

Sunday July 9, 2023 | John 1:1-14

Last week we started the gospel of John. He is the disciple whom Jesus loved and was apart of the inner circle with James and Peter. We saw John's clear purpose in writing his Gospel (John 20:30-31) was that we would "**believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." The entire gospel is summarized in this phrase. John wants to reveal who Christ is and what He did, so that we may believe. The purpose of this belief was that "you may have life in His name." John wants us to be able to see Christ like He did. So that we would be forever changed, and have life because of Him. John's introduction is an amazing presentation of Jesus. John is marveling at who Jesus is.

John 1:1-14 ESV

- (1) 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 was not any thing made that was made.
- (4) In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
- (5) The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
- (6) There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.
- (7) He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through Him.
- (8) He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.
- (9) The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.
- (10) He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him.
- (11) He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him.
- (12) But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God,
- (13) who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.
- (14) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

There are many interpretations and thoughts about various bible passages. Some are issues we can find unity even in our disagreement. Then there are some core thoughts. That if someone disagrees about these core things then we cannot be sure even of the salvation they are believing in. These are not issues, that we can agree to disagree. This passage teaches one of these core issues, the deity of Jesus.

John 1:1 ESV

- (1) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John is presenting Jesus as fully God. Not as someone who was created at some point. This issue over the deity of Jesus is the first great teaching the early church had to fight over and reclaim. It led to the first church council of Nicaea in 325. Questioning the nature of Jesus is nothing new. During John's Day they false teachers questioned His full humanity (His flesh).

2 John 1:7; 10-11 ESV

- (7) For many **deceivers** have gone out into the world, **those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh**. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.

- (10) If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, **do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting,**
- (11) for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.

John is so set on core truth that He warns the church to not have unity, and to not support anyone who teaches something, that denies who Jesus is. In His time, they questioned if Jesus actually took on a physical body. By 300 Arius will question if He was fully God. Arius taught that Jesus was created. These thoughts have not gone anywhere. Both the Mormons and Jehovah's Witness change who Jesus is.

John 1:1-2 ESV

- (1) 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.**

The Word was God. The Jehovah's Witness mistranslate this verse, they add an "a" "the Word was a god." They quote various Greek scholars to try and back up this position. These scholars have denounced this translation and even sued the Jehovah's Witness over using their name. No Greek scholar thinks there should be an "a" there. (The Grammer of the verse clearly shows that The Word is the subject and God is predicate nominative which is to be taken as definite.)

John is teaching that Jesus is God and has always been God. Jesus is also a unique person and was with God. This is presenting the mystery of the trinity. **One God in three persons.** Jesus is not the Father but He is God. It does not say Jesus was with the Father, and exclude the Holy Spirit. Jesus was always in perfect unity with the Father and The Spirit and was always God. We have one God, not three. And if you can explain it, then you are bigger than God. **God never gives us an example in scripture to help explain the trinity.** Our God is amazing! When we look for it, the trinity is throughout scripture.

Genesis 1:1-3 ESV

- (1) In the beginning, **God** created the heavens and the earth.
- (2) The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the **Spirit of God** was hovering over the face of the waters.
- (3) **And God said,** "Let there be light," and there was light.

God the Father is creating through the Word which is Jesus, as the Spirit of God is hovering over the creation. All three members of the trinity have always existed in a perfect unity with each other. God is never lonely or has any needs but is perfectly satisfied within Himself.

Ephesians 2:18 ESV

- (18) For through **Him** we both have access in one **Spirit** to the **Father.**

Because of the sacrifice of Jesus, we can have access to the Father through the unity of the Holy Spirit. All three members are at work with each other. We have one God not three. The Word was both **with** God and **was** God. Only a triune God explains this.

John 1:3-5 ESV

- (3) All things **were made** through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made.
 (4) In Him was life, and **the life was the light of men.**
 (5) The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness **has not overcome it.**

The Word **Was**, He always existed. Then all things **were made**, the Greek word changed. Everything else came into existence at some point, they came into being. The Word was never made it was. Jesus is the life that gives light to all men. There would be no life without Him.

