

John 1:1-18

John wrote this book sometime between 80-95 A.D. You could ascribe many purposes to his writing but this one seems 'central'.

"But these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." **John 20:31 NASB**

John had an interesting task in front of him; how could he relate the truth about Jesus to Jews who were still looking for the Messiah and to Gentiles who had no concept of a Messiah. The answer he was led to is found in the Word for 'Word' which had meaning for both groups.

1. The Jews saw a word as something more than a mere sound. A word was something active and existing. It was power – it possessed the power to express something, to do something. This is seen in the many Old Testament references where *The Word of God* was seen as the creative power of God, the power that made the world and gave light and life to every man (**Genesis 1:3, 6, 11; Psalms 33:6; 107:20; 147:15; Isaiah 55:11**)
2. The Gentiles or Greeks saw the *Word* more philosophically.
 - a. When they looked at the world of nature, they saw that things were not chaotic, but orderly. Everything had its place and moved or grew in an orderly fashion, including the stars above and the vegetation below. Therefore, the Greeks said that behind the world was a mind, a reason, a power that made and kept things in their proper place. This creative and sustaining mind, this supreme reason, this unlimited power was said to be the *Word*.
 - b. The *Word* was also seen as the power that enabled men to think and reason. It was the power that brought light and understanding to man's mind and enabled him to express his jumbled-up thoughts in an orderly fashion.
 - c. More importantly, the *Word* was the power by which men came into contact with God and expressed their feelings to God.
3. John grabbed hold of this common idea of the Jews and Gentiles. He proclaimed Jesus Christ was the *Word*. John saw that a word is the expression of an idea, a thought, an image in the mind of a person. He saw that a word describes what is in the mind of a person. Thus, he proclaimed that in the life of Jesus Christ, God was speaking to the world, speaking and demonstrating just what He wanted to say to man. John said three things:
 - a. God has given us much more than mere words in the Holy Scriptures. God has given us Jesus Christ, *The Word*. As *The Word*, Jesus Christ was the picture, the expression, the pattern, the very image of what God wished to say to man. The very image within God's mind of the *Ideal Man* was demonstrated in the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was the perfect expression of all that God wishes man to be. Jesus Christ was God's utterance, God's speech, *God's Word* to man. Jesus Christ was the *Word* of God who came down to earth in human flesh to bring man into a face-to-face relationship with God (**John 1:1-2**). Jesus was the *Word of God who came to earth to live out the written Word of God*.

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- b. Jesus Christ is the Mind, the Reason, the Power that both made and keep things in their proper order. He is the creative and sustaining Mind, the Supreme Reason, the unlimited Power. (**John 1:3**).
- c. Jesus Christ is the Light, the Illumination, the Power that penetrates the darkness of the world. He, the Life and Light of the world, is what makes sense of the world and enables men to understand the world. (**John 1:4-5**) The Gospel According to John...Leadership Ministries Worldwide

OUTLINE OF JOHN CHAPTER ONE

1. THE WITNESSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS CRHIST, 1:1-51

- a. Jesus the Living Word: The First Witness of John the Apostle, **1:1-5**
- b. Jesus the Light of the World: The Special Witness of John the Baptist, **1:6-8**
- c. Jesus the Light of Men: The Second Witness of John the Apostle, **1:9-13**
- d. Jesus the Word Made Flesh: The Third Witness of John the Apostle, **1:14-18**
- e. Jesus the Messiah, the Lord: The Second Witness of John the Baptist, **1:19-28**
- f. Jesus the Lamb of God, the Son of God: The Third Witness of John the Baptist, **1:29-34**
- g. Jesus the Messiah, the Christ: The Witness of Andrew, **1:35-42**
- h. Jesus the One Prophesied: The Witness of Philip, **1: 43-45**
- i. Jesus the Son of God, the King of Israel: The Witness of Jesus Himself, **1:50-51**

1In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2He was in the beginning with God. 3All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. 4In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. 5The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. **John 1:1-5 NASB**

Before the mountains were born or You gave birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God. **Psalms 90:2 NASB**

