

John Chapter 1

John 1:1 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

In contrast to (1 John 1:1), where John used a similar phrase (from the beginning), to refer to the starting point of Jesus’ ministry and gospel preaching, this phrase parallels (Genesis 1:1), where the same phrase is used. John used the phrase in an absolute sense to refer to the beginning of the time space material universe.

The verb “was”, highlights the eternal pre-existence of the Word, “i.e. Jesus Christ”. Before the universe began, the Second Person of the Trinity always existed meaning He always was. This word is used in contrast with the verb “came into being” (in verse 3), which indicates a beginning in time. Because of John’s theme that Jesus Christ is the eternal God, the Second Person of the Trinity, he did not include a genealogy as Matthew and Luke did. While in terms of Jesus’ humanity, He had a human genealogy, in terms of His deity, He has no genealogy.

John borrowed the use of the term “the Word”, not only from the vocabulary of the Old Testament but also from Greek philosophy, in which the term was essentially impersonal, signifying the rational principle of “divine reason,” “mind,” or even “wisdom”.

John however, imbued the term entirely with Old Testament and Christian meaning (e.g. Genesis 1:3), where God’s Word brought the world into being (Psalm 33:6; 107:20; Prov. 8:27), where God’s Word is His powerful self-expression in creation, wisdom, revelation and salvation. And made it refer to a person, Jesus Christ. Greek philosophical usage therefore, is not the exclusive background of John’s thought.

Strategically, the term “Word” serves as a bridge word to reach not only Jews but also the unsaved Greeks. John chose this concept because both Jews and Greeks were familiar with it.

There are two kinds of Word. One is the written Word which is the Bible. This written Word is God breathed. John was not the author of John, God was. John was the penman, moved upon by the Holy Spirit of God.

The entire Bible was authored by God. Each book had a penman moved upon by the Holy Spirit of God. I believe the written Word (the Bible), is the face of Jesus that we are looking in. Jesus is the Word.

In (John 1:14), we learn that this Word was Jesus, “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.”

In the first Book of the Bible, Genesis 1:3, we see the spoken Word, “And God said ...”

God said is the spoken Word. This spoken Word creates, as we see (in Genesis and in John 1:3), “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”

You see, the Word spoken or written is powerful. It contains the power of life and death. The Word of God gave everything the power to exist. This Word is the one we know as Jesus.

What was before the beginning? Nothing. This Word who became Jesus was there at the foundation of the world. Word “In the beginning was the Word... ” is Logos. It means divine expression. It even includes divine thought. It can also mean divine work.

He (the Word), was divine intelligence. “... the Word was with God ...”. God here is taken from a word which means supreme Divinity or supreme God.

This Logos (Word). was not only with God but was God, as well. (Proverbs 8:23), speaks of this Divine Intelligence as Wisdom. This Eternal Existence is difficult for man to comprehend, but it is true. God is the place that everything else starts from.

The Word was with God”: The Word, as the Second Person of the Trinity, was in intimate fellowship with God the Father throughout all eternity. Yet, although the Word enjoyed the splendors of heaven and eternity with the Father, He willingly gave up His heavenly status, taking the form of a man, and became subject to the death of the cross.

The Greek construction emphasizes that the Word had all the essence or attributes of deity, i.e., Jesus the Messiah was fully God. Even in His incarnation when He emptied Himself, He did not cease to be God but took on a genuine human nature/body and voluntarily refrained from the independent exercise of the attributes of deity.

John 1:2 “The same was in the beginning with God.”

The plainest reason why the Son of God is called the Word, seems to be, that as our words explain our minds to others, so was the Son of God sent in order to reveal his Father's mind to the world. What the evangelist says of Christ proves that he is God. He asserts, His existence in the beginning, His coexistence with the Father.

"The Word was with God." And "All things were made by him", and not as an instrument. "Without him was not any thing made that was made".