Psalms 36:9 ESV

- (9) For with you is the fountain of life; **in your light do we see light.**

It is in His light that we can see. He is truth. He is life. These would not exist without Him. There would be no life with Jesus. All of creation even in its sinful state, benefits from being in His light. We have life because of Him. When He shown into the darkness He illuminated the darkness. The darkness was not able to **overcome** it. This word means **to grasp** and can mean **to overcome, overpower, or to understand and comprehend.** Both are true. The darkness was not powerful enough to over power or overcome the light and it was unable to even comprehend and grasp who He was. As we look to the World and the darkness that is in it, we need to remind ourselves of these two truths. **The darkness has not overpowered the light, and it doesn't understand it.**

1 John 2:8 ESV

- (8) At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in Him and in you, **because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.**

The darkness is passing away. It will not be able to stand against the power of the light. We cannot forget this. If we are not careful, we will think that the outcome is in doubt. We wonder if the darkness is winning some days. This world is a dark place and does not comprehend the Light, but we need a confidence that the Light is shining, and will not be overcome. God in His grace wanted the world, wanted the darkness to be able to see and comprehend the light. This in part is why He sent John the Baptist, to teach about the Light.

John 1:6-8 ESV

- (6) There was a man sent from God, **whose name was John.**
 (7) He came as a witness, **to bear witness about the light,** that all might believe through Him.
 (8) He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

John introduces us to John the Baptist. This is the only gospel does not clarify which John by adding "the Baptist," because it would have been obvious for John the Apostle who he was talking about. John the Baptist was not the light but He came to bear witness of who the Light was. He wanted to get the Jews ready for the Light who had come into the World. Think about what this teaches us about the darkness and blindness of humanity. When light shines into a dark room, it should be an obvious thing. Except for those who are blind. Except for those **who cannot even comprehend the difference between light and dark.**

John 1:9-10 ESV

(9) The true light, which **gives light** to everyone, was coming into the world.

(10) He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, **yet the world did not know Him.**

Jesus came and offered light to everyone. When He paid the price for sin, He paid it for everyone. But the tragic thing is that the World does not know Him. He made the world, He came to the World, and He offered enlightenment to the World. They refused. We are the ones who reject, the light. **The issue is not that the light has never been offered to us, it is that we reject and do not want it.** When the light came it exposed the evil in our hearts. It exposed our darkness.

John 3:19-20 ESV

(19) And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, **and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.**

(20) For everyone who does wicked things **hates the light** and does not come to the light, **lest his works should be exposed.**

Humanity did not want to turn to the light because we do not like what it exposes. Our sin is brought into illumination. Humanity does not want these evil works exposed and they do not want to accept that these works will be judged. We need a savior who paid for our sins. Part of accepting the light is **accepting our need for Him.** What is even more tragic than the worlds rejection is that His own people rejected Him.

John 1:11 ESV

(11) He came to His own, and **His own people did not receive Him.**

Jesus offered Himself first to His very own people. The people that had been hand crafted for hundreds of years of History to have a society that pointed to Him. Every feast, every sacrifice, every sabbath rest was to point to Jesus. This was His **own** people. The word here means **own's own belonging, unique, peculiar.** The other three gospels emphasize the offer that Jesus made to the Jews. In John's gospel the rejection of the Jews is introduced early. John has shown the World rejected the light and the Jews rejected Him, but it is not all bad news.

John 1:12 ESV

(12) **But** to all who did **receive Him**, who **believed in His name**, He gave the **right** to become children of God,

Some received Him. What is amazing about this verse is that it clarifies what it means to receive Jesus, to believe in Him. The light shown and some rejected and refused the truth, others received the truth. They accepted who Jesus is and what He had done for them. The word receive means **to take hold of, or accept.** Once someone received Him, once we believe we now have the right to become His child. Once we receive what Jesus has done for us, we are declared part of His family. **Acceptance by God is based on belief in Jesus.** He gives us the right. Just so we don't miss what this is based on, what secures our salvation, John is going to spell out what didn't accomplish it.

