The WORD

John 1:1-5
4-7-2024

Introduction to John's Gospel:

Let's enter the door of John's Gospel and see WHO JESUS IS.

I. The Word (Jesus Christ) is the <u>Eternal God</u> (v.1-2)

A. The Word existed <u>before time, space, & matter</u>

B. The Word existed <u>with God</u>

C. The Word existed <u>as God</u>

II. The Word (Jesus Christ) is the <u>Creator of All Things</u> (v.3)

III. The Word (Jesus Christ) is the <u>Source of Life and Light</u> (v.4-5)

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Introduction to John's Gospel:

The book of John is believed to have been written around 85 – 90 A.D.

Divine Author: God (via inspiration)

Human Writer: John, the Apostle, the son of Zebedee & Salome and brother of James (Mark 1:19-20; Mt. 20:20; John 21:20-24).

John's authorship is attested by the early church fathers, such as Theophilus, Iranaeus, and Clement of Alexandria.

In the Gospel of John, John humbly refers to himself as the "disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23; 20:2; 21:7, 20).

John's Gospel is written in a distinctive style marked by:
--extreme simplicity
--constant repetition
--minute details

All new believers should read it immediately upon conversion.

Key words in John:

The word	"believe" (98 times)
	"life" (44 times)
	"eternal life" (9 times)
	"everlasting life" (8 times)
	"world" (80 times)
	"know" (55 times)
	"glorify" (42 times)
The phrase	"I am" (59 verses)

Why four Gospels? "Why not one definitive biography of Christ rather than four separate accounts? Because a picture is more complete when taken from several different angles. Take sports, for example. The player, the coach, the referee, the fans, and the television cameras all look at a play from different angles. In order to get the fullest possible picture of the play, all angles have to be taken into consideration. Or take another example. The biography of a famous man is not really complete unless we have accounts from all perspectives—from his parents, mate, children, and so forth. Each would see things from a different viewpoint and thus give us a little different slant on his life. The parents would see him as son; the wife, as sweetheart; the children, as Daddy. Similarly, each Gospel writer looks at Jesus from his own distinct angle."" (Chuck Swindoll, Exalting Christ...the Son of God, p. 2)
Comparison of the four Gospels:

1) Matthew presents Christ as the Promised Savior (to the Jews)

2) Mark presents Christ as the Powerful Savior (to the Romans)

3) Luke presents Christ as the Perfect Savior (to the Greeks)

4) John presents Christ as the Personal Savior (to the world)

(Doug Bookman, N.T. Survey notes)

The synoptics (lit. "to see through the same eye") (Matthew, Mark, Luke) are more historically arranged (showing more facts and details of the life and ministry of Jesus), whereas John's Gospel is more theologically arranged (emphasizing the nature and character of Jesus and its practical application to the believer's life).

Why did John pen this book? What is the purpose of John? SEE John 20:30-31

Jesus did many more miracles than those recorded in John. If everything He said and did was written down, John writes that "even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (John 21:25).

John records nine "signs" (miracles) that Jesus did, and then often expands on these signs giving the theological meaning or the spiritual significance of each.

The nine signs are:

1) Turning water into wine (chap. 2)
2) Healing a royal official's son (chap. 4)
3) Healing a lame man (chap. 5)
4) Feeding the 5,000 (chap. 6)
5) Rescuing his disciples on the stormy Sea of Galilee (chap. 6)
6) Healing a blind man (chap. 9)
7) Raising Lazarus from the dead (chap. 11)
8) Raising Himself from the dead (chap. 20)
9) Giving His disciples a miraculous catch of fish (chap. 21)

John 20:30-31

"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: [31] But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name. "

From a theological standpoint, the question which John seeks to answer is this: Who is the Messiah? Answer: The Messiah is Jesus. Who is the Son of God? The answer is Jesus.

From a practical standpoint, John's stated purpose is two-fold. He wrote this Gospel and nine key miracles ("signs") of Jesus so that the reader might have <u>faith</u> and <u>life</u> (the result of faith).

John shows that "the earthly life of Jesus cannot be reduced to that of an ordinary man" (Leon-Defour, cited by D.A. Carson, <u>The Gospel According to John</u>, p. 41).

