

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JANUARY 22ND, 2023 // GOSPEL OF JOHN

INTRODUCTION: THE GOSPEL OF JOHN WHO?

The fourth and final Gospel was written by the Apostle John sometime at the end of the first century, around 90 A.D.

- John and his brother of James, the sons of Zebedee, were dubbed the "Sons of Thunder" by Jesus. The brothers left their father and profession behind to follow Jesus (Matthew 4:18–22) and became part of Jesus' inner circle.

WHY FOUR GOSPELS?

There are not four "gospels," but one four-fold "gospel." The gospel, or the good news, is told from four different perspectives, and each is needed to tell one cohesive narrative.

- **To see one story told from different perspectives without contradiction testifies to the validity of what is being claimed.**

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE FOUR?

Luke was written to an individual (Theophilus) and communicates that Jesus came from Adam and is **the perfect man** (Luke 3:23–38).

- **Matthew** and **Mark** were written to Jewish audiences showing Jesus coming from the line of Abraham and David (Matthew 1:1–17) as **the promised Messiah**, and Jesus coming from Nazareth as a **humble servant** (Mark 1:9).

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

John wrote his gospel narrative to the world. At the time of writing it, he had witnessed the gospel spread throughout the entire Mediterranean world.

- Unlike the synoptic Gospels that focused on what Jesus said and did, John focuses on who Jesus is, telling us that Jesus originated in Heaven and is God. He had one purpose in writing: **that we might believe** (John 20:31)!

A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS (JOHN 1:1–5)

THE ORIGIN OF THE WORD

"In the beginning" speaks to the timeless eternity of the Creation narrative in Genesis 1:1.

- John is essentially saying that when the beginning began, the Word was already there. The Word predates time and creation. **Before anything was created, the Word was eternally existent, without a beginning.**

UNDERSTANDING WHO OR WHAT THE WORD IS

The *Word* is translated from the Greek word *logos* and was rooted in Jewish and Greek thinking. For Jews, the phrase "word of God" or *logos* was used to refer to God himself. Greek philosophers saw *logos* as the power that held everything in order.

- **John met both Jews and Greeks where they were and communicated in ways they already understood.**

BASIC FOUNDATIONS OF OUR FAITH

John 1:1, "and the word was with God, and the word was God," establishes one of our faith's most basic foundations: **the Trinity**.

- The doctrine of the Trinity is that God **eternally exists as three persons**, Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Though there are distinct persons of the Trinity, **each person is fully God, yet there is one God.**

THE WORD IS THE SOURCE OF ALL LIFE

We see Jesus was present and active at initial creation (Genesis 1:26a) and that **everything that has been created was created by Him, for Him, and through Him** (Colossians 1:16).

- Jesus is the source of the new life described in 2 Corinthians 5:17: **"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!"**

THE WORD IS LIGHT

Jesus is the life and the light of the world. The Word does not contain life and light: **He is life and light!**

- **The light will not and cannot lose against the darkness.** The light shines into the dark places of our minds, where the enemy has brought confusion. He shines into the dark recess of our hearts and purifies them.

A WITNESS OF THE LIGHT (JOHN 1:6–13)

A MAN SENT FROM GOD

The Apostle John refers to John the Baptist starting in verse 6.

- John the Baptist was the last of the OT prophets and the first NT prophets. A prophet had not been called by God since Malachi—400 years earlier. The prophet Isaiah spoke of John's coming 700 years previously (Isaiah 40:3–5).

FROM MIRACULOUS ORIGINS

John the Baptist was Jesus' cousin, who was born through a miraculous birth six months before Jesus to elderly parents, Zachariah and Elizabeth (Luke 1:7).

- The angel Gabriel told Zachariah that his son would be "great in the sight of the Lord" and he would be "filled with The Holy Spirit even before he was born (Luke 1:15).

LIVING A DEDICATED LIFE

John lived a simple, dedicated life focused on ministry. Matthew 3:4 describes John wearing clothes made of camel hair and eating locusts and wild honey.

- God sent John "as a witness to testify about the light." His message was plain:

"Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near" (Matthew 3:2)!

THE MESSAGE OF JESUS' COMING AND PURPOSE

John the Baptist was sent to testify that **"the true light that gives light to everyone, was coming into the world."**

- The light given to others is speaking to the regenerative power in Christ, that **we can be made spiritually alive**. John claims that this "light" was "coming into the world," talking about **the incarnation of Jesus**.

REJECTION OF THE LIGHT

Verse 10 contains the truth about creation, incarnation, and rejection in one verse. Because of our fallen nature, God came to the world He created and dwelt with the people He created in His image, **"yet the world did not recognize him."**

- **However, this rejection did not stop with the world; it also came from His own people.**

THE GIFT OF NEW LIFE

Though some will not "receive Him," John points out that those who do receive Him will receive **a new birth and become children of God**.

- The new birth is not of natural descent nor of the will of humanity or the flesh. **It is God's sovereign gift to humanity, not a result of our achievements.**

THE LIGHT REVEALED (JOHN 1:14–18)

HE LEFT THE MOUNTAINTOP

Every world religion focuses on man trying to reach an apex. Whether enlightenment or a god waits at the peak, the goal is to work to scale this mountain to reach the top.

- Christianity sets itself apart in that it is not about man trying to climb to the top of a mountain to reach God, but **God coming down to dwell amongst us!**

THEOLOGY TO DOXOLOGY

The Apostle John could not contain his appreciation for God's grace in light of the narrative of God's glory displayed through the Son.

- Though underserving, we all have experienced grace upon grace from the **fullness of the Father because that is who He is! He is gracious!**

THE LAW POINTS TO THE NECESSITY OF GRACE

Moses brought the law—known as the first five books of the Bible or the Torah—which contained over 600 commandments to provide a standard of righteousness that no one could meet.

- **But God brought a standard of righteousness centered on grace and truth; righteousness found only in Jesus.**

WE CAN SEE THE UNSEEN GOD

John the Baptist declared the coming of the light, and **Jesus declared the nature of an unseen God to humanity**.

- We do not have to wonder about the nature and personality of God the Father; we only have to look at the life and teachings of Jesus. **His purpose in coming was to testify to the truth** (John 18:38).

COME INTO THE LIGHT

- We either belong to darkness or light. **There is no in-between.** The light (Jesus) came into the world, but **we are in love with the darkness**.
- Those who choose darkness and do evil will hate the light because **it exposes their deeds**.
- **We must allow the light of Christ to shine in the dark parts of our lives because the darkness is overcome by the light, not vice versa.**