

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JANUARY 21ST – 22ND, 2023 // GOSPEL OF JOHN

THE AUTHOR

Few dispute that this was written by John, one of the 12 disciples who had been with Jesus longer than anyone except the other two of the inner three (James and Peter).

- John probably wrote this in the late 80s before his exile and authorship of his other biblical contributions.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Gospel means *the teachings and "good news" of Jesus Christ*, specifically, the first four books of the NT. One could argue that the entire Bible is the gospel because it is all inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16).

- The point is John is a first-person witness to the life and teachings of God on earth.

THE AUDIENCE AND SETTING

The other gospels mostly targeted Jewish audiences, but John was writing for anyone in the world. He was unashamedly targeting non-believers.

- John most likely wrote this from Ephesus, one of the largest Roman cities and comprised mostly of Greeks and Romans.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

- **The deity of Jesus:** John's case starts in chapter 1 and is reaffirmed through selected miracles and signs from Jesus' ministry.
- **Faith:** John teaches us that **"believing is seeing,"** not the other way around.
- **Salvation:** Jesus is our Savior, and we find life through the Trinity (Father, Son, Spirit).

THE ETERNAL (JOHN 1:1-5)

"IN THE BEGINNING..."

The central focus here is the eternity of Jesus. This means the Jesus who walked the earth has always existed and is, in fact, the Creator God ("all things...created through Him").

- John calls Jesus "the Word" because Jews often referred to God in such terminology. Again, the point is **Jesus is God incarnate.**

INCOMPREHENSIBLE, AND THAT IS OKAY

Chapter 1 introduces the complicated conversation of the Trinity; God is one God manifested in three Persons (Father, Son, Spirit).

- **Our finite minds are incapable of fully understanding everything about an infinite God.** We must grow to be okay not comprehending it all on this side of Heaven.

"IN HIM WAS LIFE"

The revelation of Jesus to humanity was the revelation of "life." **Salvation** (to be born again) means we have a **fulfilling and meaningful life now and an eternity with God in Heaven.**

- **Only through the teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus could people be forgiven and reconciled back to God.**

THIS GOES RIGHT BACK TO GENESIS

Not only is Jesus the Creator, but He is also the promise to correct the mistakes of the creation.

- From the time mankind sinned, there was a separation from God, and therefore life on earth grew dark. **Jesus was the promised Messiah (Savior), to be the light and pull us out of darkness.**

"...THE DARKNESS DID NOT OVERCOME IT."

These five verses give the reader **peace** because the Savior of humanity has come and is, in fact, God Himself.

- **We can have confidence and hope because the "light [that] shines in the darkness" cannot be overcome because that light is the eternal God, and He is on our side!**

THE LIGHT (JOHN 1:6-13)

THE OTHER JOHN

The John in v6 is John the Baptist, "a man sent from God...as a **witness** to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him."

- **A good witness doesn't draw attention to themselves, but to the one they represent.** John came to awaken people to their need for God's intervention in their life.

"HE WAS NOT THE LIGHT"

John was not the Savior, but someone who told others of the Savior. We are to live in the same manner. Christians must remain humble and know that no human is the solution.

- **The world doesn't need us per se; they need the Light who lives within us. We are simply catalysts of the truth.**

W.W.J.D.?

John writes that Jesus "was in the world" He created, "yet the world did not recognize Him." This means **God came to earth in a tangible and understandable way to clarify how to live and Who to follow.**

- **The problem is we tend to only want to follow our own path.**

WELL, IF I COULD JUST SEE GOD

We often say that we would believe if we could see, but that isn't true. Humanity has seen God, and they ended up killing Him.

- **The problem is not evidence or even clarity. The problem is rebellion and selfishness. If we want to see, we will, but we have to get over ourselves.**

MORE THAN JUST FLESH AND BONE

Jesus is the Light because He illuminates the way in which we're reconciled to God and adopted into His family. Christians are people who have accepted that we're not born "of natural descent...but of God."

- This means we understand that **we're more than just bodies;** we're eternal souls.

We're designed not to live solely by the natural, but to live in the light and freedom of a supernatural God.

- **Through prayer, the Bible, and obedience to Jesus, we can see God work in our lives now while also understanding we have the promise of Heaven with Him.**

GOD IN FLESH (JOHN 1:14-18)

THE INCARNATION OF GOD

V14 is a pivotal verse about the **Doctrine of Incarnation.** This simply means God became human and "dwelt among us."

- Similar to the tabernacle of the OT, **Jesus was the source of God's glory, grace, and truth. He was also going to be the sacrifice and focus of worship.**

"GRACE UPON GRACE"

The coming of Jesus in flesh provided clarity, made salvation about His work and not ours, and allowed us to receive, through a relationship with Jesus, **tremendous amounts of grace.**

- **This doesn't give us license to abuse grace, but to grow closer to God because He loves us so much.**

"FROM HIS FULLNESS"

We receive grace from Jesus' **"fullness."** This word means **repletion** and **completion.**

- With a relationship with Jesus comes repletion; **we are equipped and filled up with what we need.** We're also complete in Jesus; **our identity is restored, and we have peace and fulfillment.**

A STANDARD WE CANNOT GET PERFECT

The 10 Commandments, "law given through Moses," gave us a standard of righteousness, but we're unable to live up to it. But the grace of Jesus and help from the Holy Spirit step into that gap.

- **If we have a relationship with Jesus, His perfection covers our imperfections, and we are declared holy by God.**

"HE HAS REVEALED HIM."

Though Moses saw a brief theophany of God in Exodus 33, no one had ever seen God. In Jesus, "who is himself God," we're not shown the fullness of God visually, but **the mind and nature of God have been made clear.**

- **The key to life and light is Jesus because He is God. This is essential theology!**

AN OMNIPOTENT GOD

- John 1 and Genesis 1 connect and teach us that **there is one God who is eternal, and He is all-knowing and all-powerful.**
- God has no competition. Though God has an enemy, Satan, **there is no amount of evil that can overcome God or the people of God.**

GOD ON EARTH

- Though we cannot handle the fullness of God yet (Exodus 33:20), God sent His Son, who is Himself God (Trinity), to be a **tangible and comprehensible source of light for humanity.**
- In Jesus, we see **God is loving, gracious, and clear, and His teachings and principles are simple yet profound.**

A PERSONAL GOD AND SAVIOR

- Jesus also desires a relationship with us. This means **the Creator of the universe is personal and interactive in our lives!**
- Jesus takes it further. **He came not only to live and be an example, but to die and pay the price for the evil we have committed so we can be restored and eternally saved!**

THE GOSPEL

- This is more than just "good news"; this is the best news you will ever hear. **We are not alone.** There is an all-powerful God who loves us more than anything in the universe, and He proves it in His Son, Jesus.