

## Pastor Hank's Notes on The Gospel of John: Believe!



### Introduction:

**The Writer: The Apostle John. Date Written: Around 90 A.D.**

**John means=** Jehovah has been gracious, Graced by Jehovah.

There are **5,209,797** people in the U.S. with the first name **John**. Statistically it is the 2nd most popular first name. This most popular first name in The United States is? \_\_\_\_\_

### The Apostle John is first mentioned in:

We first see John originally a disciple of John the Baptist.

### John 1:35

<sup>35</sup> Again the next day after **John** stood, and two of his disciples;

**John= John The Baptist**, two of his disciples= The Apostle John & Andrew.

### The Apostle John's Calling:

### Matthew 4:21-22

<sup>21</sup> And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and **John** his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.

<sup>22</sup> And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.



**John's Family Tree:**

Father: Zebedee

Mother: Salome

Brother: James, The Apostle.

John and his Brother James **Nickname** as given by The Lord Jesus: **"The sons of Thunder"**

**Mark 3:17**

<sup>17</sup> And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, **The sons of thunder**:

Both John and his brother earned the nickname "The sons of thunder" when a village of the Samaritans rejected Jesus. John and James asked for fire from heaven to be sent on the village (Luke 9:51-54; Mark 3:17). Jesus declined, but did give them the nickname. Sons of Thunder could be looked at the fact of The Lord Jesus rebuking them for wanting to destroy the villages or could be looked upon at their earnestness, zeal, and enthusiasm.

**Occupation:**

Fisherman, Apostle and Writer.

**John was part of Jesus's "Inner Circle": Peter, James, and John: "Pillars of The Church".**

**Galatians 2:9**

<sup>9</sup> And when James, Cephas, and **John**, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

Peter, James, and John were the only ones permitted to follow Jesus when Jesus raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead. (Mark 5:37-43)

Peter, James, and John were present at the Transfiguration of Jesus. (Matthew 17:1)

Peter, James, and John followed Jesus to the Garden of Gethsemane. (Mark 14:33)

**John: The Disciple whom Jesus Loved:****John 21:7**

<sup>7</sup> **Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved** saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

Jesus committed His mother to the disciple He loved, John, when He was on the cross:

**John 19:26-27**

<sup>26</sup> When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

<sup>27</sup> Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

John affectionately leaned on the Lord's breast at The Last Supper:

### **John 13:23**

<sup>23</sup> Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

John witnessed The Crucifixion of Jesus. (John 19:26-27)

John was the first Apostle to witness The Empty Tomb of Jesus:

### **John 20**

<sup>1</sup> The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

<sup>2</sup> Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the LORD out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

<sup>3</sup> Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

<sup>4</sup> So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

John witnessed the Ascension of Jesus. (Acts 1:9-13)

John suffered persecution and imprisonment due to the truth he preached. (Acts 4:3; 5:17-42; Revelation 1:9)

John served as an Elder in the body of Christ (II John 1; III John 1)

John speaks about his exile/banishment to the island of Patmos:

### **Revelation 1:9**

<sup>9</sup> I **John**, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called **Patmos**, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

John witnesses what happens in The Book of Revelation.

### **Revelation 1:11**

<sup>11</sup> Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, **What thou seest, write in a book**, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

### **John's later years:**

John Preached in Jerusalem, and later, as Elder of Ephesus, south of Izmir in western Turkey, worked among the churches of Asia Minor.

According to Tertullian (in *The Prescription of Heretics*) during the reigns of either Emperor Nero (AD54-68) or Domitian (AD81-96), John was banished to Patmos, (now one of the Greek islands in the Aegean Sea) after being plunged into boiling oil in Rome and suffering nothing from it. It is said that all in the entire Coliseum audience were converted to Christianity upon witnessing this miracle.

When John was aged, he trained **Polycarp** who became a disciple of John and who later became Bishop of Smyrna. This was important because Polycarp was able to carry John's message to future generations. Polycarp taught Irenaeus, and passed on to him stories about John.

**Death of John:** Church History Teaches:

John was freed from the Isle of Patmos and died a natural death at Ephesus around AD100.

Later Christian writers from the early second-century Bishop Papias of Hierapolis, claims that he was slain by the Jews.



The traditional tomb of John the Apostle in Ephesus, Turkey.

### **The Gospel of JOHN**

**Writer:** The Apostle John

**Date Written:** Between 88-90 A.D.

\*\*The Gospel of John, The three Epistles of John and The Book of Revelation were all written by The Apostle John under Inspiration of The Holy Spirit. This is unique in that John wrote a: Gospel, Epistles and a Revelation (Prophecy). They were all written around the same time between 88-90 A.D. This is unique in that John is the only New Testament writer who had access to the entire New Testament before he began to write! He had access to The three other Gospels, Peter's Epistles, other writers and Paul's Epistles and The Pauline Revelation.

The Pauline Revelation or Pauline Doctrine focuses on Paul being The Apostle to the Gentiles and to The New Testament Church (that's us).

#### **Romans 16:25**

<sup>25</sup> Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

**Theme of The Gospel of John:**

The Theme of The Gospel of John is **BELIEVE** on Jesus Christ and throught that Belief obtain your Eternal Salvation. John makes this very clear in John 20:31.

**Key Verse:**

### **John 20:31**

<sup>31</sup> But these are written, that ye might **believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that **believing** ye might have life through his name.

The word “believe” in some form appears vastly more times in John’s Gospel than the other three. The number of times that it appears in all four Gospels stacks up like this:

Matthew- 11 times

Mark- 17 times

Luke- 11 times

John- 101 times!

Everything in John’s Gospel pushes the reader toward “belief” in Jesus Christ as the only hope of Salvation!

“... and his disciples **believed** on him.” John 2:11

“... many **believed** in his name...” John 2:23

“And many of the Samaritans of that city **believed**” John 4:39

“And many more **believed**...” John 4:41

“... many **believed** on him.” John 8:30

“And he said, Lord, I **believe**.” John 9:38

“And many **believed** on him there.” John 10:42

“She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I **believe**...” John 11:27

“Then many of the Jews... **believed** on him.” John 11:45

“... many of the Jews... **believed** on Jesus.” John 12:11

“... among the chief rulers also many **believed**...” John 12:42

This strong emphasis on “**belief**” is why The Gospel of John is popular as a Soul Winning Tool.

**Another Theme** of The Gospel of John is that Jesus is The Son of God. The Book of John shows a beautiful relationship between Jesus and the Father.

### **John 20:31**

<sup>31</sup> But these are written, that ye might believe **that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God**; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

**Another Theme** of The Gospel of John is that Jesus is the “I am”. The man Jesus Christ is at the same time the eternal God who as Lord (Jehovah) in the OT said of himself: "I am that I am." (Exodus 3:14). When the Lord Jesus was taken captive he said to the soldiers: "I am he" (John 18:5), they went away backwards and fell to the ground. - He is the only one to say: "I am the bread of life; I am the light of the world; I am the door of the sheep; I am the good shepherd; I am

the resurrection, and the life; I am the way, the truth and the life" (John 6:35; John 8:12; John 10:7; John 10:11; John 11:25; John 14:6).

### **John 8:58**

<sup>58</sup> Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, **I am**.

**A Major Theme** of The Gospel of John is The Deity of Jesus; that Jesus is God. We will see this and study this throughout The Gospel of John!

### **Some "John Facts":**

John was an eyewitness of the reported occurrences though, as he himself writes (John 1:14; John 19:35). In fact, only an eyewitness would be able to give such clear particulars as "about the tenth hour" (John 1:39), "six water pots of stone" (John 2:6) and "153 great fishes" (John 21:11).

### **John 19:35**

<sup>35</sup> And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

We know more of John than we know of any other author of the Gospels. He was one of the two sons of Zebedee. Zebedee was probably a prosperous fisherman on the shore of lake Galilee and he employed hired servants (Mark 1:19-20). John and James' mother was Salome (Math. 27:55-56; Mark 15:40). She bade the Lord Jesus to have her two sons sit on His right and His left hand in his kingdom (Math. 20:20).

John, his brother James and Peter belonged to the inner circle of the apostles. These three only were allowed to be with the Lord Jesus at the resurrection of Jairus' daughter, at the transfiguration on the mount and in the garden at Gethsemane (Luke 8:51; Luke 9:28; Math. 26:37; Mark 13:3). Peter and John were sent to prepare the last Passover (Luke 22:8); they were also the first disciples whom Mary Magdalene met on the resurrection day of the Lord Jesus and who saw the empty sepulcher (John 20:2-10). John was closest to the Lord Jesus in the upper room in Jerusalem when the disciples last met and, finally, he was the only one to be 'standing by' the cross of his Lord (John 13:23-25; John 19:26-27). It was him as well who first recognized the Lord when He appeared to them at the sea of Tiberias (John 21:7).

After the Lord's ascension we find John in Acts 3; Acts 4, together with Peter, witnessing for the Lord Jesus. Then we see him as the apostles' deputy to Samaria (Acts 8:14). According to Galatians 2:9 Paul met John at his second visit in Jerusalem.

After that John moved to Minor Asia (Ephesus) where he is likely to have stayed till his death at a very old age around the year 100 AD. This stay was interrupted though by his exile on the island of Patmos (Revelation 1:9).

The Gospel of John is the fourth section of what some call the four-fold gospel, with four voices giving different perspectives on the life of Jesus of Nazareth. Christian writers as early as Origen (a.d. 185-254) understood that there are not really four gospels, but there is one four-fold gospel.