In John's Gospel, several descriptive names or titles are given of Jesus Christ. He is called:

"the Word"
"The Son of God"
"the Son of man"
"Rabbi" or "Teacher"
"Messiah" or "Christ"
the "Lamb of God"
"The King of Israel"
"God"
the "I am"

In describing Himself as the "I am" (John 8:24, 58; 13:19; 18:5-6), Jesus identifies Himself as the Jehovah God of Exodus 3:14.

Jesus said I am . . .

"the bread of life" (6:35)
(He satisfies the hungry soul)
"the light of the world" (8:12; 9:5)
(He removes the darkness of sin)
"the door" (10:7, 9)
(He is the entry way into eternal life)
"Good Shepherd" (10:11, 14)
(He leads, feeds, protects, and died for all of His sheep)
"Resurrection and the life" (11:25)
(He gives victory over the grave to the dead)
"the way, the truth, and the life" (14:6)
(He is the source of real direction, truth, life)
"the vine" (15:1)
(He produces fruit in the lives of those connected to Him)

More than any other Gospel, John asserts the deity of Christ, by such statements as:

"the Word was God" (1:1)
"Before Abraham was, I am" (8:58)
"I and My Father are one" (10:30)
"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (14:9)
"My Lord and my God" (20:28)

Our purpose in this study, like John's purpose, is to exalt Christ. To "behold" Him and see Him as He is, the holy, brilliant, flawless, loving, awesome, beautiful Savior.

Let's enter the door of John's Gospel and see WHO JESUS IS.

I. The Word (Jesus Christ) is the Eternal God (v.1-2)

v. 1

John begins his epistle of I John with a similar description of Jesus Christ --

1 John 1:1

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

Who is the **"Word"** referring to? None other than eternal God (v. 1), who created all things (v. 3); who entered the world by becoming incarnate (v. 14) and who dwelt on earth in the days of John (v. 14).

Christ is identified as the "Word of God" in Revelation 19:11 – 13.

"A word is composed of letters, and Jesus Christ is "alpha and omega" (Rev. 1:11), the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet" (Warren Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, p. 284).

Words communicate
(Jesus was God's ultimate communication to man – Heb. 1:1-2)

Words command
(Jesus "by speaking the word only" gave orders that were carried out with swiftness and accuracy – Matt. 8:8, 4:20)

Words create
(Jesus' words not merely created impressions, they created reality – Heb. 11:3)

Jesus Christ is called "the Word" (*logos*) because He is the Revealer of God (Jn. 1:18). He is the outward expression of God. He is the manifestation of God.

When He speaks, God speaks. What He does, God does. Ever major act that God the Father ever accomplished, He accomplished through the instrumentality of His Son.

--He created through His Son (Heb. 1:2)
--He provided redemption through His Son (Col. 1:14)
--He sustains creation through His Son (Col. 1:17)
--He will judge through His Son (John 5:22)

Jesus is the self-disclosure of the Father. As the *logos*, He expresses God by the powerful acts of creation, revelation, salvation, judgment.

A. The Word existed <u>before time, space, & matter</u>

v. 1

"In the beginning" – John's Gospel begins with the same three words as the book of <u>Genesis</u> (which is the book of beginnings).

The word "beginning" points to the time when all forms of substance and life had their origin. In other words, the Word, Jesus Christ, existed prior to the beginning of the material and immaterial *cosmos*. Before the creation of physical and spiritual realities.

The WORD (Jesus Christ) is <u>Eternal</u>

<u>Scriptural Statements</u> of God's Eternal Nature

1) *"From <u>everlasting to everlasting</u> Thou art God"* (Ps. 90:2)
2) *"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth <u>eternity</u>, whose name is holy. . ."* (Is. 57:15)
3) *"The <u>eternal</u> God is thy refuge, and underneath are the <u>everlasting</u> arms"* (Deut. 33:27)
4) Creation manifests God's *"<u>eternal</u> power and Godhead"* (Rom. 1:20)
5) *"Now unto the King <u>eternal</u>, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory <u>forever and ever</u>. Amen."* (I Tim. 1:17)
6) *"The <u>everlasting</u> God"* (Gen. 21:33)
7) *"Thy throne is established of old: Thou art from <u>everlasting</u>"* (Ps. 93:2)
8) *"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding."*
9) *"Art Thou not from <u>everlasting</u>, O LORD my God, mine Holy One?"* (Hab. 1:12)
10) *". . . According to the commandment of the <u>everlasting</u> God"* (Rom. 16:26)

Before God created the sun, moon, and the orbit of the earth (features by which we measure time), He existed.