John 1:3, “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”

We see here that the Word (Jesus), was Creator God. He made it all. Let us look back in Genesis again. At the beginning of each thing created there was the expression “God said, Let there be”, then it goes on to mention everything: the skies, the world, the sun, the moon, etc. You see from this, the Word (who we call Jesus), was at the beginning Creator God.

John 1:4, “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.”

In verse 4 above, life means the power to exist. In (Genesis 2:7), we read how God gave life to man, “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”

Man was but a clay doll until the breath of life was breathed in to it. Then he became alive. The Word (Jesus), made him alive.

The word translated life here means make manifest or illuminate. This light gives everything the power to be. If a person receives this Light, it gives them the power to receive eternal life.

John introduces the reader to contrastive themes that occur throughout the gospel. “Life” and “light” are qualities of the Word that are shared not only among the Godhead, but also by those who respond to the gospel message regarding Jesus Christ. John uses the word “life” about 36 times in his gospel, far more than any other New Testament book. It refers not only in a broad sense to physical and temporal life that the Son imparted to the created world through His involvement as the agent of creation, but especially to spiritual and eternal life imparted as a gift through belief in Him.

In Scripture, “light and darkness” are very familiar symbols. Intellectually, “light” refers to biblical truth which “darkness” refers to error or falsehood. Morally, “light” refers to holiness or purity which “darkness” refers to sin or wrongdoing.

“Darkness” has a special significance in relationship to Satan and his demonic cohorts who rules the present spiritually dark world as the “prince of the power of the air” promoting spiritual darkness and rebellion against God. John uses the term “darkness” 14 times (8 times in the gospel and 6 times in 1 John), out of its 17 occurrences in the New Testament, making it almost an exclusive Johannine word. In John, “light” and “life” have their special significance in relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Word.

John 1:5, “And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”

The word shineth means to continually shine. The first thing God applied to the earth was Light which gave all other things the power to be. Nothing can live without light. Plants won’t grow and people will die without light.

Darkness symbolizes Satan or evil. When the Light (Jesus), shines, it does away with darkness (Satan). The darkness mentioned (in verse 5), is speaking of spiritual darkness. Darkness has to receive the Light to do away with the darkness.

In Genesis, just before God applied the Light, there was darkness upon the face of the deep. Let God light His Light in your heart and do away with darkness and give you eternal life.

The better meaning of the term comprehended in context is “overcome.” Darkness is not able to overcome or conquer the light. Just as a single candle can overcome a room filled with darkness, so also the powers of darkness are overcome by the person and work of the Son through His death on the cross.

John Chapter 1 Questions

1. What does the name John translate to?
2. Who was his brother?
3. Name two other names he was known by?
4. What other books of the Bible did he pen?
5. In the Book of Revelation, what do they tell us happened to him because of his loyalty to Jesus?
6. What was John doing on the Lord's day?
7. How many times is the Father mentioned in John?
8. How long was Jesus' earthly ministry?
9. Name two people Jesus had conversations with that are recorded in John and not the other three gospels?
10. How many miracles are recorded in the other books?
11. How many of these are not recorded in the other books?
12. What are some of the opposites of Jesus and Satan mentioned in this book?
13. Name five things John shows us Jesus as besides God and the Word?
14. Who is the only penman in the Bible which calls Jesus the Lamb of God?
15. Why do you think John showed more of the divinity of Jesus than any other writer?
16. What is the main message that comes forth throughout John?
17. What is symbolized by the four headed beast?
18. Which of the heads does John symbolize?
19. What are the two kinds of Word?
20. Who was the author of John?
21. What moved upon the penman to write it?

22. What is the written Word?
23. What is the spoken Word?
24. Who is the Word?
25. The Word is powerful, it contains the power of _____ or _____.
26. What is the Word in verse 1?
27. What does Logos mean?
28. Who is the place from where all things begin?
29. What is Satan's latest trick in the church?
30. Who was Creator God?
31. "In him was _____; and the _____ was the _____ of men".
32. What does life mean?
33. What does shineth mean?
34. Who is the Light?
35. Verse 5 is speaking of what kind of darkness?