

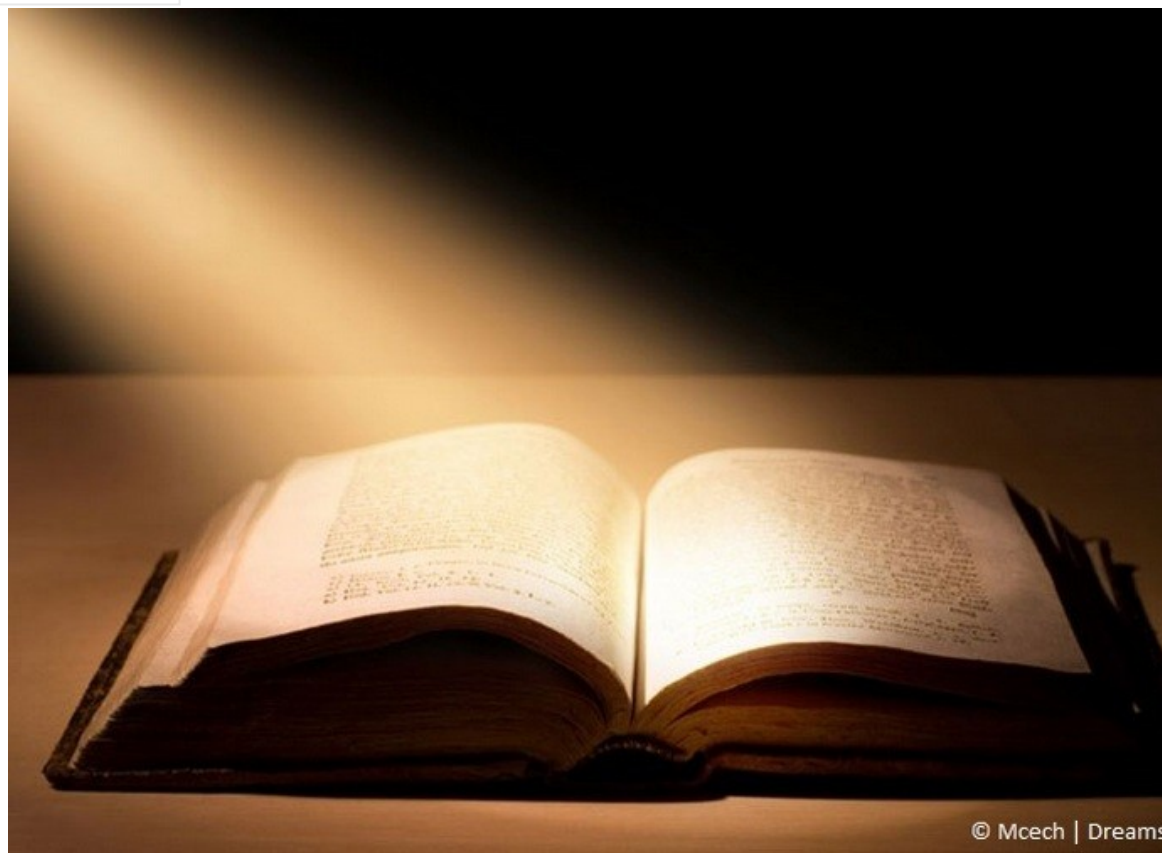
## GOSPEL PEARLS

# A very humble man

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*When all the people asked John, 'What must we do?' he answered, 'If anyone has two tunics he must share with the man who has none, and the one with something to eat must do the same. ' There were tax collectors too who came for baptism, and these said to him, 'Master, what must we do?' He said to them, 'Exact no more than your rate.' Some soldiers asked him in their turn, 'What about us? What must we do?' He said to them, 'No intimidation! No extortion! Be content with your pay!'*

*A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.' As well as this, there were many other things he said to exhort the people and to announce the Good News to them. (Luke 3, 10-18)*

In John the Baptist's place, many would have taken advantage of the status he enjoyed with his own disciples to exercise a certain power over them. John, on the other hand, was a very humble man and well aware that if he spoke on behalf of God, Jesus was the very Word of God incarnate. His humility, therefore, made him aware that he was only the forerunner and that Jesus was the one Saviour of the world: the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. This is why John the Baptist invited his disciples to prepare for the coming of Jesus by repenting of their sins. Are you truly repentant of your present and past sins or deep down do you think that you are not committing sins and that neither did you commit serious sins in the past?