**The Gospel of John** was the last of the four written, and written in view of what the previous three had already said. This is one reason why John's account of the life of Jesus is in many ways different from Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

a. There are significant events in the ministry of Jesus that Matthew, Mark, and Luke all include yet John leaves out, including:

- Jesus' birth
- Jesus' baptism
- Jesus' temptation in the wilderness
- Confrontations with demons
- Jesus teaching in parables
- The Last Supper
- The agony in Gethsemane
- The Ascension

b. The first three Gospels center on Jesus' ministry in *Galilee*. John centers his Gospel on what Jesus said and did in *Jerusalem*.

c. Each of the Gospels emphasizes a different origin of Jesus.

- Matthew shows Jesus came from Abraham through David, and demonstrates that He is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament (Matthew 1:1-17).
- Mark shows Jesus came from Nazareth, demonstrating that Jesus is a Servant (Mark 1:9).
- Luke shows Jesus came from Adam, demonstrating that Jesus is the Perfect Man (Luke 3:23-38).
- John shows Jesus came from heaven, demonstrating that Jesus is God.

d. However, it is wrong to think that the Gospel of John *completes* the story of Jesus. John wrote that the story of Jesus is so big that it can *never* be completed (John 21:25).

2. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are known as the three **Synoptic Gospels**. The word *synoptic* means "see-together" and the first three Gospels present the life of Jesus in pretty much the same format. The first three Gospels focus more on what *Jesus taught and did*; John focused more on *who Jesus is*.

- John shows us who Jesus is by highlighting seven signs (miracles) of Jesus. Six of these miracles are not mentioned in the first three gospels.
- John shows us who Jesus is by allowing Jesus to speak for Himself in seven dramatic **I Am** statements, which were not included in the first three gospels.

· John shows us who Jesus is by giving the testimony witnesses who testify about the identity of Jesus. Four of these witnesses speak in the first chapter alone.

3. John is a Gospel written for a specific purpose: that we might **believe!**

The outstanding thing about John's Gospel is that John had access to and was familiar with all of The Pauline Epistles, which were completed ten years before John began to write. This means that John had access to the New Testament Doctrine of Grace, Eternal Security and The body of Christ. You will find Pauline Theology in John (1:12-13, 3:1-6, 36,5:24, 8:3-11, 10:28-29, 14:6)

**The Gospel of John** has 21 chapters, 879 verses and 19,094 words.

### **Overview of The Gospel of John:**

#### **I. John 1:1-18 Prologue: the Word**

#### **II. John 1:19-51; John 2-12 Public Ministry of the Son of God**

Chapter 1 John the Baptist; The first Disciples of Jesus

Chapter 2 Wedding at Cana; Cleansing of the Temple

Chapter 3 Nicodemus; John the Baptist

Chapter 4 The Woman of Samaria ; the Son of the Nobleman

Chapter 5 The Infirm Man at the Pool of Bethesda ; the Opposition of the Jews

Chapter 6 Feeding of the 5 ,000; the Bread of Life

Chapter 7 Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles

Chapter 8 The Adulteress; Rejection of Jesus' Words

Chapter 9 The Blind Man (blind from birth); Rejection of Jesus' Works

Chapter 10 The Good Shepherd

Chapter 11 Resurrection of Lazarus

Chapter 12 Anointing of Jesus; the Desire of the Greeks and the Unbelief of the Jews

#### **III. John 13-17 Ministry of the Son of God to his Disciples**

Chapter 13 The Feet washing

Chapter 14 The Disciples and the Son, the Father and the Holy Spirit

Chapter 15 The True Vine

Chapter 16 The Holy Spirit and the New Era

Chapter 17 The Lord's Prayer for His Loved Ones

#### IV. John 18-20 **Death and Resurrection of the Son of God**

Chapter 18 The Taking Captive of the Lord and Accusation raised against Him

Chapter 19 Condemnation, Crucifixion and Death of the Lord

Chapter 20 The Day of Resurrection

#### V. John 21 **Epilogues: The Lord Appears to His Disciples at the Lakeside**

##### **Did John's Gospel Expect Us To Accept The Historicity Of What He Wrote?**

The answer to this question must surely be a resounding 'yes'. At the commencement of his account he stresses that he is speaking about 'the Word made flesh', and then at the end of chapters 1-20 he writes, 'And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.' (John 20:30-31).

We may divide this verse into three parts:

- 1). 'Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples.'
- 2). 'That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah), the Son of God'.
- 3). 'That believing ye might have life through his name.'

So here we learn quite definitely that John's Gospel is a book of 'signs' *which were witnessed by the disciples (thus they are seen as having actually happened)* and that those signs were intended to inculcate belief and understanding about Jesus in those who heard of them, making them realize that Jesus was both Messiah (Christ) and Son of God. The consequence of believing would be that they would receive 'life'. In other words the signs were to be seen as historical events which did actually occur, and to which the disciples could bear witness, events which had a vital lesson to teach.

An examination of the Gospel reveals to us Seven Signs-Miracles, to which we can also add the miracle of the resurrection of Jesus. These are:

- 1). The turning of purificatory water into wine (John 2:1-11).
- 2). The healing of the high official's son at a distance (John 4:46-54).
- 3). The healing of the man who had been lame for thirty eight years (John 5:2-18).
- 4). The feeding of the five thousand with a few loaves and fishes (John 6:1-15).
- 5). The walking on the water (John 6:15-21).
- 6). The healing of the man blind from birth (John 9:1-41).
- 7). The raising of Lazarus (John 11:1-53).
- 8). We may add to these the miracle of the resurrection of Jesus. (John 20:1-29).

And this is backed up by the fact that later, in **John 21:24**, his colleagues wrote, 'This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.'

Next Week: Chapter One!

## Pastor Hank's Notes on The Gospel of John: Believe!



**Chapter One Outline:** This chapter falls easily into two main divisions: (1) The Prologue, Verses 1-18. (2) John the Baptist's Testimony to Jesus and the Calling of Disciples, Verses 19-51. Thus, aside from the Prologue, this chapter records the events of only four days of Jesus' Ministry. John opens his Gospel in this Chapter, with declaring both to the Godhead and Manhood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Testimony of John the Baptist is here given to the Person and Glory of Christ. The calling of Andrew and Peter. An Account of Nathaniel. Appropriately, it begins with the words, "In the beginning," for a number of important beginnings appear in it, such as:

The beginning of all things, John 1:3.

The beginning of the recognition of Jesus as the Son of God, John 1:34.

The beginning of Jesus' disciples, John 1:41.

The beginning of the apostleship, John 1:41.

The beginning of the use of the title, Son of Man, John 1:51.

The beginning of Jesus' public ministry.

### **John Chapter 1. The Prologue, Verses 1-18:**

**Prologue** comes from the Greek term *prologos*, which means "before word," is an opening of a story that establishes the setting, and gives background details. Generally speaking, the main function of a **Prologue** tells some earlier story, and connects it to the main story.

#### **Verse 1**

**1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Every word in this verse is big with importance. John begins his gospel with the same words that Moses used to open the Book of Genesis. In both cases they are the signal for the beginning of two of the most vicious and damaging battles to ever attack The Bible. In the case of Genesis the subject is creation. The attack comes in the form of the teaching that the universe and all that is in it evolved. This attack, though weak on evidence, is trumpeted by public education, the news media and Hollywood as fact. In the case of John, the subject is the Word of God. The "Word" referred to in John is the Lord Jesus Christ and that Jesus is God. Yet it is amazing that He is given a title that describes something we can write and read.

## Genesis 1:1

**1** In the **beginning** God created the heaven and the earth.

## Proverbs 8:23

<sup>23</sup>I was set up from everlasting, from the **beginning**, or ever the earth was.

**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...** Each of the Gospels emphasizes a different origin of Jesus.

- Matthew shows Jesus came from Abraham through David, and demonstrates that He is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament (Matthew 1:1-17).
- Mark shows Jesus came from Nazareth, demonstrating that Jesus is a Servant (Mark 1:9).
- Luke shows Jesus came from Adam, demonstrating that Jesus is the Perfect Man (Luke 3:23-38).
- John shows Jesus came from heaven, demonstrating that Jesus is God.

**In the beginning...** That is, before anything was formed - God began the great work of creation. This is the meaning of the word in Genesis 1:1, to which John here alludes. This phrase fully proves, from the pen of the inspired writer, that Jesus Christ was no part of the creation, as he existed when no part of that existed; and that consequently he is no creature, as all created nature was formed by him: "for without him was nothing made that is made" John 1:3.

Had the **Word** a beginning? John says, 'No: for if we reach back to any beginning, there already was in existence the Word.' At once it is evident to John's vision 'The Word' is no other than God the self-existent.

**was the Word...** Or, existed the Logos. Word translates the ancient Greek word Logos. The idea of the logos had deep and rich roots in both Jewish and Greek thinking. The Greek word [logos] from which Word is translated was widely known in the world of John's day, being found some 1,300 times in the writings of Philo, a Hellenistic Jew of Alexandria (30 B.C. to 40 A.D.).

## Psalm 33:6

<sup>6</sup>By the **word** of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

Therefore in this opening John said to both Jews and Greeks: "For centuries you've been talking, thinking, and writing about the Word (the logos). Now I will tell you who He is." John met both Jews and Greeks where they were at, and explained Jesus in terms they already understood.

