



# Jesus, the Word of God

## Lesson 2 John 1:1-34

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### INTRODUCTION

- A. John is primarily appealing to a Jewish audience
  - B. As such we can expect
    1. Lots of Jewish overtones
    2. References to Old Testament
    3. Defense of Jesus as the Christ
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### THE DEITY OF CHRIST (1:1-2)

**1:1** “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.  
**2** The same was in the beginning with God.”

- A. Logos means “a collection of ideas or words”; Jesus is called “*the Word*” six times in scripture, and all occurrences appear only in the writings of John - **John 1:1, 14; 1 John 1:1; Revelation 19:13**
  - B. His pre-existence
    1. Obvious parallel between John 1 and Genesis 1
    2. Creation not mentioned until verse 3 so verses 1 and 2 imply a time before creation
    3. “*The Word was God*” - “*was*” in the Greek implies “a continuous existence” (Towns, *The Gospel of John*, p. 2)
    4. The idea - when all things began, the Word already was
  - C. His communion with the Father, “*the Word was with God*”
  - D. He is one with the Father, “*the Word was God*” (in the Greek, the article belongs to the Word, not God)
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### THE CREATION OF CHRIST (1:3)

**1:3** “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”

- A. Greek philosophers used the phrase “*ta panta*” to refer to “the whole of creation” (“*ta*” is the article)
  - B. John uses “*panta*” which means “*all things*” which refers to the creation and it’s infinite parts (the microscopic world)
  - C. The literal translation of verse 1 is, “All things came into being at a point in time by him,” which contrasts the finiteness of creation and the infinite Creator
  - D. “*Made*” in verse 3 means “created from nothing” in the Greek
  - E. Nothing in existence came into being apart from the Word
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## THE ILLUMINATION OF CHRIST (1:4-5)

1:4 “In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”

- A. In Him was life eternal
  - B. The light shines continuously
  - C. The darkness is the natural sphere of those who hate good
  - D. “*Comprehended it not*” means admitted or received it not
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## THE FORERUNNER OF CHRIST (1:6-9)

1:6 “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light. 9 *That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

- A. “*There was a man*” means John came into being, unlike Christ
  - B. “*Sent*” is from the Greek *apestalmenos* from which the word “apostle” is derived and means being sent with a special commission
  - C. “*Witness*” is a legal term meaning “to provide evidence”
  - D. “*Bear witness of the Light*” that lights every man (whole of the human race) that comes into the world
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## THE REJECTION OF CHRIST (1:10-11)

1:10 “He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”

- A. The world “*knew him not*” - though He was the Creator, the world did not recognize Him; failed recognition leads to failed belief
  - B. The first time the Word, the Light is given a specific person (though the others certainly imply). Here “*He*” was in the world. 1:10
  - C. He was rejected by the Jews - 1:11
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## THE OFFER OF CHRIST (1:12-13)

1:12 “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

- A. “*But as many as received him*” means “to take hold of, to gain possession of”
  - B. We have the offer to become the sons of God
  - C. Believing is necessary
  - D. At the point of faith, new birth takes place - 1:13
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## THE INCARNATION (1:14)

1:14 “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

- A. “*Incarnation*” means “assumption of human form or nature”
- B. “*Flesh*” not only means body, but nature

- C. *“Dwelt”* means “to pitch a tent or tabernacle”
    1. Emphasizes temporary nature of Christ’s incarnation
    2. Tabernacle was the dwelling place of God
    3. Tabernacle was the meeting place with God
  - D. Just as the glory of God rested in the Tabernacle, the glory of God rested in Jesus Christ
  - E. He was *“full of grace and truth”*
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## THE WITNESS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST (1:15-34)

### A. Malachi 3:1-6

**3:1** “Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. **2** But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he *is* like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap: **3** And he shall sit *as* a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. **4** Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years. **5** And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in *his* wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger *from his right*, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts. **6** For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.”

### B. John’s declaration - 1:15-18

**1:15** “John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. **16** And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. **17** For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. **18** No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.”

#### 1. The paradox - 1:15

- a. *“He that cometh after me”* means “born after me”
- b. *“Is preferred before me”* means “of a higher rank”
- c. *“For he was before me”* - He existed eternally in the past as the Word

#### 2. The exchange - 1:16

- a. *“Of his fullness have all we received”*
  - i. Occurs five times in Paul’s writings - **Ephesians 1:23, 3:19, 4:13; Colossians 1:19, 2:9**
  - ii. Occurs only once in John
  - iii. Means “the believer receives from Christ all that is necessary for personal fulfillment”
- b. *“Grace for grace”*
  - i. *“For”* means “to exchange in sale”
  - ii. Not New Testament grace in exchange for Old Testament grace, but rather the receiving of new grace upon the old grace

### 3. The purpose of Christ - 1:17-18

- a. Christ's purpose was to bring the grace and truth that was necessary because of the law - 1:17
- b. Christ's purpose was to declare the Father (to fully reveal or make Him known)
- c. What exactly is Jesus declaring about the Father? Grace and truth

## C. The Record of John

### 1. The First Day - 1:19-28

**1:19** "And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? **20** And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. **21** And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elijah? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that Prophet? And he answered, No. **22** Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? **23** He said, I *am* the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah. **24** And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. **25** And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elijah, neither that prophet? **26** John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; **27** He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. **28** These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing."

- a. "The Jews" - usually the Pharisees who were hostile toward the Gospel - 1:19
- b. The seven Questions of the Jews
  - i. Who are you? 1:19
  - ii. What then? 1:21
  - iii. Are you Elijah? 1:21; Matthew 17:10-13; Malachi 4:5-6
  - iv. Are you the Prophet? 1:21; Deuteronomy 18:15-19 (Messianic prophecy)
  - v. Who are you? 1:22
  - vi. What do you say about yourself? 1:22
  - vii. Why then are you baptizing? 1:25
- c. What does John's confession in verse 20 indicate? They were soon expecting the Messiah
- d. John the Baptist's self-identification - 1:23
  - i. I am the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy - Isaiah 40:1-4
  - ii. I have come to "make straight the way of the Lord"
  - iii. Four ways that John made "straight the way of the Lord:"
    - a) Leading people to repentance
    - b) Creating messianic expectation
    - c) Baptizing Jesus
    - d) Introducing his own disciples to Jesus

## 2. The Second Day - 1:29-34

**1:29** “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. **30** This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. **31** And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. **32** And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. **33** And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. **34** And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.”

### a. John’s identification of Jesus

- i. “*Seeth*” has the idea of “one look” - 1:29
- ii. “*Lamb of God*” is a picture of the sacrificial lamb of the Old Testament
- iii. “*Taketh away*” is taking something up and carrying it away to destroy it
- iv. “*The sins of the world*” refers to all of mankind
- v. “*I knew him not*” - 1:31
  - a) Jesus grew up in Nazareth
  - b) John in the hill country of Judea
  - c) Though related had no real acquaintance
- vi. “*But that he should be made manifest to Israel*” refers to the time of the Messiah which had come
- vii. In verse 31, why would John be baptizing with water?
- viii. That’s why he was baptizing with water - 1:32

### b. John was an eyewitness of God’s identification of Jesus

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## LIFE LESSONS

1. Christ is the unique God man - God in the flesh! He did not cease being God in the Incarnation.
2. Without the incarnation, there is no possibility for sin’s remission. The Word (Jesus) becoming flesh was essential to salvation’s plan.
3. John’s record of Christ’s identity is true!