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Gospel of John / John 1:1–18

Introduction

- Hurricane Katrina -100,000 didn't leave despite mandatory evacuation, and many who chose to leave left at the last minute and sat in traffic for hours. Why? Many reasons, but one reason because of false alarms. People didn't believe that Katrina would affect New Orleans like it did. Even when evidence pointed to Katrina bringing destruction to New Orleans, people chose to ignore the evidence.
- The Gospel of John is a call to believe. [John 20:31](#): "But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name."
- John, an apostle of Jesus, lays out the evidence so we might believe that Jesus is the Messiah, and eternal life is only found in a relationship with Him.
- What you believe matters, because what you believe shapes how you live. If you believe that this life is all that there is, you will live to experience as much pleasure in this world as possible. If you believe that there might be a god who is out there but is distant from His creation, you will live as if He is not close to you. If you believe that Jesus is the Messiah, you will center your life around His will for you.
- What does the way you live your life say about what you believe? What you believe matters, and John wants your entire life to be shaped by believing in Jesus.

- The Gospel of John begins differently than other gospels. In his introduction, John helps us to know from the start of his gospel what we must believe about Jesus. Before John tells us all that Jesus did, he tells us who Jesus is.
- From this passage, I want to show you three truths that you must believe about Jesus.

Believe that Jesus is your Eternal Creator.

- This gospel written by the Apostle John.
- First three Gospels are synoptic = seeing together or a synopsis of Jesus life and ministry. They were written in similar time period. John writes later, and he's more selective in what he records. He chooses very specific signs (miracles), conversations, and statements of Jesus. John answering the questions: "Who is Jesus and why did He come to this earth?"
- He begins to answer the question, "Who is Jesus" decisively in [John 1:1-18](#).
- vs. 1-5 - Jesus is God. "In the beginning..." reference to [Genesis 1:1](#). Synoptic gospels start with Jesus' earthly life. John starts with Jesus' preexistent life. He was before all things.
- vs. 1 - John makes three claims about Jesus as the Word. 1. Jesus is eternal. 2. Jesus has always been with the Father. 3. Jesus is God.
- God has chosen to communicate with us by His Word.
- By His Word, 1. God creates ([Genesis 1](#)). He reveals (His character, His law - e.g., [Exodus 19](#)). He saves. (e.g., the Exodus, "Let my people go.")
- John's Jewish readers would hear the Old Testament background of God creating and revealing Himself through His Word. Greek readers would also recognize *logos* as a term used for the rational principle

behind reality. But John goes beyond both. The Word is not an abstraction. The Word is a person, the incarnate Son of God who has always existed with the Father, and this one who has always been is divine. He was there at the beginning of creation as the Creator ([Colossians 1:16-17](#)).

- vs. 3 - Everything owes its existence to Jesus Christ. Nothing was created apart from the Son of God.
- John wants us to know that Jesus is God. Why? Who could save us other than God? The 7 signs John describes are evidence that Jesus is God. Jesus makes divine claims about Himself. His sinless life shows His unique holiness. Ultimately, His resurrection from the dead is proof that He is God.
- Culture wants us to believe that Jesus is a good teacher or a good example, but John wants us to know that Jesus is far more than a teacher or example. Foundational to the Christian faith is the reality is that Jesus is God.
- That belief shapes how we live our lives.
- Since Jesus is God:
- **Don't ask: Where does Jesus fit into my life?** That's the question we ask when we see ourselves as the god of our own lives. Humanity wants to be the creator. We want to create the kind of life that we want. We want to create our future. We want to create our way of living. Many of us aren't opposed to Jesus. We want Jesus to give us eternal life, give us advice when we need it, give us healing when we're sick, but do we want Him as Lord? Do we treat Him as an accessory to life?
- **Ask: How does my life fit under the Lordship of Jesus?** Since Jesus is God, my life belongs to Him. It's not, "What do I want from God?" But, "What does God want from me?" How does He want me to steward the

life that He has given me? There is no area of your life that He does not have authority.

Believe that Jesus makes you a child of God.

- The One who is the Creator is also the light. God created humanity, but His creation rebelled. As a result, we live in a dark world. We need light. Jesus is the light. In Jesus, we see the truth of who God is. Jesus guides us to the truth. He exposes the darkness, and He gives life.
- vs. 5 - We may live in a dark world, but the darkness of this world cannot overcome the light of Jesus Christ.
- In God's time, God sent John the Baptist to witness to the light. Jesus said that among those born of women, there was no one greater than John the Baptist.
- John was prophesied about in the OT as the one who would come to prepare the way of the Lord. John is the bridge between the Old Testament and the New Testament. He's a prophet who announces in the wilderness that God's Messiah has finally arrived!
- God sent John to announce the arrival of the Messiah so all might believe (vs. 7). In the first century, in Judea, the true light had come into the world (vs. 9). Israel had waited for centuries for the arrival of the Messiah, and He was finally here!
- Yet, the world did not recognize Him, and His own did not receive Him.
- The world = the people of the world. Why did the world not recognize Jesus?
 - [John 3:19-20](#) - Because the world loves the things of the world. Closed to Jesus.
 - [John 7:7](#) - The world does not like Jesus' message - that its works are evil.

