



## *Living Christ Together...*

### Know Who You Are Not

Dear Friend in Christ,

Priests from Jerusalem come to find out what John the Baptist is up to. They ask him two simple questions: “Who are you?” and “Why . . . do you baptize?”

Surprisingly, John answers in the negative, emphatically declaring that he is not the Christ, not Elijah, not the Prophet. Before the Baptist says who he *is*, he says who he is *not*.



What if John did *not* know who he was not? What if he gave up baptizing and set out Messiah-like to save the world as people wanted him to? What if he left the Jordan to call down fire from heaven like Elijah? What if he went up the mountain alone like Moses to dedicate himself to the Law?

John the Baptist did none of these things because the desert had been his school of identity. In silence and solitude, he learned that he was “not the light” but he was “sent from God.” He learned who he was. “I am the voice,” he said, the voice of “the One who is coming after me.”

John’s testimony has lost none of its challenge. Unless I know who I am not, I cannot know who I am or what I’m called to do. Unless I know who I am, I risk getting lost in what I do.

I don’t have to be someone I’m not. I don’t have to do something I can’t. Like John, I too am “sent from God” to be who I am and do what I can.



In Christ Jesus,

*Bishop Liam Cary*

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