

John Chapter 1 Continued

John 1:6 “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.”

We see here a man not like the Logos in the last lesson but a real man.

This is a man with a mission from birth.

John the Baptist, we know, is no ordinary man.

Jesus, Himself, would say of John that there had never been a man born of woman who was greater (Matthew 11:11).

We also know that John’s birth was a miracle.

His parents were old when they had him, and his father was a high priest in the temple.

Zachariah and Elisabeth were from priestly families.

We also know that the Holy Ghost entered John while he was yet in his mother’s womb (see Luke chapter 1).

John the Baptist would be spoken of as the promised Elijah that was spoken of in Malachi (Matthew 11:14).

We read very little of John the Baptist’s youth.

He was sent to the earth for one purpose by God, and that was to proclaim the soon coming of the Messiah.

His only purpose was to make the way clear for Jesus Christ the Messiah.

His message was repent.

As forerunner to Jesus, John was to bear witness to Him as the Messiah and Son of God.

With John’s ministry, the “400 silent years” between the end of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament period, during which God had given no revelation, ended.

“John”:

The name “John” always refers to John the Baptist in this gospel, never to the Apostle John.

The writer of this gospel calls him merely “John” without using the phrase “the Baptist,” unlike the other gospels which use the additional description to identify him.

Moreover, John the apostle authored the gospel and that his readers knew full well that he composed the gospel that bears his name.

For more on John the Baptist (see Matt. 3:1-6; Mark 1:2-6 and Luke 1:5-25 and 57-80).

John 1:7, “The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.”

From Isaiah until Malachi the prophets had been prophesying the coming of the Light, and that was (Jesus Christ).

John the Baptist was to warn that the Light was here.

Be ready to receive it.

John’s one job was to make ready for the Light.

John was the climax to all the Old Testament prophets telling of this glorious Light, but we will see that not all believed.

The world and the so-called pleasures thereof, had too much of a hold on the people.

The terms “witness” or “to testify” receive special attention in the gospel, reflecting the courtroom language of the Old Testament where the truth of a matter was to be established on the basis of multiple witnesses.

Not only did John the Baptist witness regarding Jesus as Messiah and Son of God, but there were other witnesses:

(1) the Samaritan woman (4:29);

(2) the works of Jesus (10:25);

(3) the Father (5:32-37);

(4) the Old Testament (5:39-40);

(5) the crowd (12:17); and

(6) the Holy Spirit (15:26-27).

John was the “agent” who witnessed of Christ.

The purpose of his testimony was to produce faith in Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world.

John 1:8, “He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.”

John knew from the beginning that he was not the Light.

While John the Baptist was the agent of belief, Jesus Christ is the object of belief.

Although John’s person and ministry were vitally important, he was merely the forerunner who announced the coming of the Messiah.

Many years after John’s ministry and death, some still failed to understand John’s subordinate role to Jesus.

He was just a messenger running ahead telling people to prepare to receive the Light.

We would see that many esteemed the messenger of the Light above the Light.

Even when Jesus was questioned by those of the church, they were careful not to say anything bad about John the Baptist.

John 1:9, “That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”

This is the Light which was applied first in Genesis which gave all matter the power to be.

This Light determines whether you have life or not.

If you do not have this Light within you, then you have death and not Life.

“The true Light ... cometh into the world”:

This phrase highlights the incarnation of Jesus Christ.

“Lighteth every man”:

Through Gods sovereign power, every man has enough light to be responsible.

God has planted His knowledge in man through general revelation in creation and conscience.

The result of general revelation however, does not produce salvation but either leads to the complete light of Jesus Christ or produces condemnation in those who reject such “light”.

The coming of Jesus Christ was the fulfillment and embodiment of the light that God had placed inside the heart of man.

The World:

The basic sense of the Greek word which means “an ornament” is therefore illustrated by the word “adornment”.

While the New Testament uses it a total of 185 times, John had a particular fondness for this term, using it 78 times in his gospel (24 times in 1, 2, and 3 John and 3 times in Revelation).

John gives it several shades of meaning:

(1) the physical created universe;

(2) humanity in general and

(3) the invisible spiritual system of evil dominated by Satan and all that it offers in opposition to God, His Word, and His people.

