

John 1:1-18 (ESV)

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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. 15 (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") 16 For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through *Jesus Christ*. 18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

Key words:

"In the beginning" (v. 1, 2) —same phrase from Genesis 1:1, which refers to the origin of the time-space-material universe.

"Was" (v. 1)— in the Greek, this verb refers to something ongoing (i.e. not of the past, present or future) that had no beginning and has no end.

"The Word" (v. 1, 3)—John used the Greek word *logos* to embody the idea of divine power and wisdom in the person of Jesus Christ; as "the Word," Jesus Christ is God's self-expression to mankind.

"Dwelt" (v. 14)—literally means to "pitch a tabernacle/ tent" and refers to the "tent of meeting" in the Old Testament where the glory of God lived. Here, John is

showing us how much more personal it is that Jesus took on humanity and personally lived among His created people.

Related passages:

Colossians 1:15-16—"15He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him."

Hebrews 1:1-3—"1Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. 3He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power..."

Study Questions:

1. Looking at vs. 1 & 14, to whom is John referring when he says, "the Word"? (O)
2. Make a list of the statements about "the Word" from vs. 1-3: (O)
 - a. _____ the Word (v. 1)
 - b. The Word _____ (v. 1 & 2)
 - c. The Word _____ (v. 1)
 - d. All _____ (v. 3)
3. What is the purpose of these statements? (I)
4. Read verse 14. What two things did "the Word" do? (O) What was the intended result? (v. 18) (O)

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“The Word” (v. 1, 3)—John used the Greek word *logos* to personify the idea of divine power and wisdom in the person of Jesus Christ. John Phillips said, “When John calls Jesus “the Word,” the *logos*, he is referring to him as the thinker, the omniscient genius behind the created universe.” Leon Morris said, “The Word’ points to the truth that it is of the very nature of God to reveal Himself. A man’s word is the means whereby he reveals what he is thinking.”

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Discussion Questions

*1. Does God want to be known? Why or why not?

*2. Looking at vs. 1 & 14, to whom is John referring when he says, “the Word”? (O) What meaning does the title “the Word” have in reference to Jesus? (I)

*3. Make a list of the statements about “the Word” from vs. 1-3: (O)

1. _____ the Word (v. 1)
2. The Word _____ (v. 1 & 2)
3. The Word _____ (v. 1)
4. All _____ (v. 3)

*4. “The beginning” refers to the **origin** of the universe. So, what does “the Word was in the beginning” (v. 1 & 2) mean? (I)

5. In John 10:30, John records Jesus saying, “I and the Father are one.” How do John’s statements “the Word was with God” and “the Word was God” affirm and expand on this truth? (I) Look at verses 14 and 18 and identify two other statements describing “the Word’s” relationship with God the Father. (O)

6. What is “the Word” credited with in verse 3? (O) What do Colossians 1:16 and Hebrews 1:2 say? (O)

*7. Why is it critical for us to understand that Jesus is God? (A)

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*8. Skipping down to verse 14, what two things did “the Word” do? (O) Why would the eternal, creator Son of God limit His divine powers to take on the form of man and leave glories of heaven to live on earth among sinners? (I) There are many reasons, but find and discuss one in v. 18.

*9. Read the following three verses and discuss how they help us understand how “the Word” made God, who no one has seen, known to mankind.

John 12:45—“...whoever sees me sees the One who sent me.”

Hebrews 1:3—“...He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature”

Colossians 1:15—“He is the image of the invisible God...”

10. What two attributes was the glory of “the Word” full of? (v. 14) (O) These echo the words in Exodus 34:5-6 where God revealed himself to Moses. That revelation was only partial, Jesus is the “full” expression. Discuss how have we benefitted according to v. 16? (O/A)

11. Keeping in mind John’s purpose: “but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” (John 20:31), how do the verses that you just studied (1-3 & 14-18) impact your understanding of who Jesus Christ is and what He did? (A)

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Key Words

"**Life**"—(*zoe*) spiritual life (as opposed to physical life)

"**Light**"— truth & holiness

"**Darkness**"—falsehood & sin

"**world**"— (*kosmos*) 1. Physical world; 2. Humanity; 3. The evil system dominated by Satan.

Related Passages

Psalms 36:9—"For with you is the fountain of life; in your light do we see light."

John 3:19-21—"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. 21 But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."

John 11:25-26—"25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

Study Questions

1. Look at verse 4. What kind of "life" is this verse referring to? (I) See also John 3:16 & 17:3
2. Verse 9 basically states the mission of Jesus as the true light. What two things did the Light do (O) and what do they mean (I)?
3. Looking at verses 10-11, did the world readily know and receive the light? What do you think hinders people from knowing and receiving the light? (A) (See also John 3:19-21) What does your relationship with the light look like (A)?