"John was using a term which, with various shades of meaning, was in common use everywhere. He could reckon on all men catching his essential meaning." - Henry Morris

**and the Word was with God ...** Not with men or angels, for they have not been created yet. This means that our Lord was intimately associated with the Father upon a parity and equality with him.

He himself was in the beginning, face to face with God. The fully divine Word, existing from all eternity as a distinct Person, was enjoying loving fellowship with the Father. Thus, the full Deity of Christ, his eternity, and his distinct personal existence are confessed once more, in order that heretics may be refuted and the church may be established in the faith and love of God.

Jesus was “**with God**” - that is, He was united to him in a most intimate and close union before the creation; and, as it could not be said that God was “with himself alone”.

This expression denotes friendship or intimacy. Compare Mark 9:19. John affirms that he was “with God” in the beginning - that is, before the world was made. It implies, therefore, that he was partaker of the divine glory; that he was blessed and happy with God. It proves that he was intimately united with the Father, so as to partake of his glory and to be appropriately called by the name God. He has himself explained it:

### **John 17:5**

<sup>5</sup>And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

His personal co-existence with the Father, The Word was with God: that is, eternally and inseparably with him, in the same essence and nature, being in the Father, as well as with him, so that the Father never was without him,

**and the Word was God...** With this brilliant statement, John 1:1 sets forth one of the most basic foundations of our faith – The Deity of Jesus and The Trinity. We can follow John’s logic:

- There is a Being known as the Word.
- This Being is God, because He is eternal (In the beginning)
- This Being is God, because He is plainly called God (the Word was God).
- At the same time, this Being does not encompass all that God is. God the Father is a distinct Person from the Word (the Word was with God).

This is the foundation of the doctrine of the Trinity:

1. That the second person is in some sense “distinct” from the first.
2. That he is intimately united with the first person in essence, so that there are not two or more Gods.
3. That the second person may be called by the same name; has the same attributes; performs the same works; and is entitled to the same honors with the first, and that therefore he is “the same in substance, and equal in power and glory,” with God.

### **Here’s Ten Bible verses on the Deity of Jesus Christ! Jesus is God:**

First of all God The Father says that Jesus is God!

#### **1. Hebrews 1:8**

<sup>8</sup>But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

#### **2. 1 Timothy 3:16**

<sup>16</sup>And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

#### **3. John 1:1**

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

**4. Revelation 1:8**

<sup>8</sup>I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

**5. Isaiah 9:6**

<sup>6</sup>For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

**6. 1 Timothy 1:16-17**

<sup>16</sup>Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

<sup>17</sup>Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

**7. John 20:28**

<sup>28</sup>And Thomas answered and said unto him, My LORD and my God.

**8. 1 John 5:20**

<sup>20</sup>And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

**9. Acts 20:28**

<sup>28</sup>Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

**10. Colossians 2:9**

<sup>9</sup>For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

\*\*Bonus:

**2 Corinthians 4:4**

<sup>4</sup>In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

So, the Father and the Son (the Son is known here as the Word) are equally God, yet distinct in their Person. The Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father. Yet they are equally God, with God the Holy Spirit making one God in three Persons.

The Son of God may be called “the Word,” because he is **The One** by which God broadcasts His will and issues His commandments.

**Hebrews 1:1-3**

**1** God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

**2** Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

<sup>3</sup>Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:

**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...** The Watchtower (the Jehovah's Witnesses) bible, called *New World Translation*, translates this line quite differently. The Jehovah's Witness translation reads like this: "In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god." Their translation is used to deny the teaching that Jesus is God, and is a wrong and misleading translation.

"A GROSSLY MISLEADING TRANSLATION. It is neither scholarly nor reasonable to translate John 1:1 'the Word was a god.' But of all the scholars in the world, so far as we know, none have translated this verse as Jehovah's Witnesses have done." - Dr. Julius R. Mantey

"The deliberate distortion of truth by this sect is seen in their New Testament translations. John 1:1 is translated: '... the Word was a god,' a translation which is **grammatically impossible**. It is abundantly clear that a sect which can translate the New Testament like that is intellectually dishonest." - Dr. William Barclay

## Verse 2

<sup>2</sup>The same was in the beginning with God.

The three propositions of John 1:1 are here reduced to a single declaration and re-affirmed. This definite repetition of the first verse prepares the way for the statement that follows in verse third; and the practice of repeating an important truth for the sake of emphasis, or of preparing the mind for connected truth, is characteristic of this evangelist's style.

This is a repetition of what is before said, and is made to show the importance of the truths before delivered; namely, the eternity of Christ, his distinct personality, and proper deity; and that the phrase: "in the beginning", is to be joined to each of the above sentences; and so proves, not only his eternal existence, but his eternal existence with the Father, and also his eternal deity.

## Conclusion:

This repetition of the opening clause is intended to stress what has been said already, thereby giving twofold witness. It is stressing that 'in the beginning, before anything was created, God and His Logos (Word) were there together, already eternally existent.' This was something both Jew and Greek could agree on. Where they would have differed was concerning what the Word consisted of. John tells both that it consisted of Jesus as the full expression of God, as the eternal Reason, as the powerful saving word of God through Whom He acts.



## Pastor Hank's Notes on The Gospel of John: Believe!



**Chapter One Outline:** This chapter falls easily into two main divisions: (1) The Prologue, Verses 1-18. (2) John the Baptist's Testimony to Jesus and the Calling of Disciples, Verses 19-51. Thus, aside from the Prologue, this chapter records the events of only four days of Jesus' Ministry. John opens his Gospel in this Chapter, with declaring both to the Godhead and Manhood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Testimony of John the Baptist is here given to the Person and Glory of Christ. The calling of Andrew and Peter. An Account of Nathaniel.

### **The Prologue, Verses 1-18.**

**Prologue** comes from the Greek term *prologos*, which means "before word," is an opening of a story that establishes the setting, and gives background details. Generally speaking, the main function of a **Prologue** tells some earlier story, and connects it to the main story.

### **The work and nature of the Word, Verses 3-5:**

#### **Verse 3**

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

The first Verse in The Bible says:

#### **Genesis 1:1**

1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

GOD is said to have created all things: in this verse, **Jesus** is said to have created all things here in Verse 3. 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 "And 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 is Jesus), was at the beginning Creator God.

But why should Jesus uniquely be called 'the Word'? Certainly in Hebrew thought 'the Word' (Hebrew - *debar*) is seen as significant as an extension of God. "By the **word** of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." (**Psalms 33:6**). This links directly with Genesis 1 where "God said" and it was done. Creation took place by God's **word**. Thus the term 'Word' signifies the powerful, creative Word of God Who brought about creation. That this is in John's mind and **John 1:3** makes clear, for the Word is seen as the One who carries out the work of creation, 'All things were made by him'.

Creation means causing that to exist that had no previous being: this is evidently a work which can be effected only by an Omnipotent God.

**All things...** The expression cannot be limited to any part of the universe. It appropriately expresses everything which exists - all the vast masses of material worlds, and all the animals and things, great or small, that compose those worlds.

**All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made:**

#### **Colossians 1:16-17**

**16 For by him were all things created**, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

**17** And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

#### **Hebrews 1:2**

**2** Hath in these last days spoken unto us by **his Son**, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, **by whom also he made the worlds;**

#### **1 Corinthians 8:6**

**6** But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; **and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things**, and we by him.

**Observe here:** The argument which John uses to prove Christ to be God; it is taken from the **Work of Creation**. He that made all things, is truly and really God; and Jesus made all things, and nothing was made without him; therefore is Christ truly and really God.

#### **Verse 4**

**4** In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

Jesus is Author and Dispenser of all life unto his creatures. He is the original life in the order of nature, because by him man was created, (Genesis 1:26). He is spiritual life in the order of grace, **I am the way, the truth, and the life**. (John 14:6). He is eternal life in the order of glory, **This is the true God, and eternal life**. (1 John 5:20).

All creatures receiving light and life from Christ, not as an instrument, but as the fountain from whence it flows, and in which it is preserved, is an evident proof of his **Divinity**, and an argument that he is truly and really God. **In him was life; and the life was the light of men.**

Nothing can be more evident than this statement, and nothing can be more **Blessed!**

#### **Verse 5**

**5** And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

The dramatic shift to the present tense shows that John was not here dealing merely with a past phenomenon, but with a present reality. In the very nature of that overwhelming light in Christ Jesus, it is at once past, present, and future, ever shining in the gloom of mortal darkness; and in the remarkable truth of this Gospel, that light was viewed as a blazing sun illuminating the night of human sin and rebellion against God.

**and the darkness comprehended it not...** The basic hostility between light and darkness, good and evil, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of evil, appears in this verse. The unregenerated world hates God and the knowledge of his truth; but the hatred and opposition of evil men cannot prevent the light from shining. It shines of its own inherent glory regardless of how inadequate human response to it might be. The history of the last two millenniums is here summarized as the Light shining in darkness!

Therefore, without Jesus, we are *dead* and in *darkness*. We are lost. Significantly, man has an inborn fear towards both death and darkness.