- The word 'everlasting' can have a variety of meanings but for our purpose today, we will use the definition of 'the beginningless past'.
 - From 'the beginningless past' to the 'endless future', He is God.
 - In **John 1**, John is prompting us to experience God in the 'wonderment of His everlastingness'...in the beginning was the Word... (His 'everlasting beginningless')

4 In Him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men. 5 And the Light shines on in the darkness, for the darkness has never overpowered it [put it out or absorbed it or appropriated it and is unreceptive to it]. **John 1:4-5 AMPC**

16For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. 17He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. **Colossians 1:16-17 NASB**

- Jesus is Eternal.
- Jesus is the Creation
- Jesus is Life (*zoe*) He is the source of life, the Purpose of life, and the Truth of life.

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6There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. 8He was not the Light, but *he came* to testify about the Light.

9There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. 10He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. 12But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name, 13who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. **John 1:6-13 NASB**

- John was a man, a human, just like us, a man sent from God, whose purpose was to testify about Jesus the Light of Life...just like us.

9 There it was—the true Light [was then] coming into the world [the genuine, perfect, steadfast Light] that illumines every person. [Isa. 49:6.]

10 He came into the world, and though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognize Him [did not know Him]. **John 1:9-10 AMPC**

- ...” The world of sinners did not have an experiential knowledge of Him.” **John 1:10 Wuest**
- Jesus came but was not known, recognized, or received.
- “Distinguish the act from the method by which the method is performed and do not reject the fact because you do not know how it is done.” **John Wesley**

12 But to as many as did receive *and* welcome Him, He gave the authority (power, privilege, right) to become the children of God, that is, to those who believe in (adhere to, trust in, and rely on) His name— [Isa. 56:5.]

13 Who owe their birth neither to bloods nor to the will of the flesh [that of physical impulse] nor to the will of man [that of a natural father], but to God. [They are born of God!] **John 1:12-13 AMPC**

- Believing in His name implies the acceptance of Jesus to the full extent of His self-revelation.
- By believing in His name, we are empowered to become something that we previously were not...that is, a child of God.

14And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. 15John *testified about Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’” 16For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. 17For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. 18No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*. **John 1:14-18 NASB**

- Jesus, the Word made flesh...the Son of God in flesh and blood.

14 And the Word (Christ) became flesh (human, incarnate) and tabernacled (fixed His tent of flesh, lived awhile) among us; and we [actually] saw His glory (His honor, His majesty), such glory as an only begotten son receives from his father, full of grace (favor, loving-kindness) and truth. [Isa. 40:5.]

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15 John testified about Him and cried out, This was He of Whom I said, He Who comes after me has priority over me, for He was before me. [He takes rank above me, for He existed before I did. He has advanced before me, because He is my Chief.] **John 1: 14-15 AMPC**

This Word, the agent of creation, has become a creature. He who brought the universe into existence is now born within the universe as a human being. This thought is so familiar in Christianity we may no longer be staggered by it. A prayer of the Eastern churches conveys well the breathtaking wonder: "We see most eloquent orators voiceless as fish when they must speak of Thee, O Jesus our Savior. For it is beyond their power to tell how Thou art both perfect man and immutable God at the same time."

When we look at this Word become flesh John says we see glory (**v14**). Often in John the "flesh" is that which is natural, powerless, and superficial (cf. **v13**). But now the flesh becomes the sphere of the supernatural, the all-powerful, the really real. Matter becomes spirit bearing, and we see the divine glory not through the flesh but precisely in the flesh. (Bultmann 1971:63).

- ...The law was given by Moses, grace and truth came to be 'through Jesus Christ'.
- Moses commanded righteousness...Jesus produced righteousness.
- Moses forbids sin...Jesus saves us from sin.
- No one has ever seen God at any time but Jesus..." He has declared Him, He has revealed Him, and brought Him out where He can be seen' He has interpreted Him, and He has made Him known. **John 1:18b AMPC**

John's intense desire is that we would truly believe, receive, and intimately know Jesus; may that be our true desire, too.