

Devotional Questions – John 1:35-39

1. *What did John mean by ‘the Lamb of God’ (John 1:35)?*
2. *Why does John tell us that Jesus passed by* (John 1:36)?* *The correct term is **“walked.”** See note below.
3. *What can we learn from the fact that John said the same thing twice (John 1:29, 35)?*
4. *Why did Jesus ask ‘what’ not ‘who’ are you seeking (John 1:38)?*
5. *Why is the question of Jesus an important one (John 1:38)?*
6. *What did the disciples mean by their question (John 1:38)?*
7. *What did Jesus mean with h(H)is answer (John 1:39)?*
8. *Why does John tell us that the two disciples stayed with Jesus (John 1:39)?*

Note on **“walked”** John 1:36, Question 2

The 1611, 2011+ AV1611s have **“walked.”**

Of the pre-1611 Bibles 1385, 1395 Wycliffe, Coverdale have *“walking,”* Tyndale, Matthew, Great, Bishops’ *“walked by,”* Geneva *“walking by”*

Of the post-1611 Versions 1582 JR NT and DRB, 1984, 2011 NWT, Ricker Berry’s 1897 Stephanus 1550, Nestle’s 21st, Farstad-Hodges ‘Majority’ Greek-English Interlinear Editions have *“walking,”* CEV, GN, NCV *“walking by,”* ESV, LB, NET, NLT *“walked by,”* HCSB, 1984, 2011 NIVs *“passing by,”* JB *“passed,”* NJB *“went past,”* NRSV *“walk by,”* RV, ASV, RSV, 1977, 1995 NASV, NKJV *“walked”*

In sum, of the 8 pre-1611 Bibles and the 25 post-1611 Versions, 33 Versions in all, 28 essentially agree with the AV1611 reading **“walked”** John 1:36, implying that the Lord was not by-passing the disciples. At most 5, HCSB, 1984, 2011 NIVs, JB, NJB, imply –wrongly, see *Question 2* - that He was. NIV supporters therefore appear to be in a minority with respect to John 1:36, even amongst their fellow apostates, though, typically, they are with present-day Rome.

Devotional Questions – John 1:35-39, Answers to Questions

See Dr Ruckman's commentary *The Book of John* pp 46-57 and the *Ruckman Reference Bible* p 1383 for detailed comments.

1. What did John mean by 'the Lamb of God' (John 1:35)?

John 1:29 states **"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."**

John 1:35-36 state **"Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!"**

Note first that the expression **"the Lamb"** with Lamb capitalised occurs 28 times in scripture, exclusively in the New Testament and mainly in the Book of Revelation. John 1:29, 35 are the first and second occurrences of the expression **"the Lamb"** and the only occurrences outside of the Book of Revelation, where the expression **"the Lamb"** occurs in Revelation 5:8, 12, 13, 6:1, 16, 7:9, 10, 14, 17, 12:11, 13:8, 14:4 twice, 10, 15:3, 17:14 twice, 19:7, 9, 21:9, 14, 22, 23, 27, 22:1, 3.

John uses the expression **"the Lamb of God"** because:

- **"the Lamb of God...taketh away the sin of the world"** in that the Lord Jesus Christ testified that **"I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world"** John 6:51 and **"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"** Acts 4:12.
- **"the Lamb of God"** is **"the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"** Revelation 13:8 in that **"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved"** John 3:17.
- **"the Lamb of God"** authors **"the Lamb's book of life"** Revelation 21:27. *It is vital to have your name in that Book as your passport to "the holy city, new Jerusalem" because as John testifies "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" Revelation 20:15 **"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband...And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life"** Revelation 21:2, 27.*

Note that the term **"of God"** applies to the Lord Jesus Christ in at least 12 identities. He is:

- **"the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"** John 1:29
- **"the Son of God"** John 1:34 **"who loved me, and gave himself for me"** Galatians 2:20
- **"the bread of God...he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world"** John 6:33
- **"the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve"** Acts 27:23
- **"the righteousness of God"** Romans 1:17, 3:5, 21, 22, 10:3, 2 Corinthians 5:21, James 1:20, 2 Peter 1:1 **"Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world"** 1 John 2:1-2
- **"the power of God, and the wisdom of God...unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks"** 1 Corinthians 1:24
- **"the peace of God"** Philippians 4:7, Colossians 3:15 **"For he is our peace"** Ephesians 2:14 **"now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ"** Ephesians 2:13

