight the way of the Lord." He is calling the people to repent in preparation to the coming Messiah. Finally the Pharisees get to the point, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, not Elijah nor the prophet." In John's humble way he responds, "I baptize with water" He calls them to look around and see the real Messiah. In John's final self-effacing nature, he compares his position relative to Jesus stating, "I'm not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal."

We couldn't find a better mentor or example for our own lives. We should be witnessing to Jesus, and turning way from our own self-importance, especially during this Advent season. We should all be preparing the way for the Messiah.

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