

**How Much Did the Baptist Know?  
How Early Did He Know It? (John 1:15-18)**

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**Introduction**

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**A Verse that Confounds Scholars: *Out of His fullness, we have all received* (John 1:16)**

**The common view:** These words are from John the Apostle (many years later)

**The speaker's view:** These words are from John the Baptist (before Jesus' ministry)

**Points raised by the common view against the speaker's view:**

**John 1:16 looks back in time.** (This is true, but that is not a problem for my view).

Scholars ask, "How can the Baptist look back at Jesus in John 1:16?"

Therefore, they assume that 1:16-18 are the words of John the apostle.

**John 1:16 says "From His fullness we all have received."**

Scholars ask, "How could the Baptist possibly know this by John 1:16?"

Therefore, they assume that 1:16-18 are the words of John the apostle.

**Counter-Point in favor of the speaker's view:**

The narrator refers to the unbelieving readers as:                   YOU

The narrator refers to apostles as:   WE

You and we in speeches refer to characters in John.

Scholars wrongly treat WE in John 1:16 as if the verse said YOU

## **Making the Case for the Speaker's View:**

Where (in John 1) would Jesus' baptism fit? (John's Gospel omits His baptism)

Most scholars regard Jesus' baptism as happening after John 1:19

Jesus' baptism did not happen after John 1:19. It occurred even before John 1:15:  
John 1-2 has a series of days (1:29, 35, 43; 2:1), but Mark 1:12 says immediately

	Matt	Mark	Luke	John
John baptized Jesus	3:13-17	1:9-11	3:21-22	—
Jesus went to the desert	4:1a	1:12a	4:1a	—
Jesus was tempted 40 days	4:1b-11	1:12b-13	4:1b-13	—
Jesus returned from the desert	—	—	—	(implied by 1:26)
John recalled his own earlier words	—	—	—	1:15-18
John testified to the leaders	—	—	—	1:19-28
John said Behold God's Lamb	—	—	—	1:29-34
John's disciples joined Jesus	—	—	—	1:34-51

**This view resolves a major bump in the common scholarly interpretation of John 1**

**The Baptist is a prophet—even more than a prophet. (He received revelation from God)**  
Cf. Matt 11:9 // Luke 7:28

**John must be knowledgeable about Jesus, so he can magnify Jesus and minimize himself**

**Jesus' first disciples start out with much greater knowledge of Jesus than we imagine**

**Conclusion**