

“In the Beginning...” - John 1:1-13

Please Stand and Open Your Bibles to John 1:1-18

As we begin our verse by verse study of the Book of John, we are reminded of the prologue of this Book in our reading and the purpose of this book as we saw last week...

John 20:31

...but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

But there is another reason for John's book that is not directly mentioned that is noticed in this prologue. By the time that John wrote this book the first heresy that had infected the church had been dealt with. Remember in Acts 15 when there were those that said that the Gentiles had to be circumcised and follow the law of Moses to be saved? These are called “Judaizers” and were marked out and dealt with in the Book of Galatians and other places. By the time of John, they had been pretty much purged from the church. But as the gospel went throughout the world it started to be picked up by the Philosophers and mingled with their beliefs. It started a group called the “Gnostics” that would forever plague the church and

are still around today in many forms. We will pick up on these as we go through this book. Gnostic beliefs taught that everything in the material realm was all inherently evil and everything in the Spirit was good. There were basically two forms. One that was monastic that stayed away from materialism and became another form of legalism, and the most prevalent one was that of license. Whatever you did in the material realm didn't matter because it was separate from the Spirit therefore you could live a life of debauchery and it didn't matter. They became popular because they taught that they had the knowledge of deeper truths that can only be found through them. They also taught that God can't be known and that Jesus was just a spiritual animation and not truly God in the flesh. Only through becoming one of their followers can one start to reach different levels of Knowledge, hence that name "Gnosticism".

Well, why doesn't John just name them and call them out? Because the best way to reveal the false is by knowing the genuine. (Explain Bankers and Money)

Have you ever noticed who JW's and Mormon's prey on? Christians who don't know the word! They offer them more than what their church offers. They tell them that they are the ones that hold the genuine and to discover it you must become

one of them. This is why we take the time to study the word and books like this! So, with that said let's dig right in...

John 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Notice the difference to the other gospels. Matthew starts at Abraham, Mark starts with John the Baptist, Luke starts with Adam but John...In the beginning. But what beginning?

Was it...

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

No. Because God existed before Genesis 1:1. If the Word is Jesus and Jesus is with God then and is God, again, which beginning? John is starting his gospel stating something that needed to be known. That Jesus is God and has always been. A truth that the Bible teaches is that God is a triune being existing in three persons. * God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. As you can see from our chart the complexities of it. Don't try to reason it out, you can't. Just because we can't figure it out doesn't mean it is not true.

This statement is so emphatic that it is attacked by the cults. The JW's try to add an "a" to it. But even with that you can just ask "If Jesus is just a god, what kind of a god is He?" The bible declares throughout that there is only one God. But, hey, you're reasoning with unreasonable people.

Also, the word here is the "Logos". This is the used for the written word of God. But it has two different meaning.

To the Greek hearers...

A Greek philosopher named Heraclitus first used the term Logos around 600 B.C. to designate the divine reason or plan which coordinates a changing universe. Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy (2nd ed): Heraclitus, 1999.

But to a Jewish reader it would be...

The Memra – is the Aramaic translation of the Hebrew davar which is logos in Greek. As seen by the Rabbis:

The Memra is the same as God

The Memra is involved in creation.

The Memra is an agent of salvation.

The Memra is a manifestation of God.

The Memra is the signer of covenantal agreements

The Memra is the revealer of revelations

There is a message by Jacob Cohen that explains it better. I hope to do a podcast with him next week and talk about this. Now we can see this in the rest of the passage...

John 1:1-3

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

Notice it? If Jesus is God and God is good and God made everything, is everything evil? Do you see how the plain statement of scripture destroys all false teaching.

Genesis 1:1-3

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

Genesis 1:26

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness”

Genesis 1:31

Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.

Jesus is God and Creator. Not only that but the sustainer too!

Colossians 1:15-17

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

Who is the one holding everything together? Jesus! And not only that but we can know Him!

John 1:4-5

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

Now both in the Old and New Testament and would have been understood by the first century reader is that Light and Darkness have many different meanings.

Light

Daylight, Artificial Light, Moonlight, Starlight
Illumination of God, His word, a truth, revelation
A Godly Lifestyle
Good or God Himself

Darkness

Absence of Light
Ignorant of God's word and the truth
An unrighteous and evil lifestyle
Evil or the Devil and his minions

All of these could be implied here as Jesus is all of these things. The idea is that Life is found in Him and that is the Light that He brings. When we believe in Him, we have Light and Life! And the Darkness in all these forms cannot overcome, prevail or comprehend it.

John 1:6-9

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all

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 gives light to every man coming into the world.

This is John the Baptist, and we will get more into him as we move through chapters 1-2. But again, he is using terms that the Gnostics had been using. You can't have the "Light" unless you join their club and through a lifetime of study you still can't really know. But no, Jesus is that light and He gives it to everyone who receives Him. But J the B's ministry was to the Nation of Israel and this the truth in the next set of verses...

John 1:10-11

He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

Jesus came as the Jewish Messiah. God told Moses...

Deuteronomy 18:18-19

I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.

The Nation of Israel rejected Jesus.

Matthew 12:23-24

And all the multitudes were amazed and said, “Could this be the Son of David?” Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, “This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.”

This is the exact moment that the leaders officially reject Him. It is as the Prophets foretold

Isaiah 53:3

He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

We also know it is plainly stated in Daniel...

Daniel 9:26a

“And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself...”

For whom then? That’s the good news in our last two verses today!

John 1:12-13

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Those that receive Him. That is, you and I. And what is the first thing to happen? We become the Children of God!

1 John 3:1-3

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

That word bestowed is also lavished. Think of it as getting an ice cream sundae and instead of the small dripping they would put on for the topping, they pour so much of it that it falls off the plate! Like a “lavish” Banquet that is all you can eat. That is the Love that God has poured out on you the moment you believe. You are now His child!

Galatians 3:26

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

But that sonship comes in two ways. Legally you are adopted...

Galatians 4:4-5

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

In that culture adoption was not the same as we think of today. When a person was brought into the family, they shared in all the same rights as a person born into it and looked at in all senses and purposes as a true born member. But that is not all we see in our scripture that we are also born into the family too!

John 3:3

Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

John 3:5-8

Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is **everyone** who is born of the Spirit.”

When we receive Christ, we have the authority to call ourselves Children of God legally and by the Spirit!

1 Peter 1:3-5

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.