The latter concept is the significant new use that the term acquires in the New Testament and that predominates in John.

Thus, in the majority of times that John uses the word, it has decidedly negative overtones.

John 1:10, “He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.”

Here again, just as in our last lesson (in verse 3), we see that this Light (Jesus Christ; Word), made everything.

He was Creator God.

The Creator of all the world came to this earth to save His creation, and His creation had no idea who He was.

John 1:11, “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”

“His own ... his own”:

The first usage of “His own” most likely refers to the world of mankind in general, while the second refers to the Jewish nation.

As Creator, the world belongs to the Word as His property but the world did not even recognize Him due to spiritual blindness.

The chosen people (Israelites), whom God had made covenant with, were the very ones who would not receive Him.

They had the Scriptures which spoke of His coming, and yet when He came, they rejected Him.

John used the second occurrence of “His own” in a narrower sense to refer to Jesus’ own physical lineage, the Jews.

Although they possessed the Scriptures that testified of His person and coming, they still did not accept Him.

This theme of Jewish rejection of their promised Messiah, does receive special attention in John’s gospel.

Verses 12 and 13 stand in contrast to verses 10 and 11.

John softens the sweeping rejection of Messiah by stressing a believing remnant.

This previews the book since the first 12 chapters stress the rejection of Christ, while chapters 13-21 focus on the believing remnant who received Him.

John 1:12, “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:”

Notice even here, He did not do it for them.

They had their own free will.

He made it available to them and gave them power to receive it; but they had to of their own free will, accept it.

“As many as received Him ... to them that believe on His name”:

The second phrase describes the first.

To receive Him who is the Word of God means to acknowledge His claims, place one’s faith in Him, and thereby yield allegiance to Him.

“Gave” is a term emphasizing the grace of God involved in the gift of salvation.

Those who receive Jesus, the Word, receive full authority to claim the exalted title of “children of God.”

“His name”:

Denotes the character of the person himself.

The secret to becoming sons of God is in believing in His name.

In Romans 10:9, “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

It is so simple and yet so many miss out.

The confession is that He is our Lord and Savior.

Jesus means Jehovah Savior.

The belief cannot be surface either.

It must truly be in our heart.

John 1:13, “Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

The divine side of salvation: ultimately it is not a man’s will that produces salvation but God’s will (3:6-8; Titus 3:5 and 1 John 2:29).

Jesus told them later, “Marvel not that I say ye must be born again”.

This is a spiritual birth not a birth of the flesh.

I Peter 3:18, “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”

We also read (in John 3:5-6), “Jesus answered, Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

You see, then to be sons of God we must be born of His Spirit, The Holy Spirit of God.

If we are never reborn of the Spirit, then we remain flesh; and flesh cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Corinthians 6:9, “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?”

John 1:14, “And the Word was made 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.”

The Word (Jesus Christ), took on the form of flesh and dwelt here on this earth with us.

He is called Immanuel (God with us), in Matthew.

His flesh was man (inherited through Mary), His Spirit was God.

God is a Spirit.

The Holy Spirit of God hovered over Mary and she conceived of the Holy Spirit of God.

Jesus took on the flesh of Mary, but was in fact, God within that flesh.

The spirit and the body are part of every person.

The flesh is made in the image of man, but the spirit that is within each of us is the image of God (our life).

“The glory as of ...the Father”:

Jesus as God displayed the same essential glory as the father.

They are one in essential nature.

“Only Begotten”:

The term “only begotten” is a mistranslation of the Greek word.

The word does not come from their term meaning “beget” but instead has the idea of “the only beloved one”.

It therefore, has the idea of singular uniqueness, of being beloved like no other.

By this word, John emphasized the exclusive character of the relationship between the Father and the Son in the Godhead.

It does not connote origin but rather unique prominence; e.g., it was used of Isaac who was Abraham’s second son (Ishmael being the first).

God is a Spirit; and to be His image (likeness), we would have to be spirit.

The spirit within is our being that will live eternally in heaven or hell.

We will shed this body we dwell in now and will have a new body.

This body you live in here on this earth will return to dust from which it came, but the real you will have vacated that body and taken on a new heavenly body.

