

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

Turn your bibles with me to John 1

This October, by the grace of God – it will be 30 years since I responded to the gospel message in the office of the assistant pastor at Calvary Chapel of West Covina.

And I have told many of you guys how the Lord used my boss at the time, Ed Pena, to share the gospel with me that entire summer and even though I ridiculed him for doing so – I mocked him in front of my coworkers and talked behind his back – yet, he continued to share with me that I needed Jesus Christ in my life.

After receiving Jesus Christ in my heart, the assistant pastor gave me a bible and told me to home and read the gospel of John.

So I went home and read it, read it again, and again and again.

The Gospel of John became my first personal bible study.

Did I understand what I was reading? Not at first.

However, each time I read it, the Holy Spirit began to reveal a little bit more and it made me want to read even more.

You see church, there is a reason that new believers and those that are struggling are guided to read the gospel of John first.

Because it reveals who Jesus Christ truly is. It reveals that He is God.

**[Jhn 20:31 NKJV] 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.**

So not only does it reveal that Jesus Christ is God –

Notice that the Holy Spirit inspired John to use the word “believing” – that is a word of continual action – to continue to believe. He did not write “believed” or once believed”

It provokes the believer toward a continual, growing belief in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

So, during the times we are struggling in our faith – we turn to the Gospel of John so that we can be reminded of and encouraged that we place our faith and trust in the One True God.

Let's pray...

So before we get started this morning – I want to do a little introduction on the Gospel Of John.

The writer of course is John –

John never refers to himself by name in this gospel.

When we see the name “John” (especially over the next two Sundays), it will be talking about John the Baptist.

John only refers to himself as “the disciple whom Jesus loved”.

It was written much later than the other three gospels were written.

It was time of great turmoil and persecution for the early church.

Rome had destroyed the temple, the church had been infiltrated with false teachings and believers were struggling to persevere.

So the Holy Spirit inspired John to write his gospel differently than the other three gospels.

John is not writing a biography of Jesus – he is writing to remind us of who Jesus is.

When we read the other gospels, we get a lot of information regarding the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

We have information about the parables that He taught, we have information about the miracles that He performed, we have information about the sermons He preached.

When we studied the Gospel of Mark – you might remember that I had you make a note of how many times Mark used the word immediately.

41 times, Mark used it to transition from one event to the next or from one bit of information to the next.

However, John doesn't include any of the parables, he doesn't include information about the sermon on the mount, he doesn't include information about Jesus being tempted in the wilderness.

He does however, give us information about 8 miracles – five of them which are not included in the other three gospels.

So as the other three gospels focused on giving us information – the Gospel of John gives us some information but, **here is the major difference** - it also includes inspiration – John tells us the reasons behind why Jesus did what He did.

And after giving us information and inspiration – John also provides us with application.

How are we supposed to respond to what Jesus did.

So let's go ahead and look at our text.

**[Jhn 1:1-5 NKJV] 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

In the scriptures, we have different beginnings.

Of course, when we open up our bibles to Genesis 1:1 – we read,

**[Gen 1:1 NKJV] 1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.**

The, in the beginning in Genesis 1:1 refers to the beginning of creation.

The point in time, where God created everything.

However, the, in the beginning that John refers to here in John 1:1, it predates the beginning of creation and even the beginning of time.

Because the only thing that existed in the beginning (the one that John refers to) – God.

God is eternal. Both forward and backwards.

He has no beginning and no end.

God is not bound by time.

Yet time could not exist without God.

And I think even for many believers – this is very hard to grasp. So I want to make sure that we understand the significance of this because it is very important.

I have had brothers and sisters who struggle with this – of trying to figure out if God has a beginning.

Just as space, energy and matter – time is a created thing.

Because we are created, we are bound by time.

Think about what time is – it is the duration characterized by changes in what something is or has.

The cup of coffee that I had this morning, it took 10 minutes (it took time) from the time the coffee maker went off at 5 AM and the hot water and coffee grounds became that pot of goodness.

I am going to be 48 next month. I am bound my time. I do not look like I did 47 years ago.

I changed.

So, time and change go hand and hand.

However, God does not change.

He already knows the future.

If He changed who He is, He would cease to be perfect and thus cease to be God.

He cannot learn anything new because He already knows everything.