So the picture is of the Word of God coming with the **light of life** ('eternal life' as it will often be spoken of from now on) and overcoming the darkness that blinds mankind. Truth has come. Darkness will be dispelled for those who respond, just as it was dispelled at the beginning. The Word has brought life (John 1:13; John 3:15-16; John 5:24; John 8:12; and often). And in receiving His life we receive light. It is this reception of life that is a central theme of the Gospel (John 20:31. See John 3:15-16; John 3:36; John 4:14; John 4:36; John 5:24; John 5:26; John 5:29; John 5:39-40; John 6:27; John 6:33; John 6:35; John 6:40; John 6:47-48; John 6:51; John 6:53-54; John 6:63; John 6:68; John 8:12; John 10:10; John 10:28; John 11:25; John 12:25; John 12:50; John 14:6; John 17:2-3; John 20:21).

### **The forerunner of the Word, Verses 6-8:**

#### **Verse 6**

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

**whose name was John... John The Baptist** (Gift of God, the Lord is gracious).

The forerunner of Christ who announced His coming to Israel.

**sent from God ...** The Apostle John identifies John the Baptist as a true prophet with a valid message from God. This verse, and the two following, form a parenthesis in this prologue dealing with the mission of John the Baptist.

#### **Matthew 3:3**

<sup>3</sup>For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

John the Baptist bore witness **of the light, that all men through him might believe**. The work of John the Baptist was deliberately focused on bringing people to faith in Jesus the Messiah.

#### **Verse 7**

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

This parenthesis, including John 1:6, presents the following facts with reference to John the Baptist:

He came from God and was therefore a true prophet.

He was not the light. His mission was to bear witness to the light.

To bear witness to the light was to bear witness to Jesus Christ.

**that all men through him might believe...**The purpose of God in sending John the Baptist was that all people might believe in Christ. His was the function of a herald who went ahead of a king

to announce his coming and to prepare the popular mind to receive him. John the Baptist effectively discharged that responsibility. The fact that many would not believe was due to hardening and prejudice on their part and not to any fault of the noble herald who went before the Lord in the spirit and power of God.

### Verse 8

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

John the Baptist's work was remarkably well received and widely known. It was important for the John the Gospel writer to make it clear that John the Baptist **was not that Light**, but that He pointed towards and bore witness of **that Light**.

**but was sent to bear witness of that Light...** "The matter of **witness** is a serious thing, establishing truth and giving ground for faith. Yet, **witness** "does more. It commits a man. If I take my stand in the witness box and testify that such-and-such is the truth of the matter I am no longer neutral. I have committed myself. John lets us know that there are those like John the Baptist who have committed themselves by their witness to Christ." - Henry Morris

That this light refers to Jesus is immediately made clear (John 1:10-11; John 1:14) and also comes out later in the chapter where John the Baptist bears his testimony to Jesus (John 1:29-34). It is testimony to how faithful the Gospel writer is to his sources that he does not try to put terms like 'the Word' or even 'the light' on the lips of John the Baptist. But the reader is left in no doubt that Jesus is the One to Whom 'the Word' and 'the light' refer.

### The rejection of the Word, Verses 9-11:

#### Verse 9

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

**That lighteth...** That enlightens. He removes darkness, error, ignorance, from the mind.

**Every man...** This is an expression denoting, in general, the whole human race - Jews and Gentiles. John preached to the Jews. Jesus came "to be a light to lighten the Gentiles," as well as to be the "glory of the people of Israel," Luke 2:32.

Through God's 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 leads to the complete light of Jesus Christ or produces condemnation in those who reject such "light".

The sense of the phrase is, that Christ, shining forth in the light of the gospel, is a light that *lightens all the world*. The light of the law shone only upon the Jews; but this light spreads wider, even over the face of the whole earth.

#### Verse 10

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

These words bluntly state a near incredibility. That the very Creator of the world should cast aside the glory of His eternal existence and choose to enter earth life as a man subject to all the inconveniences and limitations of the flesh - that is a fact of awesome wonder; but added to that is

the stubborn and rebellious refusal of the Lord's creation to acknowledge Him when he came! As the prophet cried out so long ago, "Lord, who hath believed our report?" (Isaiah 53:1). God was not taken by surprise by man's refusal to know the Lord, for His prophets had faithfully foretold it. The repetition of "world" in these lines dramatizes the marvel of humanity's not knowing Jesus when he came.

**and the world was made by him...** Again, A Bible Verse stating that Jesus Created!



**And the world did not know Him:** This is strange. God came to the same world He created, to the creatures made in His image, and yet **the world did not know Him**. This shows how deeply fallen human nature rejects God, and that many reject (**did not receive**) God word and **Light**.

#### Verse 11

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

Here is the same dramatic repetition of "his own," similar to the repetition of "the world" in the previous verse. The better part of a century had passed since Jesus came, when John wrote these words; and yet, in these words, the apostle seems still to be struck with the marvel that the Lord's own people, the chosen people=Israel, who should have been the first to know and hail his coming, that even **HIS OWN PEOPLE** did not welcome him. The words of the apostle in this passage reveal a profound and pathetic grief on his own part that Israel, in its major aspect, had rejected the Lord - but not all of them. John, having registered the fact of the unbelief of the chosen people (in major part, that is), next turned to a consideration of those who had received him.

\*\* Interesting Commentary from a Bible Scholar: 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 receiving of the Word, Verses 12-13:

##### Verse 12

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:

Verses 12 and 13 stand in contrast to verses 10 and 11. John softens the sweeping rejection of Messiah by stressing a **believing remnant**.

**But as many as received him...** 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.

**to them gave he power to become the sons of God...** “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.”

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

### **Romans 10:9**

**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.**

**even to them that believe on his name...** This phrase is used regularly by John denoting a personal, responsive faith. It is so simple and yet so many miss out.

### **Verse 13**

**13** Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

This refers to the “new birth,” or to the great change in the sinner’s mind called regeneration or conversion. It means that they did not become the children of God in virtue of their natural birth, or because they were the children of “Jews,” or because they were descended from pious parents. The term “to be born” is often used to denote this change.

New birth is a condition of salvation, and it was assumed by John that believers who received the right to become God's children would exercise it by obedience of the gospel, thus being born again; and the burden of the thought in this verse is that the new birth is of God, spiritual, and from above, and that it does not derive from Abrahamic descent, that is, "of blood," nor "of the flesh" nor "of the will of man."

All Man has to do is believe, and believing is not a work it is a faith. It is God's Grace that then Saves Man. The result: Man becomes a son of God. “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” (Verse 12)

### **Verse 14**

**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.

**And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us...** Hello Christmas!

### **Isaiah 9:6**

**6** For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

### **1 Timothy 3:16**

**16** And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifest in the flesh,** justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received

up into glory.

Some greatly err who suppose that John differed from the Synoptics regarding the virgin birth of our Lord, for it is in this verse recorded that the Word who was God did in fact become flesh, and that he was "the only begotten" of the Father! John's terminology here is fantastic. He did not use any of the terminology employed by the synoptics, and yet he stated here the doctrine of the virgin birth in terms that were suggested by his presentation of Christ as the divine Word. That the author was an eye-witness of Christ's glory is affirmed in the parenthesis. Significantly, the pronoun "we" indicates that others besides the author had opportunity to witness the Word incarnate; and thus the statement here has the weight of a confession by **ALL** the apostles of the deity and Godhead of Jesus Christ.

**And the Word was made flesh ...** connects with John 1:1,2 and means that God became a man. This is John's statement of the doctrine of the incarnation.

**and dwelt among us...** God has come close to you in Jesus Christ. You don't have to struggle to find Him; He came to you, He is Living among you! Jesus entered into a new dimension of existence through the gateway of human birth and took up his residence among men.

**and dwelt among us...**The idea behind this phrase is more literally, dwelt as in a tent among us. From the sense and the context, John connected the coming of Jesus to humanity with God's coming to and living with Israel in the tent of the tabernacle. It could be stated, and tabernacled among us.

"If God has come to dwell among men by the Word made flesh let us pitch our tents around: this central tabernacle; do not let us live as if God were a long way off." - Charles Spurgeon

**(and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father),...** The word **beheld** is stronger than the words "saw" or "looked." John tells us that he and the other disciples carefully studied the glory of the Word made flesh. The verb "beheld" contains the root of the word "theater" and connotes more than a casual glance. It involves careful scrutiny of what is before one in order to understand its significance.

**and we beheld his glory...** This refers to the transfiguration, at which John was present, in company with Peter and James.

**the only begotten of the Father...** That is, the only person born of a woman, whose human nature never came by the ordinary way of generation; it being a mere creation in the womb of the virgin, by the energy of the Holy Ghost.

**full of grace and truth...** Full of favor, kindness, and mercy to men; teaching the way to the kingdom of God, with all the simplicity, plainness, dignity, and energy of truth.

## Verse 15

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.

So as to leave his readers in no doubt the author now stresses again that 'the Word' is the One to whom John the Baptist bears witness. John, who has been sent by God (John 1:6), and whose powerful ministry is everywhere acknowledged, now testifies to the superiority of Jesus. He says of the Word, 'This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for

he was before me.’ (Compare John 1:30).

John the Baptist’s testimony was rooted in his understanding of the pre-existence of Jesus. He knew that Jesus was **before** him in every sense.

### Verse 16

16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

This new order has an inexhaustible supply of grace (**grace for grace**, the figure of speech similar to *sorrows upon sorrows*) and truth, contrasting with an order of rigid laws and regulations **given through Moses**.

**Grace** means favor, gracious care and assistance, goodwill, undeserved love. And it will be continually self-producing, a continual flow, never ceasing. This fullness abounds towards them. It flows like a river, grace (God’s unmerited love in action) following after grace in an unceasing flow.