- **“the image of the invisible God”** Colossians 1:15 **“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins”** Colossians 1:14
- **“the beginning of the creation of God”** Revelation 3:14 **“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist”** Colossians 1:16-17
- **“The Word of God”** Revelation 19:13 **“And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron”** Revelation 19:15
- **“the tabernacle of God...and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God”** Revelation 21:3 with John 1:14 **“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”**

Paul could therefore write this encouragement to today’s believer **“And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power”** Colossians 2:10 with 1 Peter 3:21-22 **“In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”** Colossians 2:3.

2. Why does John tell us that Jesus passed by* (John 1:36)? *The correct term is “walked.” See Note on “walked” John 1:36, Question 2 above.

The Lord was not by-passing the others in John 1:36 as the NIVs imply. He was open to *unconstrained* enquirers as John 1:37-38 show in contrast to when the disciples had to show *commitment* for the Lord to reside with them. Where the scripture must indicate *passed by* it does so.

“And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them” Mark 6:48. John’s account reveals the *commitment* that the disciples had to exercise for the Lord to be with them. **“Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went”** John 6:21. *Toiling had to give way to trust via commitment* as it must do for every individual seeking **“salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus”** 2 Timothy 3:15. From www.g-e-c.org.uk/ GEC Meeting June 10th 2014.

“And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them” Luke 24:28-29. Jesus was to meet with **“the eleven”** Luke 24:33-39 but delayed to minister **“the scriptures”** to two *committed* followers each with **“an honest and good heart”** Luke 8:15, 24:13, 32. He seeks *committed* followers and hates lukewarmness Revelation 3:16. **“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind”** Matthew 22:37.

“Walked” is basic because the believer *must walk with Christ in at least 11 essential aspects*:

- A walk in the light of fellowship and holy living. **“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life”** John 8:12 with Ephesians 5:8 **“For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light”** and 1 John 1:7 **“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”**
- A walk **“in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.”** **“Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied”** Acts 9:31.

- A walk in “*newness of life.*” “*Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life*” Romans 6:4.
- A walk “*not after the flesh but after the Spirit.*” “*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit...That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*” Romans 8:1, 4.
- A walk of honesty clothed with “*the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*” 2 Peter 1:1. “*Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof*” Romans 13:13-14.
- A walk of charitableness toward others. “*But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died*” Romans 14:15 with Ephesians 5:2 “*And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.*”
- A walk in obedience to God’s calling “*unto good works*” worthily. “*But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches*” 1 Corinthians 7:17 with Ephesians 2:10 “*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*” Ephesians 4:1 “*I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called*” and Colossians 1:10 “*That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.*”
- A walk “*by faith, not by sight.*” “*(For we walk by faith, not by sight)*” 2 Corinthians 5:7 with Colossians 2:6 “*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.*”
- A walk “*in the Spirit*” in order to counter “*the lust of the flesh.*” “*This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh*” Galatians 5:16 “*That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory*” 1 Thessalonians 2:12.
- A “*Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time*” Colossians 4:5 “*That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing*” 1 Thessalonians 4:12 not like the young man who “*wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want*” Luke 15:13-14. Note Solomon’s warning. “*He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed*” Proverbs 13:20.
- A “*walk in truth...after his commandments*” according to the *Biblical* criterion of love for God. “*I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father...And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it*” 2 John 4, 6.

In sum, as John testifies like “*holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*” 2 Peter 1:21 concerning the walk of the believer who purposes how he “*ought to walk and to please God*” 1 Thessalonians 4:1:

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth” 3 John 4.

3. *What can we learn from the fact that John said the same thing twice (John 1:29, 35)?*

John 1:29-34, 37 show that what John the Baptist said twice with respect to ***“the Lamb of God”*** John 1:29, 35 did ***“take root downward, and bear fruit upward”*** 2 Kings 19:30, Isaiah 37:31 for John ***“the disciple whom Jesus loved”*** John 21:20.