John 1:12-13 ESV

(12) But to all who did **receive** Him, who believed in His name, **He gave the right** to become **children of God,**

(13) who were born, not of **blood** nor of the **will of the flesh** nor of the **will of man, but of God.**

We have a new birth when we believe in Jesus. We become His children. This was not accomplished by blood meaning **this was not an inherited birthright.** We did not naturally deserve to be a child of God. All are sinners. This was not by the flesh. We don't have enough strength, and we cannot do enough good things to earn this salvation. We are not a child of God by the will of our flesh. It also wasn't the will of man. We cannot choose it for another person. We were born by **God.**

Verse 12 and 13 Hold Human responsibility and God working in perfect tension. We had to receive, and it was based on God. Don't lean into one verse and ignore the other. We just finished talking about the mystery of the trinity. God is three in one. Let this be a mystery that both are presented as truth. Man must respond to the gospel; we must believe in Jesus and our salvation was of God.

Acts 13:47-49 ESV

(47) For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, **that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth."**

(48) And when the **Gentiles heard this,** they began **rejoicing** and **glorifying** the word of the Lord, and as many **as were appointed to eternal life believed.**

(49) And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region.

In Acts 13 Paul turns from teaching the Jews and presents the gospel to the gentiles. God wants Paul to take it to the ends of the earth. Some gentiles heard the gospel and start rejoicing, they received the message. They have believed in Jesus and had been appointed to eternal life. **Human response held in perfect unity with God accomplishing the work.** John will hold these two truths in unity throughout the gospel. Let's not miss John's point. He is marveling at what God has done for us. We have become Children of God. God accomplished this. He sent Jesus.

John 1:14 ESV

(14) **And the Word became flesh** and **dwelt among us,** and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

The Word that was God and with God. The Word that created all things and gave life and light. **This Word became flesh and dwelt with us.** The invisible God became visible. Jesus took on flesh, He took on every part of humanity. God became man. Jesus is fully God and fully man.

John 1:14 YLT

(14) And the Word became flesh, **and did tabernacle among us,** and we beheld His glory, glory as of an only begotten of a father, full of grace and truth.

Jesus tabernacled with us. This points to how God revealed Himself in the Old Testament.

Exodus 25:8-9 ESV

(8) And let them make me a sanctuary, **that I may dwell in their midst.**

(9) Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern of **the tabernacle**, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it.

God asked Israel to build a tabernacle, this is where His presence would dwell. It is where sacrifices would be given. They were to be focused on it.

Exodus 40:35-38 ESV

(35) And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and **the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.**

(36) Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out.

(37) But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up.

(38) **For the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night**, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys.

When His presence moved, they were to move. The entire way they camped was to be centered around this tabernacle. **When they wanted to know where God was and where He was leading, they looked to the tabernacle.** The tabernacle is where God's presence was, and yet on the outside it was very simple.

Exodus 27:9 ESV

(9) "You shall make the court of the tabernacle. On the south side the court shall have hangings of **fine twined linen** a hundred cubits long for one side.

On the inside it was incredibly ornate, but on the outside, it was simple linen and animal skins. Everything about this tabernacle points to Jesus. He came and tabernacled with us. In His humanity He was not much to look at.

Isaiah 53:2 ESV

(2) For He grew up before Him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; **He had no form or majesty that we should look at Him, and no beauty that we should desire Him.**

He had no beauty or majesty that we would desire Him, but as John says He had a glory inside that was incredible. Just like the tabernacle. He gives us a physical representation of God. He provides the sacrifice. He leads and directs us. The depth of the phrase cannot be understated.

Colossians 1:19-20 ESV

(19) For in Him all the **fullness of God** was pleased to dwell,

(20) and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, **making peace by the blood of His cross.**