### Verse 17

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

John now stresses the overflowing wonder of what Jesus, the Word, has come to do, and stresses His superiority over Moses. The instruction (the Torah) has been replaced by the Word. The book has been replaced by a Person. Moses had given God’s instruction (Hebrew torah = instruction, law) as a guide to men, and as providing through the sacrifices a way of forgiveness, but the instruction had been made harsh and unreasonable by its interpreters. Jesus has come as God’s direct Word to man, active in men’s lives, and has brought undeserved love and favor, together with the fullness of truth. There is nothing harsh and unreasonable about what He declares. Indeed His fullness has overflowed into them in unbounded measure, far exceeding anything offered by Moses.

### Verse 18

18 No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

John sums up by declaring that Jesus is the final revelation of God, as the One Who alone partakes in His essence. He is ‘God’s only begotten’, alone enjoying the very nature and essence of God.

**No man hath seen God at any time...** There were those who had awesome revelations of God, such as Abraham in Genesis 15:12-17; Moses in Exodus 3:2; Exodus 33:21-23 ; Job in Job 42:5-6; Isaiah in Isaiah 6:1 and Ezekiel in Ezekiel 1, but these were but shadows of the great reality. Mainly He was revealed in fire. They had not seen God as He really is. For God is the One Who dwells in unapproachable light, Whom no man has seen nor can see.

**which is in the bosom of the Father,..** The expression signifies, Kindred and oneness of essence: – and is derived from the fond and intimate union of children and parents.

**he hath declared him...** The Father has revealed Jesus and showed him unto us, whereas before he was hidden under the shadows of the law, so that our minds were not able to perceive him: for whoever sees him, sees the Father also.

**\*\*\* Bonus Notes From: The Biblical Illustrator**

**From Verse 9**

**That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.**

**I.**

CHRIST IS THE TRUE LIGHT. This is seen when we reflect that

1. He is the source of all the knowledge we have of the Divine Being--His relation to us, His infinite love, and the wonderful plan of salvation He has devised.
2. He is the source of all the knowledge we have of the life beyond.
3. He is the source of all the consolation we experience under the pressure of trial.

**II. HE LIGHTETH EVERY MAN.**

1. The general direction which the beams of the true Light are here directed to take is a marvellous instance of His condescension. The noble chandelier which floods the throne-room of the palace with its dazzling light throws not a single ray into the murky gloom of the squalid courts not far away. That Christ, the true Light, should dart His beams downwards to this abiding-place of sin is part of the wonderfulness of the gospel which we preach.

2. To Him we owe the gift of reason, which is one of the two great foundation stones of natural religion.

3. He has placed within us the gift of conscience--God's eye and voice, a witness against ourselves.

4. The proclamation of the gospel in every land.

**III. THE TRUE LIGHT IS MADE EVIDENT FROM THE WORKING OF HIS SPIRIT AND GRACE.** (*H. W. Price.*)

**Christ's light is**

**I.** The light of NATURAL REASON, which He has given us to cultivate and improve, for the benefit of ourselves and others, especially in the great concerns of religion. This light, which even the Gentiles had, was sufficient to have led them to the knowledge of the true God, and, by the visible works of the creation, to understand His "eternal power and Godhead" Romans 1:10).

**II.** The light of REVELATION. By this light His will has been made known to us in the Holy Scriptures; the religion of nature commenced revealed; and the lesser light of natural reason was not extinguished by, but absorbed in, revelation. This further light was typified to us by the Shechinah in the tabernacle, and by that bright cloud by day and pillar of fire by night which conducted the Israelites through the wilderness.

**III.** The light of the GOSPEL: and this is represented by that noblest and brightest of all the heavenly luminaries, the Sun; Christ Himself, who is therefore styled "the Sun of Righteousness," having now arisen on His Church "with healing in His wings." This is the light which constitutes our present day.

**IV.** The last and most perfect light of all will be that of GLORY, which shall never set, nor ever change. But this light none shall ever behold who neglect the use of those lesser lights, who advance not gradually from reason to revelation, from revelation to faith, from faith to glory. (*Wogan.*)

### **The arrival of the Light**

**I.** Its NATURE. “True,” not the genuine as opposed to the false, but the substantial, the essential, the original, the permanent, as opposed to the shadowy, phenomenal, derived, transitory.

**II.** Its INFLUENCE. Set forth

**1.** Intensively, it lighteth.

**2.** Extensively, as reaching to every man, *i.e.*, to all mankind, in the sense that its light exists for all, and to some degree shines on all, and to all souls who inwardly admit its beams.

**III.** Its CONDITION, described as

**1.** Coming into the world, *i.e.*, in process of passing from a Divine and Eternal into a human and temporal mode of existence, and

**2.** Coming into His own, *i.e.*, as unfolding His glory before the theocratic people. (*T. Whitelaw, D. D.*)

### **The true Light**

**I.** He is UNDECEIVING light, the true light in opposition to all the false lights of the Gentiles.

**II.** He is REAL light, true in opposition to ceremonial types and shadows.

**III.** He is UNDERIVED light, true in opposition to all light that is borrowed, communicated, or participated from another.

**IV.** He is SUPEREMINENT light, true in opposition to all that is ordinary and common. (*Arrowsmith.*)

### **Christ the Enlightener**

Jesus Christ enlightening every man

**I.** FROM WITHIN, *i.e.*, in the intuitive conceptions of the mind.

**1.** This light is internal, shining in the mental constitution of every man. What was life in the Word pre-incarnate was light or reason in men.

**2.** This light is innate in every man. “That was the true Light which lighteth every man as he cometh,” etc., is a translation of many scholars. God takes care to write His name on the soul of every man; human nature bears the sign-manual of its Maker in its deepest constitution (Romans 1:19, “in them”).

**3.** This light is Divine, the same in its nature as that which illuminates God Himself. The light proceeding from the sun is the same as that which resides in the sun.

**4.** This light is persistent. It continues to shine notwithstanding the Fall and its consequences “lighteth,” present tense.

**II.** FROM WITHOUT, in the revealed doctrines of Christianity.

**1.** It is a supernatural light: not unnatural, or contranatural, for the most perfect correspondence obtains between the natural and the supernatural. Railway companies often possess running powers on each other’s property, and the natural and the supernatural often run their trains on each other’s lines. The latter is only an extension of the former.

2. It is a perfect light: true, *i.e.*, the complete as opposed to the imperfect, the full as opposed to the partial. Christ is this; not a ray wanting. You may see God *through* the creation, but you may see Him *in* Jesus Christ.

3. It is a universal light.

### **The Light of the world**

There has been a threefold revelation of the Word.

**I. THROUGH NATURE.** "In the beginning," before there was ear to hear or mind to understand--the mind of God was speaking with itself. There was a Word. Then

1. The Word is spoken of as bringing the world into being, *i.e.*, God's Word found utterance in creation. A word is an expression or a work. The most expressive of all are not those which the lips speak. The American sculptor gazed upon the sky upon a summer's morning. He went about haunted with the memory of it. It was a necessity for him to express it. Had he been a poet he would have thrown it into words; a painter, on canvas; an architect, into a building; but being a sculptor his thoughts and syllables were expressed in stone. This world is God's sculptured work whereby He speaks out Himself.

2. This creation is a pervading immanence. "He was in the world." Creation is not the work of a Divine watchmaker, who winds it up, leaves it to go by itself, interfering now and then in great emergencies called miracles. He is in the world, the life of all that is. The world is the form of which Christ is the Personality. The beauty of the sea-shell and of the field-flower is the loveliness of God. The world is an everlasting anthem hymning God's secrets.

**II. THROUGH MAN.**

1. Universally: "lighteth every man." Just as the sunlight shines on all, more intensely in the tropics, more feebly at the poles, yet shines on all. Your reason and conscience are the God within you. Thus the Fathers spoke of the wisdom of Plato and others as the unconscious Christ within them. Thus, too, in the Old Testament rulers and judges are called "gods" John 10:35-36).

2. Specially: "He came to His own." The distinction is between those who received the light common to every man and those who received the special illumination which entitled them to be His own--the Jewish people, the inspired people. Inspiration is God's acting on man's higher spirit--his worship and reverence. There is an inspiration of genius, but the inspiration of the prophet is another thing altogether. The Jews were not great statesmen, artists, scientists; but the thought of God, the sanctity of duty, moral and spiritual truth were in them as in no other nation on earth.

**III. THROUGH THE INCARNATION.** God manifested Himself not through what Jesus taught or spoke, but through what Jesus was and did.