Jesus Christ is Eternal!

Proof:

1. His name is *"Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end"* (Rev. 1:11, 21:6, 22:13)
2. He is the eternal *"I AM"* (John 8:58, 18:5-6)
3. He gives eternal life (Jn. 10:28)
4. His descriptive name is *"eternal life"* (I Jn. 1;2, 5:20)
5. He is called *"the everlasting Father"* (Is. 9:6)
6. The Redeemer said, *"I am the first and I am the last, and beside me there is no God"* (cp. Rev. 1:8, 11)
7. Christ is the Creator of Heaven and earth and all the contents thereof (Jn. 1:3, 10; I Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2)
8. Christ did not begin to exist in Mary's womb but came from Heaven (Jn. 6:51; I Tim. 1:15; II Cor. 8:9; I Cor. 15:47)
9. Christ's *"goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting"* (Micah 5:2; Mt. 2:6)

B. The Word existed with God

v. 1

An apparent paradox: The Word is distinguished from God and yet is identified as being God. Such a truth seems contradictory, yet it is not, when you understand the nature of the Godhead. God is one God, yet exists in three Persons.

The word Trinity is a theological term which refers to the "tri-unity" of God. God is "three in one." God is three distinct and eternal persons, yet indivisibly one in nature and essence.

1. The Bible clearly teaches that only one God exists (this doctrine is called "Monotheism").

God is one divine essence.

a. *"Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord"* (Deut. 6:4) (cp. Deut. 4:35, 39)
b. *". . . beside me there is no God"* (Is. 44:6)
c. *". . . Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no God; I know not any"* (Is. 44:8)
d. *"I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me. . ."* (Is. 45:5)
e. *". . . There is none beside Me. I am the LORD, and there is none else"* (Is. 45:6).
f. SEE: Isaiah 43:11, 45:21-22

2. The Bible clearly teaches that the Father, and the Son are <u>one</u> in nature and essence.

1) *"I and my Father are one"* (Jn. 10:30)
2) *". . . <u>equal</u> with God"* (Jn. 5:18)
3) *"All men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father"* (Jn. 5:23)
4) *". . . He that hath seen me hath seen the Father"* (Jn. 14:9)
5) *"I am in the Father, and the Father in me"* Jn. 14:10, 11)
6) *". . . we are one. . ."* (Jn. 17:22)
7) *"Who being in the <u>form</u> of God thought it not robbery to be <u>equal</u> with God"* (Phil. 2:6)

The Old Testament makes many intimations of the Triune Nature of God

1) The name "Elohim" in the Old Testament

"In the beginning <u>God</u> (Elohim) created the Heavens and the Earth" (Gen. 1:1).

(The word "Elohim" which occurs some 2,570 times in the Old Testament is a <u>plural</u> name for the one and true God)

2) God uses <u>plural pronouns</u> in speaking of Himself throughout the Old Testament

a. *"Let <u>us</u> make man in <u>our</u> image, according to <u>our</u> likeness"* (Gen. 1:26).
b. *"Behold the man has become like one of <u>us</u>, to know good and evil"* (Gen. 3:22)
c. *"Let <u>us</u> go down. . ."* (Gen. 11:7)
d. *"Whom shall <u>I</u> send and who will go for <u>us</u>"* (Is. 6:8)

Analogies which may help illustrate the Trinity:

1) The <u>Atom</u>

An atom has
1) a proton
2) a neutron
and 3) an electron

Yet it is one atom.

2) A Musical Chord

Three distinct notes may be played on the piano at once, yet they make one sound.

C. The Word existed <u>as God</u>

v. 1

"The Word was God" – the Greek word order is significant. The Greek text reads: "God was the Word" (qeoj hn o logoj).

By putting the predicate nominative first in the sentence, John is emphasizing the quality of the word "God" and is demonstrating Christ's deity.

The Jehovah's Witness cult, which denies the deity of Christ points out that the absence of the article before the word "God" means that Jesus is not "<u>the</u> God but "<u>a</u> God" (hence, they add the indefinite article "a").