Everyone who has been clinically dead and revived will tell you that they left their old body in the hospital.

This is exactly what the Scripture teaches.

Even Jesus' resurrected body was different than the one that went into the tomb.

It was a body because He ate and because the nail prints were there; but in His new body, it was not necessary to open doors.

He just appeared.

Our spirit dwells in a body while we are here on the earth.

Our spirit or our body will control our will.

This determines whether we are controlled by God or the lust of the flesh.

“Full of grace and truth”:

John probably had (Exodus 33 and 34 in mind).

On that occasion, Moses requested that God display His glory to him.

The Lord replied to Moses that He would make all His “goodness” pass before him, and then as He passed by, God declared “The Lord ... compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in loving kindness and truth”.

These attributes of God's glory emphasize the goodness of God's character, especially in relationship to salvation.

Jesus as Yahweh of the Old Testament (8:58; “I am”), displayed the same divine attributes when He tabernacled among men in the New Testament era.

John 1:15, “John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.”

John here is speaking of the eternity of Jesus.

Jesus is six months younger than John in the flesh.

John is aware that Jesus created John.

Here John the Baptist's testimony corroborates John the apostle's statement regarding the eternality of the Incarnate Word (verse 14).

The things that confuse people are the different names of Jesus.

He did not use the name Jesus, until He came to the earth. Jesus means Savior.

He took on that name while He was here on the earth because that was what He was here for.

Jesus is called by whatever name describes what He is doing at that time.

Word was His name in heaven.

John the Baptist keeps reminding the people that he is not Messiah.

He tells them Jesus is their Messiah.

John 1:16, "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace."

We must remember here that Jesus is the Word.

The Old Testament teaches Jesus just the same as the New Testament.

John here is saying, "He has been filling us with His Word since Genesis".

The phrase "grace for grace", emphasizes the superabundance of grace that has been displayed by God toward mankind, especially believers.

John 1:17, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

Even the law came from God, through Moses.

Grace and truth are not only from Jesus but through Jesus, as well.

We will read further in this book of John that Jesus not only brought the truth but is in fact, known as the Truth.

Corroborating the truth of verse 14, both of these verses (17 and 18), draw a closing contrast to the prologue.

The law, given by Moses, was not a display of God's grace but God's demand for holiness.

God designed the law as a means to demonstrate the unrighteousness of man in order to show the need for the Savior, Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, the law revealed only a part of truth and was preparatory in nature.

The reality or full truth toward which the law pointed, came through the person of Jesus Christ.

John Chapter 1 First Continued Questions

1. Who was the man sent from God?
2. What high praise did Jesus give John the Baptist?
3. Who were John the Baptist's parents?
4. Who would Jesus say John was?
5. What was John the Baptist's mission?
6. When did the Holy Ghost enter John the Baptist?
7. What was John to bear witness of?
8. How long had Messiah been prophesied by prophets?
9. Was John ever deceived into believing he was the Light?
10. What is said about the Light in verse 10?
11. Who was this Light, this Word, this Jesus Christ?
12. Why did He come to this earth?
13. Who were the chosen people of God?
14. They had the Scriptures that spoke of His coming and yet they _____ Him.

15. As many as received Him, He gave them the power to be what?
16. What was the requirement?
17. What are we told in Romans 10:9?
18. Jesus really means what?
19. In verse 13, we learn these are born of what?
20. In I Peter 3:18, we find that we must put to death the _____ but be quickened by the _____.
21. In 1 Corinthians, it tells us who will not inherit the kingdom of God?
22. Verse 14 says, “And the Word was made _____, and dwelt _____,”
23. Who does verse 14 say this Word is?
24. What two things was He full of in verse 14?
25. What does Immanuel mean?
26. Who did Jesus come to first and they would not receive Him?
27. In John 3:6-7, we find the difference between what?
28. God is a Spirit and to be in His likeness we must be _____.
29. In the flesh, who was the oldest, John or Jesus?
30. John said, “He that cometh after me is _____ before me.”
31. What fullness’s had they all already received in verse 16?
32. Who was the law given by?
33. Where did the law come from?
34. Who brought grace and truth?