1. Christ was not a transient theophany like the burning bush, the Angel of the Covenant, or the Shechinah glory.

2. But God Himself in man and with man for ever. The application is

### **Christ the Light of all the living**

**I. EVERY MAN COMES INTO THE WORLD WITH A LIGHT IN HIM.** Dim in infancy, but ready to be fanned by educational influences; dark in heathenism., but glimmering amongst fogs of superstition. This light reflects

1. On social obligation. Every man has the sense of right and wrong.
2. On religious worship: the sentiment of a God is universal.
3. On future retribution: reference to a future life of reward and punishment instinctive. That all men have their light is clear

## II. THE LIGHT IN EVERY MAN IS FROM CHRIST. This fact

1. Exalts Christ as the Creator of souls (John 1:2). He puts this inextinguishable light in them.
2. Reveals the responsibility of heathens. They are not in utter darkness. It is amongst them in these elements of truth by living up to which they may be accepted of God. Thus heathen salvation is not independent of Christ.
3. Furnishes an argument for the congruity of Christianity with human nature. Both the natural and the gospel light come from one source in Christ and harmonize with each other.
4. Supplies a motive to extend the light of the gospel Although Christ gave men natural light, He saw their need of a higher light, and became flesh and died to give it. (*D. Thomas, D. D.*)

### **Christ our revealing Light**

I once spent a night on Mount Righi, and there was nothing visible for a rod from my window. But when the morning broke, the icy crowns of the Jungfrau and the Schreckhorn began to glitter in the early beams. They had been there all the night, waiting for the unfoldings of the dawn. Even so have all God's laws of the material universe and all His purposes of redeeming mercy through Jesus Christ been in existence from the beginning. They only waited for the dayspring of discovery. And one of the most delightful occupations of a devout mind is to watch the unfoldings of God, and to drink in new truths as He gradually reveals them. (*Theodore L. Cuyler.*)

### **Jesus our Light**

A visitor went one cold day last spring to see a poor young girl, kept at home by a lame hip. The room was on the north side of a bleak house. It was not a pleasant prospect without, nor was there much that was pleasant or cheerful within. Poor girl I what a cheerless life she has of it, he thought, as he saw how she was situated; and he immediately said to himself, what a pity it was her room was on the north side of the house. "You never have any sun," he said; "not a ray comes in at these windows. That I call a misfortune. Sunshine is everything; I love the sun." "Oh," she answered, with the sweetest smile, "my sun pours in at every window, and even through the cracks." The visitor looked surprised. "The Sun of Righteousness," she said, softly--"Jesus. He shines in here and makes everything bright to me." Who could doubt her? She looked perfectly happy. Yes! Jesus shining in at the window can make any spot beautiful and any home happy.

### **Christ the interpreter of human life**

**I. HOW FAR IS THIS TRUE?** Is it not rather sin which explains it? Its facts meet us everywhere, and sum up the life of the individual and the nation. We see them and feel their curse. But do they explain all? Are there not stirrings of the awakened conscience, longings of the soul for its lost innocence, better hopes, holier resolves, efforts to lay hold of God? Whence have these come? From the Light. Sin, so far from interpreting life, is its confusion. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." But sin has obscured it all; caused its power and promise to be wasted, changed its blessing into a curse, quenched its light in darkness. A saved soul--that is consistent; a lost soul--there is bewilderment in the very thought.

We cannot understand our own being till Christ gives us light; then our darkness passes, and the true light shineth.

**II.** It is not only true that salvation in Christ is the end which alone makes human life intelligible—**THE LAW OF LIFE IN CHRIST IS THE LAW ACCORDING TO WHICH WE WERE MADE.** The self-devoted Saviour is “the Light which lighteth every man.” Men resolve every motive into selfishness. Men are always seeking, it is said, to please, themselves. But this only confuses. There is an impulse of self-denial which cannot thus be explained away. The father labouring for his little ones, the mother watching over her sick child’s couch, do this for love’s sake, and not to please themselves. The patriot denies himself for his country’s good; we are often ashamed of our comforts when we reflect on the wants of others. The impossibility of living a life wholly selfish, the inspirations of pity, the passion for self-devotedness find their explanation in Christ. In Him we see the self-devoted life, the only true and blessed life for man. As Christ was it would be well for us all to be; that is what God would have us all be. All falls into harmony now; this is the true light.

**III.** If we turn from the quenchless impulse of devotedness to the **QUENCHLESS IMPULSE OF WORSHIP** if we ask how it was that amidst the degradations of heathenism and the corruption of the Jews, faith itself did not die out; if we ask how it was that though philosophers often seemed on the verge of proclaiming that all religion was only a fiction useful for civil government, men could not rid themselves of reverence; if we ask how it was that in even the worst superstitions of idolatry something may be often seen which strangely suggests to us the gospel revelation; again we are reminded that Christ, “the true Light which lighteth every man,” was in the world. He would not let them sink into utter godlessness. He preserved in them some little longing for the true, awoke in them some dissatisfaction with the false.

**IV. FROM THE CROSS COMES THE LIGHT WHICH INTERPRETS THE DEEPEST AND MOST MYSTERIOUS FACTS IN HUMAN LIFE.** The selfishness of pride is crushed as we recognize ourselves saved not by our own righteousness, but by Him that bore our curse. We have murmured that we should bear a doom for Adam’s sin: Christ bore the doom for Adam and for us. We have murmured at our birth into a state of sin and suffering. But Christ was born into it for us. Our Christian life is interpreted here. If we are restless amid our pleasures, if we cannot be happy, if we are yearning to be better, it is because the Word is within us pleading with us to receive Him. If we have not been allowed to sink amidst temptations, to rest in a life of ungodliness, and if there be in us purer feelings and holier aspirations, these seek their fulfilment in Christ. (*A. Mackennal, D. D.*)

## Pastor Hank's Notes on The Gospel of John: Believe!



**Chapter One Outline:** This chapter falls easily into two main divisions: (1) The Prologue, Verses 1-18. (2) John the Baptist's Testimony to Jesus and the Calling of Disciples, Verses 19-51. Thus, aside from the Prologue, this chapter records the events of only four days of Jesus' Ministry. John opens his Gospel in this Chapter, with declaring both to the Godhead and Manhood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Testimony of John the Baptist is here given to the Person and Glory of Christ. The calling of Andrew and Peter. The Account of Nathaniel.

### **John the Baptist's Testimony to Jesus and the Calling of Disciples, Verses 19-51:**

#### **The testimony of John the Baptist, Verses 19-22:**

##### **Verse 19**

19 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

**And this is the record of John...** We have already learned that John the Baptist *came for a witness* (John 1:7 and 1:15). Now we learn what his **testimony** regarding Jesus was.

John, born into a priestly family, belonged to the tribe of Levi. He began his ministry in the Jordan Valley when he was approximately 29 or 30 years old and boldly proclaimed the need for spiritual repentance and preparation for the coming of the Messiah. He was the cousin of Jesus Christ and served as His prophetic forerunner.

**when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him...** Here for the first time we come upon the use of the term 'the Jews' in this Gospel to denote not the people as a whole but one particular group – here, the religious establishment in Jerusalem.

**Who art thou?...** These priests and Levites knew that Messiah was promised. This John the Baptist they knew was a very special man. They even thought that perhaps this was Messiah. The only way they can find out is to ask him.

##### **Verse 20**

20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

With emphasis, John told the Jewish leaders *that he was not the Christ*. He did not come to focus attention on himself, because he was not the Messiah. His job was to point to the Messiah.

**Verse 21**

21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

**And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias?...** It might be easy for the priests and Levites from Jerusalem to associate John with Elijah because of his personality and because of the promise that Elijah would come before the Day of the Lord (Malachi 4:5-6).

John was careful to never say of *himself* that he was Elijah. Yet Jesus noted that in a sense, John *was* Elijah, ministering in his office and spirit (Matthew 11:13-14 and Mark 9:11-13).

**Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No...** The prophet spoken of by Moses, Deuteronomy 18:15, Deuteronomy 18:18. This text they had also misunderstood: for the prophet or teacher promised by Moses was no other than the Messiah himself.

What John The Baptist is saying is that he is not the prophet which they expect (The Messiah), nor Elijah.

**Verse 22**

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

John The Baptist has given the “No” to all the ideas they had formed of him. There is nothing left to them but to draw the definite statement from himself, or to return to their senders empty handed.

**John explains his identity to the religious leaders, Verses 23-28:****Verse 23**

23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

Quoting from Isaiah 40:3, John explained his work – to prepare **the way of the Lord**. His baptism prepared people, cleansing them for the coming King. The idea was, “Get cleaned up, get ready for a Royal visit.”

**Isaiah 40:3**

**3** The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

John’s real function was not to teach ethics, but to point men to Jesus. ‘Prepare ye the way of the Lord’ is a call to be ready, for the coming of the Messiah is near.

The religious leaders wanted to know who John was, and he wasn’t really interested in answering that question. He wanted to talk about his mission: to prepare the way for the Messiah.

**Verse 24**

24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.

The Pharisees were probably the most influential religious group in the eyes of the common people. They had originated from the Hasidim, the ‘separated ones’, who during the time of fierce religious

persecution of the Jews a century or two earlier had stood firm for the Law (the Torah - 'instruction' - which was composed of the books of Moses, the first five books in the Bible), for circumcision and for the Sabbath.

### Verse 25

25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

They were puzzled by his Baptism. They recognized that it must have some great religious significance but it was one they did not understand. Nor were they sure where he felt he had obtained the authority to perform such a Baptism. If he did not see himself as the expected Messiah, or as Elijah, or as the great Prophet, why was he Baptizing? They almost certainly saw his Baptizing as a special aspect of ceremonial washing.

### Verse 26

26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

John's Baptism demonstrated the humble willingness to repent, be cleansed, and prepare for the coming Messiah. Yet John's Baptism gave nothing to help someone *keep* clean. The work of Jesus and His Baptism of the Holy Spirit represents more than John's Baptism.

Jewish people in John's day practiced Baptism. It was an outgrowth of ceremonial washings, but only for Gentiles who wanted to become Jews. In submitting to John's Baptism, a Jew had to identify with Gentile converts. This was a genuine sign of repentance.

### Verse 27

27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

His reply was that he was baptizing with water in preparation for the coming of Another, someone who was already standing among them, and was yet unknown to them, someone so great that he, John, was not worthy to untie His sandals.

