



John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. He is the one of whom I said, 'A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.' I did not know him, but the reason why I came baptizing with water was that he might be made known to Israel." John testified further, saying, "I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from the sky and remain upon him. I did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God."

Introductory Prayer: Lord Jesus, I know that all Christians are called to proclaim you with their lives and to follow the path you have taught. I want to grow closer to you and to be more the person you want me to be. I love you and long to be transformed by your grace!

Petition: Holy Spirit, help me to be attentive and docile to your inspirations.

1. Trust in the Lord and Let Him Lead You: Although John the Baptist knew that he was sent as the Precursor of the Messiah, he did not initially know who the Messiah would be. But he did not let uncertainty about the details stop him. He knew that God had a plan and that he was called to play a part in it; as soon as he knew what direction to go, he went, regardless of not knowing his exact destination. Sometimes we can want to have total knowledge of God's plan, and we hesitate to go forward until we're sure we know exactly what to do. However, God rarely gives us a full view of his plan before we start out. He wants us to trust in him, to act on what we do know, and to be confident that

God will bring his plan to a good end. Not that we shouldn't have all the foresight we can, but we can't expect God to let us in on his "master plan." When God calls us, our response should be to follow without questioning God's ways.

2. The Holy Spirit Is Our Guide: The fact that we have to trust in God and allow him to reveal his plan as we go along means that we have to be very attentive to his work in our life. John the Baptist recognized Jesus because he was paying total attention to the signs God was giving him: the Holy Spirit revealed to him that Jesus was the Messiah. God will usually not speak to us through visions and special signs; however, if we have St. John the Baptist's attitude of openness to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit and seeing God's will in the events around us, we will be able to discern his plan for our life and fulfill it. The most important time to listen to God is in prayer, so setting aside time to be with God has to be part of our daily routine.

3. Dealing with the Unexpected: When St. John the Baptist realized that Jesus was the Messiah, it might have been a surprise. They were related through their mothers' families, and they may have known each other in youth before John went out into the desert. However, John clearly states that he did not know who the Messiah was until the moment the Holy Spirit revealed Jesus' true identity. John may well have shared the common opinion that Jesus was a man like any other, albeit outstanding in justice and piety. The important thing is that he doesn't doubt the divine inspiration. Rather, he immediately acts on it, proclaiming Jesus to his followers. In our own lives, God may well ask us to do the unexpected, or we may see his will in places we least expect it. We need to have St. John the Baptist's readiness to see God's hand and act on it, even if it goes contrary to our expectations.

Conversation with Christ: Lord Jesus, knowing your will in my life can be hard at times. Even when I think I do know what you want from me, it can be difficult to follow through — especially when it is something that I did not expect or that requires that I go beyond my "comfort zone." But, Lord, I do want to do your will. Grant me the same spirit of docility and dedication as St. John the Baptist!

Resolution: Today I will renew in prayer my personal commitment to always seek to know and follow God's will in my life. I will try to heed the inspirations that the Holy Spirit gives to guide me on the right path.