John 1:29-34 show that what John the Baptist said did sink down into John his then disciple’s ears, Luke 9:44, the first time round i.e. took root down so that John became ***“Jesus’ disciple”*** Matthew 27:57 the second time round i.e. bore fruit up.

John the Baptist therefore knew the importance of *putting in remembrance*, as Paul and Peter expressed it in order for ***“the words of truth”*** Proverbs 22:21, Ecclesiastes 12:10 to ***“take root downward, and bear fruit upward”*** 2 Kings 19:30, Isaiah 37:31.

“Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe” Philippians 3:1.

“If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained...Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee” 1 Timothy 4:6, 16.

“Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance” 2 Peter 1:12-13.

“This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour” 2 Peter 3:1-2.

4. *Why did Jesus ask ‘what’ not ‘who’ are you seeking (John 1:38)?*

Individuals in Jesus’ day and immediately afterwards were interested in ***“eternal life”*** Matthew 19:16, Mark 10:17, 30, Luke 10:25, 18:18, John 3:15, 5:39, 6:54, 68, 10:28, 17:2, Acts 13:48, 12 references in all.

- *Men asked Jesus about “eternal life.” “And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?”* Matthew 19:16.
- *Jesus commanded men to search the scriptures for “eternal life” in Him. “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me”* John 5:39.
- *Jesus spoke “the words of eternal life” John 6:68 to the multitudes. “Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day”* John 6:54.
- *The apostles preached “eternal life” to Gentiles, many of whom gladly received it. “And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed”* Acts 13:48.

“Eternal life” is still the *real* big issue. It is *only* in the Lord Jesus Christ. Keep preaching it!

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life” John 6:47.

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” 1 John 5:11-12.

5. *Why is the question of Jesus an important one (John 1:38)?*

See *Question 4*. Note Paul's warning that draws *the sharpest possible distinction* between the haves and the have-nots with respect to *"eternal life"*. ***"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his"*** Romans 8:9.

6. *What did the disciples mean by their question (John 1:38)?*

They sought to be ***"with him"*** Mark 1:36, 3:14, 9:2, 14:33, Luke 7:11, 8:1, 9:18, 22:14. That is a condition of discipleship. Even where not physically possible, Luke 8:38, 39, as is the case for today's believer, it should be ***"in heart"*** 1 Thessalonians 2:17. See again *Question 2* and Colossians 2:6 ***"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him."***

7. *What did Jesus mean with h(H)is answer (John 1:39)?*

The Lord Jesus Christ is genuinely transparent. There is nothing ***"in the dark...in the chambers of his imagery"*** Ezekiel 8:12 with the Lord Jesus Christ as John would later testify of Him ***"That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world"*** John 1:9. ***"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all"*** 1 John 1:5.

The Lord also wanted the disciples to be *with Him*. See *Question 8* and note this statement from the *real* Lord's Prayer. ***"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world"*** John 17:24. However, being close to the Lord is conditioned on *obedience to Him in love*. ***"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him"*** John 14:21.

8. *Why does John tell us that the two disciples stayed with Jesus (John 1:39)?*

See *Question 6* and note John's later testimony in his first letter. Every believer today may have the same fulfilment of John's testimony with respect to fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

- *That fellowship is joyful* as even an Old Testament saint such as David could testify. ***"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore"*** Psalm 16:11 with Acts 2:28. John testifies as follows.

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full" 1 John 1:3-4.

- *That fellowship is personal* as Isaiah testifies. ***"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones"*** Isaiah 57:15.
- *That fellowship is eternal* as David testifies. ***"For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness"*** Psalm 84:10. God's courts *are* eternity, Isaiah 57:15, and a day in them is *not* finite as *"a thousand"* is finite. ***"One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day"*** 2 Peter 3:8 but ***"the day of the Lord"*** 2 Peter 3:10 i.e. ***"the day of God"*** 2 Peter 3:12 ushers in ***"new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness"*** 2 Peter 3:13 ***"and so shall we ever be with the Lord"*** 1 Thessalonians 4:17.

Regular time in scripture and in prayer is therefore ***"good and profitable unto men"*** Titus 3:8 for ***"fellowship...with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."*** ***"I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning"*** Psalm 130:5-6.