

John the Baptist Scene [Part of "J"]

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John walks out of the alley way and stretches as if he has just woken up. Some people are passing by him and he acknowledges them as they walk past. They regard him like a crazy man and walk away briskly. His hair is teased and he looks like he plays in a Nirvana tribute band. [I own a lot of 90's grunge scene clothes and I will make a t-shirt that reads "Save the Humans".]

John: (with a smile to a passer-by) Good morning

Passer-by [walking by] it's two in the afternoon?

[John Shrugs head]

[begins going through a nearby trashcan and notices a sandwich on top of a bag inside the can]

Another passer-by [walking by with disgust as he begins to eat the sandwich] That's disgusting man.

John: (with a mouthful of the sandwich) What! It was on top!

[John Shrugs head]

A crowd starts to gather as he finishes his sandwich.

Crowd person: That's the guy right there.

Another Crowd person: I heard that he used to do communion for this Church, right—and they made him stop because he bought Hawaiian Punch and sourdough bread.

Another Crowd person: he told my cousin that PSE&G hires witches to help them control the weather.

Another Crowd person: I heard he sleeps back there in that alley.

John: I can hear you and no I don't sleep in the alley. [short pause] I sleep in the backseat of a '74 Gremlin that's parked in the alley.

[louder in a preaching voice, but also kind of grungy and sort of comical despite its angry tone] And it matters to you where I live? Or is it how I live? You live in your condos, with your skylights, and your [quoting fingers in the air] “showers” and “running water” and good for you. Then when someone asks you for 15 freaking cents for charity it’s “Oh I haven’t the change”. “I’ve got buy a new cell phone” or “I need a \$400 coach bag”, but nobody wants to help anybody else out. Everybody thinks about it, but nobody’s ever gonna do anything about it. You don’t care about those people.

The government doesn’t care about those people. Government doesn’t care about you. They want you to support those people. But is that what you need? [patronizing voice] you need big brother Uncle Sam to tell you how to live?

Yeah go ahead, just sign over every decision you would ever have to make. Anything that might cause you to think for yourself, just sign that right over to someone else—sign it over to the government. They should be caring for you.

And if life gets tough, we’ll just sue everybody. Right? Fat kids sue McDonalds. “Let’s let the government so they can tell us when to stop eating”, and...now we can’t supersize anymore. While we’re at it, let’s let them tell us what temperature we should serve coffee at. Is that how you want to live—whatever they tell you? How long are you gonna let someone else think for you? How long are you gonna let people push you around and live your life for you.

The media tells you what to wear, what to listen to, what to watch and you just follow along, right? Give me a break. Can’t you see through that? It’s just a huge system in place designed for one thing—to distract you from doing something good...from doing what God put inside you to do.

I need to watch every episode of the season or else I won’t know what’s going on. If I don’t know what’s going on, I won’t be cool. If I’m not cool, I won’t be popular, and if I’m not popular I’ll be miserable. So you spend your life watching a singing contest judged by a bunch of people who can’t sing and you think that that’s your dream because they tell you “that’s your dream”. That pop culture life isn’t real and you know it. It’s only real because some rich guys in an office say it’s real.

It’s a big stupid culture of fear. “I’ll scare you into following the program”. So every commercial you watch tells you that if you don’t buy this your life will be miserable. The news says “Don’t do this, or you’ll be miserable”, the government tells you trust us and let us decide what’s best for you or you’ll be miserable, so you surrender your life to other people and you let them live it for you and you’re not miserable—you’re mediocre and you die mediocre.

Well, when you’re sick and tired of living in fear day in and day out, you surrender your life to God, you put your trust in God. He’s the only one that cares about you and he’s the only one that can give you something real to live for.

[crowd responds—some people start crying others drop to their knees]

John: [Slightly more mellow] You think you need God like they have on the TV-Church, right? Or else it's not real? More of the same—God doesn't need lots of people in order to show up and he does not care if it's televised. He just wants you [points to the people]...and that's it.

He wants you, right now, to make a decision that you're gonna let him change your life. Decide, now, and ask him to help you to stop being a self-centered person and live your life right.

Crowd begins being baptized by John—he pulls a spritz bottle hanging from the utility belt he's wearing, sprays people and then squeegees them with the squeegee also hanging from his belt.

Sprays three people (expect laughter)

Crowd person: you're awesome, man.

John: [continues baptizing] Me? I'm nobody. I'm nobody doing nothing special.

Same Crowd person: Well, I think you need a little recognition.

John: [stops baptizing] Haven't you listened to anything I've said. Look, man, it's cool that you dig what I'm doing and I'm glad, but I'm not spritzing people to score chicks. We all have to figure out what we've been called to do, and this is what I'm called to do. It's my purpose.

But I'm just some guy with a message—the guy who comes after me—he's the real thing.

[Crowd noise softens and stops]

Crowd person: what do you mean?

Another Crowd person: Yeah, who are you talking about?

John: He is God's son...and he will change everything

[crowd begins clapping and cheering]

Crowd Person: [shouts] Yes, our time of peace is upon us. [Phony, Churchy, religious vernacular]

[crowd continues clapping and cheering]

John angrily jumps up on a box or something elevated to silence their applause and capture their attention.

John: [yelling at the people] Peace? What do *you* know about peace? Yes, the one who comes after me is the prince of peace, but if you wanna follow him, you're not gonna see an ounce of peace! Nope, not at all!

Crowd is puzzled

John: [somewhat forceful] There's no peace in when you have to decide whether you're going to do what you want to do or what you feel like God is telling you to do.

[more forceful] There's no peace when your family ridicules you for what you do for people simply because you feel like it's "God's purpose" for your life. There's no peace at all when it inconveniences them—no peace at all.

[somewhat more reflective and calm]

There's no peace when you hear "resist the Devil" and then you're forced to make the choice to actually do it—everyday of your life—to turn off the radio in your mind that echoes "you can't do it", "you're not good enough", "you're a sinner" and to believe that what God says is true.

[very matter of fact] It's worth it, but I'm sorry, that's not what I'd call peace.

[louder and enthusiastic in an insane sort of way] You think I'm a eccentric and radical and whatever, but just wait until you see the one who comes after me, you're gonna freakin' wet yourself when you see the stuff that he does. I baptize you with water, but the one I'm talking about baptizes in fire...and I don't even know what that means.

So peace? [speaks into megaphone hanging off of his utility belt] What the [hits *bleep* sound on megaphone] do *you* know about peace?

John stops and everyone stands completely still and silent. [The faint sound of crickets is heard?]. Crowd noise begins again.

Another Crowd person: You believe that guy?

Another Crowd person: He's so judgmental!

Another Crowd person: Typical Baptist!