John proclaimed a 'baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins' (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3), and the connection between repentance from sin and his baptism is made clear by John himself. However, he also goes on to declare that his baptism is a precursor to the age of the Spirit (Mark 1:8; Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:15-16; John 1:30-34), and he specifically parallels his baptism with water with Jesus' coming 'baptism (drenching) with the Holy Spirit'. It is this fact which makes clear the significance of John's baptism.

This is especially confirmed by:

### Isaiah 44:3-4

3 For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

4 And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses.

### Verse 28

28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

The place is mentioned, not only to authenticate the narrative, but also to inform us that this answer was given amidst a numerous assembly of people; for there were many who flocked to John's baptism, and this was his ordinary place for baptizing.

The interview took place at Bethany (House of the ferry-boat) on the east bank of the Jordan at the spot called in Origen's time Bethabara (House of the ford) — the traditional place of the passage of the Ark and the nation under Joshua (Joshua 3:14-17).

### Verse 29

29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

**The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith...** The day after the Jews made inquiry whether he was the Christ.

**Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world...** Thus John the Baptist hailed Jesus of Nazareth as the long expected Messiah of Israel and the Savior of all mankind.

In this first announcement of the great office of the Son of God, it was his relation to man's sin that was emphasized. He "taketh away the sin of the world!" Christ did not come to solve the political problems of Israel, nor to break the back of Roman tyranny, nor for bringing improvements in agriculture, trade, medicine, or education, nor for any similar thing. Christ came to redeem people from sin. This is the only problem incapable of solution by the race of man; but this problem is so malignant and pervasive that it requires to be solved first, before the final solution of all the other problems can be achieved, thus being the one great need of mortal man that it should be truly solved.

**Behold the Lamb...** A "lamb," among the Jews, was killed and eaten at the Passover to commemorate their deliverance from Egypt, Exodus 12:3-11. A lamb was offered in the tabernacle, and afterward in the temple, every morning and evening, as a part of the daily worship, Exodus 29:38-39. The Messiah was predicted as a lamb led to the slaughter, to show his patience in his sufferings, and readiness to die for man, Isaiah 53:7. A lamb, among the Jews, was also an emblem of patience, meekness, gentleness. On "all" these accounts, rather than on any one of them alone, Jesus was called "the Lamb." He was innocent 1 Peter 2:23-25; he was a sacrifice for sin the substance represented by the daily offering of the lamb, and slain at the usual time of the evening sacrifice Luke 23:44-46; and he was what was represented by the Passover, turning away the anger of God, and saving sinners by his blood from vengeance and eternal death.

**The Lamb of God:** John used the image of the sacrificial lamb, represented many times in the Old Testament. Jesus is the perfect fulfillment of every time that image is displayed.

- He is the lamb slain before the foundation of the world.
- He is the animal slain in the Garden of Eden to cover the nakedness of the first sinners.
- He is the lamb God would Himself provide for Abraham as a substitute for Isaac.
- He is the Passover lamb for Israel.
- He is the lamb for the guilt offering in the Levitical sacrifices.
- He is Isaiah's lamb to the slaughter, ready to be shorn
- Each of these lambs fulfilled their role in their death; this was an announcement that Jesus would

die, and as a sacrifice for the **sin of the world**.

At the dawn of His ministry, Jesus was greeted with words declaring His destiny – His sacrificial agony and death on the cross for the sin of mankind. The shadow of the cross was cast over the entire ministry of Jesus.

**of God...** Appointed by God, approved by God, and most dear to him; the sacrifice which he chose, and which he approves to save people from death.

**which taketh away the sin...** This denotes his “bearing” the sins of the world, or the sufferings which made an atonement for sin. Compare Isaiah 53:4; 1 John 3:5; 1 Peter 2:24. He takes away sin by “bearing” in his own body the sufferings which God appointed to show his sense of the evil of sin, thus magnifying the law, and rendering it consistent for him to pardon.

**of the world...** Of all mankind, Jew and Gentile. His work was not to be confined to the Jew, but was also to benefit the Gentile; it was not confined to any one part of the world, but was designed to open the way of pardon to all men. **He was the propitiation for the sins of the whole world.**

**Unlimited atonement** (sometimes called **general atonement** or **universal atonement**) is a doctrine in Protestant Christianity that is normally associated with Amyraldians and non-Calvinist Christians. The doctrine states that Jesus died as a propitiation for the benefit of mankind without exception. It is a doctrine distinct from other elements of the Calvinist acronym TULIP and is contrary to the Calvinist doctrine of limited atonement.

A doctrinal issue that divides Christians is the question of the extent of the atonement. This question typically goes as follows: "Did Christ bear the sins of the elect alone on the cross, or did his death expiate the sins of all human beings?"

**1 John 2:2 Says:**

**2** And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, **but also for the sins of the whole world.**

In his commentary on 1 John 2:2, John Calvin wrote:

*Christ suffered for the sins of the whole world and in the goodness of God is offered unto all men without distinction; His blood being shed not for a part of the world only but for the whole human race. For although in the world nothing is found worthy of the favor of God yet He holds out the propitiation to the whole world, since without exception He summons all to the faith of Christ which is nothing else than the door unto hope.*

**Titus 2:11**

**11** For the grace of God that bringeth salvation **hath appeared to all men,**

**Hebrews 2:9**

**9** But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God **should taste death for every man.**

**1 John 4:14**

14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be **the Saviour of the world.**

**2 Corinthians 5:14-15**

14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

15 **And that he died for all**, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

**1 Timothy 2:6**

6 Who gave himself a ransom **for all**, to be testified in due time.

**Isaiah 53:6**

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

**1 Timothy 2:4**

4 Who will have **all men** to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

**Romans 5:18**

18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift **came upon all men unto justification of life.**

**John 3:16**

16 For God so loved **the world**, that he gave his only begotten Son, that **whosoever believeth in him** should not perish, but have everlasting life.

**Ezekiel 18:23**

<sup>23</sup>Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?

**Calvin wrote in his commentary on John 3:16:**

*Faith in Christ brings life to all, and that Christ brought life, because the Heavenly Father **loves the human race, and wishes that they should not perish....***

*That whosoever believeth on him may not perish. It is a remarkable commendation of faith, that it frees us from everlasting destruction. For he intended expressly to state that, though we appear to have been born to death, undoubted deliverance is offered to us by the faith of Christ; and, therefore, that we ought not to fear death, which otherwise hangs over us. And he has **employed the universal term** whosoever, both to **invite all indiscriminately to partake of life, and to cut off every excuse from unbelievers.** Such is also the import of the term World, which he formerly used; for though nothing will be found in the world that is worthy of the favor of God, yet he shows himself to be reconciled to the whole world, when he invites all men without exception to the faith of Christ, which is nothing else than an entrance into life.*

### What Unlimited Atonement States:

*The purpose of the atonement was universal*—Jesus died on behalf of all people, not just the elect.



*The atonement makes a way for all to respond to the Gospel call*—Part of the effect of the atonement is the restoration of the ability to respond to God's call of salvation.

*Salvation is available for all*—The doctrine of unlimited atonement rejects the predeterminism associated with Calvinism and states that every human has the opportunity to accept Jesus through faith.



*The atonement legally pays for the sins of those who believe on Jesus*—Only those who believe on Jesus are forgiven—only the believers' sins are paid.

### What It Does Not State:

*Jesus paid the penalty for those who deny faith in Him, and His death was a substitutionary atonement for those who deny Him*—Though the term *unlimited atonement* can easily give the incorrect assumption that Jesus' payment encompassed all people, unlimited atonement maintains a limit on the legal effect. Jesus' death was indeed an *offer* of a substitutionary atonement to all, but this offer was resistible; though salvation is offered to all, not all are saved.

## Pastor Hank's Notes on The Gospel of John: Believe!



**Chapter One Outline:** This chapter falls easily into two main divisions: (1) The Prologue, Verses 1-18. (2) John the Baptist's Testimony to Jesus and the Calling of Disciples, Verses 19-51. Thus, aside from the Prologue, this chapter records the events of only four days of Jesus' Ministry. John opens his Gospel in this Chapter, with declaring both to the Godhead and Manhood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Testimony of John the Baptist is here given to the Person and Glory of Christ. The calling of Andrew and Peter. The Account of Nathaniel.

**John the Baptist's Testimony to Jesus and the Calling of Disciples, Verses 19-51:**

**John the Baptist's testimony: Jesus is the Son of God, Verses 30-34:**

### Verse 30

30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.

As a man John was six months older (Luke 1:36) than Jesus, but Jesus was the **Eternal Word**. The Baptist therefore asserts here the pre-existence of our Lord; **“for he was before me.”**

### Verse 31

31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

John was not personally close with Jesus. Though they were related to each other, yet it seems that they had here not much or no personal contact. John had lived chiefly in the hill country of Judea. Jesus had been employed with Joseph at Nazareth. Until Jesus came to be baptized Matthew 3:13-14, it seems that John had very little or no acquaintance with him. He understood that he was to announce that the Messiah was about to appear. He was sent to proclaim His Coming, but he did not personally know Jesus, or that he was to be the Messiah. This proves that there could have been no collusion or agreement between them to impose on the people.

### Verse 32

32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

In order for John to be able to see the Holy Spirit, it was necessary for the Spirit to assume a physical form; and, appropriately, it was that of a dove, long the symbol of peace and goodness.