- [2 Corinthians 4:3-4](#) - This world is blinded by the god of this age.
- Shocking - Jesus' own people, the Jews, did not receive Him. Why?
 - Jesus did not fit their expectations. We want a Messiah on our terms; what we think He should be like.
 - Jesus threatened religious authority. We want a comfortable religion, a god that we can control.
 - Jesus exposed. Jesus calls out hypocrisy and calls to repentance.
- You live in a world that largely rejects Jesus because of His radical, exclusive claims.
- Many rejected, and John tells a story of rejection in his gospel, but there were those who did receive Jesus. Some became children of God. In OT, children of God was a corporate descriptor of Israel, but Israel had rejected God. In the new covenant, the children of God are those who believe in Jesus.
- Why did some receive Jesus? Why did some become children of God? They believed. They recognized Jesus as the Messiah. It wasn't because of natural descent or human agency, but divine action. Jesus talks about this with Nicodemus. The way to become a child of God is to be born again.
- How are you born again? It's of God's will. You can't give yourself new life. God does it. He opens your eyes to the truth. He convicts you of sin, and He draws you to Himself through the Son. It's a complete act of grace and mercy. John is simply reminding us:
- **You can't inherit faith.** You can be brought to church. You can be around the things of God. You can sit through Sunday School classes. You can have the best Christian parents possible or the best spiritual mentors possible. You can attend the most faithful church and sit under the most solid expositional preaching, but those things do not infuse

faith in you. Those are all good things - but you can have all of that exposure to Jesus and still refuse to receive Him personally.

- **You can personally receive Jesus.** How do you receive Jesus? You believe that He is who the Gospel writers say that He is - He is God who came for you, who lived and died for you. You trust that the only way to be saved from God's judgment is through faith in Jesus Christ. You surrender your life to Him. You turn from your sins and surrender to His Lordship in your life. Even in a church like ours, there are some who have rejected Jesus instead of received Jesus. Today, receive Him.

Believe that Jesus came to dwell with you.

- John has established that the Word is fully God. Now he tells us that the eternal Word became fully human. A powerful statement: the Word became flesh. The Eternal God of all creation took on a fully human nature without ceasing to be God. He was born of a virgin. He lived in a real place in a real time. He got hungry. He got tired. He felt pain. He felt emotions. He lived the entire human experience yet never sinned. Jesus did not merely look human. He became human.
- He dwelt among us. In Greek language, dwelt means to pitch His tent or tabernacle. John using deliberate language to help us to understand that the presence of God is not confined to the OT tabernacle/temple, but the fullness of the presence of God is in His incarnate Son.
- vs. 14 - John and the disciples observed His glory. In the OT, the glory of God experienced on Mt. Sinai, or at the temple, but now the glory of God in Jesus Christ. At the cross, Jesus showed us the glory of God by dying in our place.
- The glorious one is full of grace and truth. Jesus embodies the full nature of God. Jesus is full of grace - He gives us what we do not deserve - forgiveness of sins and life everlasting. John likely echoing [Exodus 34:6](#). The character of God has been fully revealed in Jesus.

- Jesus is truth. He is the way, the truth, and the life ([John 14:6](#)). He gives us authentic knowledge of God. He reveals the Father to us. In His truth, He reveals the truth about the Father and the truth about us.
- vs. 15 - another reminder that John testified to the truth. John knew Jesus was far greater than him.
- Vs. 16-17 - In Christ we are lavished with grace. There will never be a time in your life that grace runs out ([Ephesians 2:7](#)).
- The law given through Moses. The law came through Moses and was itself a gracious gift from God, but we were unable to keep the Law. The Law showed us just how sinful we are. Moses brought the law; Jesus brings the fullness of grace and truth to which the law pointed. Jesus fulfills the Law by obeying God in our place then going to a cross to die in our place.
- Jesus entered into history to make dead people alive by dying in our place, forgiving our sins, and giving us new life.
- vs. 18 - No one has ever seen God. Likely a reference to [Exodus 33:19-23](#). After the people rebelled by building a golden calf, Moses begged God to forgive the people. In [Exodus 33:18](#), "Let me see your glory." Moses face was hid God passed by. He just caught a glimpse of God's glory.
- However, John saw something different than Moses. He saw the Son. He saw the glory of God in a person - Jesus Christ. John is telling us that if we want to know what God is like, we look at Jesus. We see the glory of God in Jesus Christ.
- **Your response to Jesus will shape how you live now.** If Jesus is the Son of God who came to dwell among us, you cannot treat Him as if He's irrelevant. There's no area of your life that He's not Lord over. There's nowhere you can go where He's not with you. You cannot hide from Him because He exposes all the dark areas of your life. You can't

treat people however you want to because Jesus has treated you with boundless grace. What evidence do you see in your life of how the Gospel has reshaped you? Where do you need to continue to be reshaped?

- **Your response to Jesus will determine where you will dwell forever.**

Will you spend eternity in the presence of God? Jesus came to dwell with us so we can dwell with God. How you respond to Jesus will determine your eternity. This morning, if you've never trusted Him, the invitation is to believe. Believe that He died and rose again for you so you can experience His glory and be with Him forever.