
1

Introducing Jesus

John 1:1–18

Purpose: To introduce John's message about Jesus and to demonstrate the impact Jesus had in people's lives.

The first 18 verses of John's Gospel (often called the prologue) are not as much an introduction to the Gospel as they are a condensation of John's whole message.

John states the basic truths about Jesus that he wants to communicate to us and then uses the remainder of the book to prove what he says in the prologue.

The Bible declares that the central point in history happened two thousand years ago. God walked on the earth in the person of Jesus Christ. John opens his Gospel with a beautiful hymn of exaltation to Christ. It is one of the most profound passages in all the Bible. It is written in simple, straightforward language, yet in studying the depths of its meaning, it is a passage where we never reach bottom. It is an ocean-sized truth, and we have to be content to paddle around in shallow water.

1. What do you hope will happen in your life as a result of studying the Gospel of John?

2. Read John 1:1–18. Why do you think John calls Jesus *the Word* (see vv. 1, 14)?

Question 2. By using the title *the Word* for Jesus, John was declaring that Jesus is the full expression of God to us. Just as we express our thoughts to others through words, God expressed himself to humanity in Jesus. A good parallel passage is Hebrews 1:1–2.

3. Why does this gospel begin with "In the beginning" rather than at Jesus' birth?

4. In verses 1–3 what facts does John declare to be true of the Word? Why are these facts significant for understanding who Jesus is?

Question 4. The assertion in John 1:1 that “the Word was God” is challenged by some modern cults. Jehovah's Witnesses contend, for example, that because no definite article appears before the word *God* in the Greek text, this phrase should be translated “the Word was *a god*.” No evangelical (or non- evangelical) Greek scholar agrees with that translation. The absence of the definite article stresses that Jesus was distinct from the Father but was fully God just the same. For further detail see Morris, *According to John*, pp. 76–78. See also the handout “Who Was Jesus?” provided on the resource table.

5. What do the symbols of life (v. 4) and light (v. 5) tell us about Jesus and why he came to earth?

How has Jesus brought these qualities into your life?

6. John contrasts Jesus' rejection by the majority with his reception by a few (vv. 9–13). What facts about Jesus should have brought the majority to receive him (vv. 9–11)?

7. How would you explain to someone both the meaning and results of receiving Jesus (vv. 12–13)?

8. According to verses 14–18, what specific aspects of God's character are revealed to us through Jesus?

9. How would someone "full of grace and truth" treat others? What is the significance of this description of Jesus?

10. How would you summarize John's testimony concerning Jesus?

For next week: Read John 1:19-34

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