So He is not bound by time, He was not created, He is eternal.

And so, John starts off his gospel with **In the beginning was the Word.**

Now, look down at verse 14 – John provides us with the identity of the Word.

**[Jhn 1:14 NKJV] 14 And the Word became 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.**

So in verse 14, John tells us that the identity of the Word is Jesus.

Why didn't John simply write, In the beginning was Jesus???

Two reasons.

1. The Word that John uses here for Word is the word "logos" And the significance of this word is that during this time in history, the Greeks had developed a philosophy articulated by the philosophers Heraclitus and Plato that was built upon the assumption that the "logos" (the WORD) was the foundation of everything on earth. The logos was the power that set the world in perfect order and kept it going in perfect order.

Through Jesus, John had come to understand that the Logos wasn't merely some abstract philosophical principle or idea. The Logos was a Person – and that person is Jesus Christ & he wanted others to come to know Him as he had.

2. He doesn't because he wants to make absolutely clear that when he refers to Jesus as God, his readers don't think of Him as some kind of lesser deity or merely an elevated spiritual being. Jesus is nothing less than the One God of Israel, the Creator & Sustainer of the Universe. By calling Him, "The Word" he accomplishes that.

So in the first part of verse 1 –

John reminds us that Jesus is eternally God.

Whenever and wherever the beginning was, Jesus – the Word, was already there.

The next part of verse 1 states that the Word was with God and the Word was God.

So, here we see that the “Word/logos” is distinct from God the Father. They are separate yet they are still one God.

One of the consistent themes throughout John’s gospel is the huge amount of grief the Jewish leaders gave Jesus because of His constant claim to deity.

The Jews were fierce defenders of the truth that there was only one God.

They had borne the anger and hostility of the Gentile world many times because of their fierce devotion to Yahweh as the one & only God.

While the rest of the world worshipped many gods, the Jews relentlessly held to the worship of only One.

That is why the Pharisees wanted to stone Jesus every time He claimed deity.

Yet here is John, a Jew of Jews, who now says that while there is only one God, there are three persons that make up God. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

(Two of them here in verse 1, the Father and the Son)

Now, I am not going to try to explain the Trinity with an illustration because I believe that every illustration I have ever heard falls short of being accurate.

I have heard people trying to use an eggs (shell, white, yoke), or apple or water to describe the trinity.

Church, an infinite God cannot be fully understood with a finite illustration.

The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not forms of God, each of them is God.

And that is what John is pointing out here in verse 1.

Now, some people teach that Jesus was not God, part of the Trinity. The Jehovah's Witnesses translate this phrase, "the word was a god".

They say that Jesus isn't fully God Himself, but instead a created being.

The have added an "a" before God.

Now, in the Greek language there are no indefinite articles. There is no "a" or "an"

So the JW's took it upon themselves to add "a" wherever it coincides with the doctrinal beliefs of its founders.

### **Why is it important to believe that Jesus is God?**

#### **1. If it's not true, then Jesus is a liar.**

Jesus claimed to be God, several times.

We will see this throughout the Gospel of John.

If Jesus weren't telling the truth, He's either a liar, or He's some crazy guy.

If He's wrong in this subject, how about the other things He's said that we hold so dear?

## **2. Our salvation is based on it.**

See how salvation works

The Bible teaches that man is sinful.

(Rom 3:23 NKJV) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Sin has consequences.

It comes with a steep price to pay.

(Rom 6:23 NKJV) For the wages of sin is death...

For man to become right with God, someone has to pay the price.

If I am not able to pay the price, someone else can pay that price -

For someone to pay for you, they must meet certain requirements - they can't be a sinner.

If they were a sinner, they would only be dying to pay for their own sins.

If Jesus was sinless, but just an ordinary man, could He die in your place?

Yes. But He could only pay for one person's sins.

Jesus was not only sinless, but He is Eternal God.

When He laid down His life, He laid down an infinite life.

He was able not only to pay for my sins, but yours as well.

He died for the sins of the entire world.

## **2 He was in the beginning with God.**

By referring to Jesus as the Logos, he doesn't want his reader to think that Jesus is merely some kind of philosophical concept.

He's a person, so John assigns Him the personal pronoun, "He." When the beginning began, Jesus was already there with God, as God.