Such an addition implies polytheism (that more than one God exists), and such an addition violates the rules of the *koine* Greek language.

One such rules states that whenever the predicate nominative precedes (comes before) the main verb, it never takes the definite article ("the") but still retains its definiteness.

II. The Word (Jesus Christ) is the Creator of All Things (v.3)

The "Word" is the Creator of all.

Hebrews 11:3
Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

"The worlds" **-** the ages of time, space and matter that have been sovereignly planned and designed by God.

"Word of God" **-** *rhemati* - the spoken word of God. God spoke and matter, time, and space came into existence.
Gen. 1 - *"And God said. . . and it was so."*
The *Logos* of God (Jesus Christ - Jn. 1:1-3) spoke the *Rhema* of God and created the universe with His Word.
[Note the power of Christ's words - with His word He healed the sick, cast out the demons, calmed the storm, raised the dead (Lazarus), and will resurrect the departed dead in the future (Jn. 5:25).]

God created the world by His word; He sustains it by that same word; and He will one day destroy it by His word (II Peter 3:5-7).

Psalm 33:6-9 - *"By the word of the Lord the heavens were made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as a heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spake, and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast."*

We owe our existence to Jesus Christ: He is our Creator.

Col. 1:16
For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Ephes. 3:9
And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

Hebrews 1:2

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Hebrews 11:3

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

Jesus created everything.

1) All beings and things "in heavens and in earth" (Col.1:16)
2) All that is material and immaterial
3) All laws, governing authorities and powers

"In Heaven" - Jesus created the angelic realm (the host of angels including Michael and Gabriel; the cherubim and seraphim, etc.)

"In earth" - everything from the beautiful Swiss Alps & awesome Mount Everest to the Islands of Hawaii and the Caribbean; every kind of plant, tree, fruit, vegetable; every animal, fish, reptile and insect. And the crown of His creation - mankind - was made by and for Jesus Christ.

No wonder the elements obeyed His voice; and the demons trembled in His presence and respected Him. He is LORD of all, Creator of all!

It does not matter where it is (location); or what it is (essence); or how it is ("the powers that be") -- Jesus made it all.

The powers that be are ordained of God (Rom. 13:1) particularly of Jesus Christ!

When Jesus became man, He worked as a carpenter. A fitting trade for the one who built the universe, and yet what a humble trade. What humiliation for the Creator who spoke the world into existence to work much of his 33 years on earth using the simple tools of man and the elements of His own creation, to construct with.

You were created by Jesus and for Jesus.

He made you for Himself; to glorify Him, to live for Him.

III. The Word (Jesus Christ) is the Source of Life and Light (v.4-5)

v. 4
"In Him was life" –

The WORD (Jesus Christ) is …
the One who is life,
who created life (where there was nothing),
who sustains life,
who imparts spiritual life (where there was spiritual death),
who graciously gives eternal life (where there was mortality and corruption),
who raises the body unto the resurrection of life (where there was physical death)
who gives "abundant life" here and now to all who know Him (John 10:10)

To look at Jesus was to look at life (life's Creator, Sustainer, regenerator, and Resurrector)!

No one has light unless they share in Jesus' life.

Prior to being connected to Jesus, no man has light. Those without Him dwell in powerless, lifeless darkness.

v. 5
The **"darkness"** in John not only refers to an absence of light, but also to the presence of evil (3:19, 8:12, 12:35, 46; I John 1:5-6, 2:8, 9, 11) (Carson, p. 119).

'Comprehended" (*katelaben*) – In context, the word means to not "understand" or to not "grasp on to" As verse 10 states -
"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. "

Why didn't the world comprehend the light in Jesus? The blindness of their heart, due to willfull ignorance (Eph. 4:18)

John 3:19
And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

Conclusion:

Since Jesus is eternal,
He knows all;
Since Jesus is Creator,
He can do all;
Since Jesus is life and light,
He can empower all who trust Him.

No matter how dark your life may be, Jesus can light up your life (2 Cor. 4:6). "Where there is chaos, He can bring order. Where there is emptiness, He can bring fullness. Where there is darkness, He can bring light" (Chuck Swindoll, p. 12).