By the way, according to the teachings of the LDS – they believe that Jesus was created. They even believe that God the Father was created by another god.

## **3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.**

If a thing is made, if it is created, then Jesus did the making, the creating.

This ought to forever silence the Jehovah's Witnesses who say that Jesus was the First thing made, then He made everything else.

The language John uses here completely nukes that idea.

In terms of category of being, there are only 2 categories: Creator & created

And according to what John says here, what category does Jesus belong to? He is in the Creator category.

Turn your bibles with me to Colossians 1

**[Col 1:16 NKJV] 16 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.**

Think about this, when the Creator, when Word became flesh - the baby in the manger – He was responsible for putting the very stars in the sky, including the star which led the wise men from the east to come and worship him.

Now, if you can't sleep at night, and you want something to think about that will help you to get off to sleep again, think about that: that the Christian claim is that the child in the manger, is none other than the Lord of eternity.

The Logos, the Word which spoke a billion stars into being, spoke through the human vocal chords of a carpenter from Nazareth.

Church,

There is no more sublime thought than that the Creator should become a part of His creation so that we could know Him and have a relationship with Him

**4 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.**

In order to fully grasp what John is saying here in verse 4 and 5 – we need to answer 3 questions.

What is light and what is darkness and what do we do it about it.

First we find that Jesus Christ is not only the source of life, He is also the source of light.

Turn with me to Gen 1

**[Gen 1:2-4 NKJV] 2 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. 3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that [it was] good; and God divided the light from the darkness.**

In the beginning, God brought light into creation, then made a perfect world that was good and complete and sinless.

This original life man received was the kind & quality of life God originally planned for man.

As long as man had it, he lived in light

Adam and Eve chose to break their relationship with God by going against the one command He put in place as a test of their love for Him. They chose to break that command, they sinned, and in doing so, they plunged the world into spiritual darkness.

Later on in John 3:19, Jesus is going to say the following to Nicodemus.

**[Jhn 3:19 NKJV] 19 "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.**

And this refers to our sinful nature as a result of the fall of man.

And because of our sinful nature and because we serve a holy God, we were separated from Him and therefore doomed to an eternity in hell.

But because of God's love for us, because He didn't want us to continue to be separated from Him in this life or in eternity, John is saying that in Jesus is the original life God intended for man.

It's a life marked by light, by truth & goodness.

And it's a light the darkness could never extinguish.

The gospel of Luke tells us that when Jesus died on the cross, there was three hours of darkness that followed.

For three hours, it appeared that the Light of the World had been extinguished.

But three days later, Jesus was back to shine in our hearts as the Bright and Morning Star.

The first man may have fallen into darkness, but Jesus could never be overcome, because He is God.

When we see the light and receive the life that Jesus offers to us, we become a child of God.

A child of God receives an eternal inheritance from the King of the Universe.

In fact, the Bible teaches that God loves each of us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to come and live a sinless life, to die on a cross to pay for our sins, and then rise again 3 days later, winning victory over sin and death.

God does not want human beings to reject Him and go to hell. He desires that we all should repent and believe and become His children, so that we can live life empowered by His Holy Spirit, live life full of His strength and His presence and then spend eternity with Him in heaven.

That's the deal. That's what light and darkness are all about.

God stepping in to save us from ourselves.

God intervening when we were on a path of self-destruction.

God transforming lives and changing our destinies because He loves us personally.

So we can either respond to receive the WORD, the logos, to receive His light and His life or we can reject that offer that He is making to us.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

I remember watching a video series a few years ago –

And the instructor was talking about the concept of light and darkness.

He illustrated it this way – he told about a time when he was in his living room and his son opened the closet door. Dr. Tackett got all excited and asked his son to close and open the door again. He said that a principle dawned on him about light and dark.

When the closet door was opened, the inside of the closet was illuminated by the light from the living room. He got inside the closet and closed the door, and the closet was dark again. He pointed out that darkness is not something that can conquer light.

Light always conquers darkness.

If there is darkness creeping across our nation, it is not because someone went to Washington DC or California and opened a big box of darkness and the darkness is spreading.

And he concluded that if there is darkness in our nation, it is only because we as the church have been hiding our light.

**[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 'May the LORD bless you and protect you. 25 May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you. 26 May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'**