This was not a mere case of a bird landing on Jesus for a moment, a phenomenon which, while rare, is occasionally experienced by men. Much more was involved. The heavens were opened, and the dove visibly descended from on high, an action totally dissociated from the invariable flight pattern of a dove, which is always horizontal. Also, there was a voice out of Heaven (Matthew 3:17), the same being the testimony of God himself that "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." In addition to all this, the Spirit-Dove remained visibly upon the Lord. Thus, Jesus was absolutely identified as the one who would baptize in the Holy Spirit.



### Verse 33

33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

God gave John the Baptist the sure sign to know the Messiah. He would be the one on Whom the Holy Spirit descended upon from Heaven. John was a reliable witness regarding Jesus, because he had confirming evidence from God.

### Question: "What of John the Baptist's Baptism and today's Baptism?"

**Answer:** Though today the word baptism generally evokes thoughts of identifying with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, baptism did not begin with Christians. For years before Christ, the Jews had used baptism in ritual cleansing ceremonies of Gentile proselytes. John the Baptist took baptism and applied it to the Jews themselves—it wasn't just the Gentiles who needed cleansing. Many believed John's message and were baptized by him (Matthew 3:5–6). The baptisms John performed had a specific purpose.

In Matthew 3:11, John the Baptist mentions the purpose of his baptisms:

**Matthew 3:11**

<sup>11</sup>I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

Paul affirms this in Acts 19:4:

**Acts 19:4**

<sup>4</sup>Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus. John's baptism had to do with repentance—it was a symbolic representation of changing one's mind and going a new direction. "And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." (Matthew 3:6). Being baptized by John demonstrated a recognition of one's sin, a desire for spiritual cleansing, and a commitment to follow God's law in anticipation of the Messiah's arrival.

There were some, like the Pharisees, who came to the Jordan to observe John's ministry but who had no desire to step into the water themselves. John rebuked them sternly:

**Matthew 3:7-8**

<sup>7</sup>But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

<sup>8</sup>Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

Even the religious leaders needed to repent of their sin, although they saw no need of it.

Christian baptism today also symbolizes repentance, cleansing, and commitment, but Jesus has given it a different emphasis. Christian baptism is a mark of one's identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. It is representative of a cleansing that is complete and a commitment that is the natural response of one who has been made new. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross completely washes away our sins, and we are raised to new life empowered by the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 5:17–21; Romans 6:1–11). With John's baptism, a person repented of sin and was therefore ready to place his faith in Jesus Christ. John's baptism foreshadowed what Jesus would accomplish, much as the Old Testament sacrificial system did.

John prepared the way for Christ by calling people to acknowledge their sin and their need for salvation. His baptism was a purification ceremony meant to ready the peoples' hearts to receive their Savior.

**Verse 34**

<sup>34</sup> And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

This is the solemn testimony of John the Baptist was that Jesus **is the Son of God**.

These words are the climax of the witness of John the Baptist and form here a direct quotation from him; but they also stand as the witness of the apostle John as well, being a part of the testimony which had convinced him that Jesus is the Son of God. The expression "Son of God"

means the divine Messiah and was understood by all the Jews as having that unique and absolute meaning; and it was because Jesus confessed under oath that he was the Son of God (John 19:7) that the Sanhedrin condemned him to death. These and other considerations require, therefore, that "Son of God" be understood in its most exalted sense.

### **Two of John The Baptist's Disciples begin to follow Jesus, Verses 35-39:**

#### **Verse 35**

35 Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples;

**Again the next day ...** That is, on the very next day, he and that other disciple were standing there with John the Baptist; and Jesus walked in that vicinity, not toward them, as on the previous day, but near them; and, once more, John the Baptist, perhaps a little sadly, due to the impending departure of some of his most discerning disciples, thundered the identification of Jesus as the Lamb of God, doing so as emphatically and bluntly as possible.

John tells us that one of these two was Andrew (John 1:40). The other of the two is not identified, but for several reasons it is reasonable to think it was John the Gospel writer himself, who appears several times in his Gospel, but is never specifically named.

#### **Verse 36**

36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

John had previously made this declaration earlier in Verse 29!

It was as if John the Baptist had said, "There! I have identified him. There is no more for me to say. It is now up to you." John, the apostle-to-be, and that other disciple took the decisive step. They followed Jesus!



**Behold the Lamb of God...** A “lamb,” among the Jews, was killed and eaten at the Passover to commemorate their deliverance from Egypt, Exodus 12:3-11. A lamb was offered in the tabernacle, and afterward in the temple, every morning and evening, as a part of the daily worship, Exodus 29:38-39. The Messiah was predicted as a lamb led to the slaughter, to show his patience in his sufferings, and readiness to die for man, Isaiah 53:7. A lamb, among the Jews, was also an emblem of patience, meekness, gentleness. He was innocent 1 Peter 2:23-25; he was a sacrifice for sin the substance represented by the daily offering of the lamb, and slain at the usual time of the evening sacrifice Luke 23:44-46; and he was what was represented by the Passover, turning away the anger of God, and saving sinners by his blood from vengeance and eternal death.

**The Lamb of God:** John used the image of the sacrificial lamb, represented many times in the Old Testament. Jesus is the perfect fulfillment of every time that image is displayed.

- He is the lamb slain before the foundation of the world.
- He is the animal slain in the Garden of Eden to cover the nakedness of the first sinners.
- He is the lamb God would Himself provide for Abraham as a substitute for Isaac.
- He is the Passover lamb for Israel.
- He is the lamb for the guilt offering in the Levitical sacrifices.
- He is Isaiah’s lamb to the slaughter, ready to be shorn
- Each of these lambs fulfilled their role in their death; this was an announcement that Jesus would die, and as a sacrifice for the **sin of the world**.

### Verse 37

37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

The text does not specifically say, but the implication is that these **two disciples** did this with John’s permission and direction. John the Baptist did not care about gathering disciples after himself. He was perfectly satisfied to have these disciples leave his circle and follow Jesus. It fulfilled his ministry; it did not take away from it.

### Verse 38

38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?

**What seek ye? ...** Was an appropriate response by Jesus to the fact of their following him; but their response was more timid and hesitant than we might have expected. Instead of declaring flatly that "We understand that you are the Messiah and would like to follow you," they politely addressed him as "Rabbi," and inquired where he lived!

**Rabbi ...** By the use of this title, and by their inquiry as to where the Master lived, the two disciples clearly indicated a desire to know more of that Person of whom their beloved teacher had made such amazing statements. The Lord rewarded their interest and desire by his encouragement:

### Verse 39

39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that

day: for it was about the tenth hour.

So in response to Jesus' invitation they go to where He is staying and spend the day with Him, presumably being taught by Him. But behind it may well lie the implication that they also became enlightened by Him as to His eternal dwelling place ('they saw where He dwelt'). They became aware that He was truly from God. The reference to the tenth hour suggests someone who was there. He remembers the time of day because he was involved.

**the tenth hour...** Could refer to the Roman time of 10am or the Jewish time of 4pm. Probably is to be understood as speaking of the Roman hour, which was ten o'clock in the morning; and as the John remarks, they **abode with him that day**, it implies that there was a considerable portion of time spent with our Lord

### **Andrew brings his brother, Simon Peter to Jesus, Verse 40-42:**

#### **Verse 40**

40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

Two of John the Baptist's disciples started following Jesus because of John's witness. This was perfectly proper since John's ministry was to point others to Jesus. They were not abandoning the Baptist for a more popular teacher. They were simply doing what John urged his hearers to do. They began following Jesus physically to learn from Him. They also took the first steps toward genuine discipleship.

#### **Verse 41**

41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

**He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him...** Andrew met Jesus, and then wanted his brother **Simon Peter** to meet Jesus. Each time Andrew is mentioned in the Gospel of John, he is bringing someone to Jesus (also at John 6:8 and 12:22).

Andrew then seeks out his brother Simon (Peter) and declares that they have found 'the Messiah'. Once someone has truly found Christ they cannot help but seek to tell others. That is a proof of their genuineness.

**We have found the Messiah ...** Implies that Andrew, Peter, James and John had been earnestly expecting and waiting for the Messiah and that they had been searching to find him, their attitude of expectancy having resulted from John the Baptist's preaching, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2).

**We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ... Messiah (Greek), Messiah (English)** comes from the Hebrew word, *Mashiach*, meaning "the anointed one," or "the chosen one."

**Christ**, Christos is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew term, Messiah, is used in translating the Hebrew term, so that the terms "Messiah" or "Christ" are titles and not personal names of Jesus.

The Bible repeatedly declare that Jesus is the Messiah—the One chosen by God and anointed by Him to save His people from their sins (Matthew 16:16; Luke 4:17-21; John 1:40-49; 4:25, 26).

## Verse 42

42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.

**And he brought him to Jesus...** Through the centuries, this is how most people come to faith in Jesus Christ. A Peter has an Andrew who introduces him to Jesus. This is natural, because it is the nature of Christian experience that those who enjoy the experience desire to share their experience with others.

Humanly speaking the great Peter owed his conversion to Andrew. And it is a reminder that that is what we are to seek to do. To bring men to Jesus.

**Concerning Andrew:** The greatest contribution of this apostle would appear to have been the exercise of his ability to enlist others. He enlisted his own brother, Peter; he discovered the lad with the barley loaves and fish; he, along with Philip, brought the Greeks to Jesus; and, upon at least one occasion, he was associated with the "inner three" in a private meeting with Jesus (Mark 13:3). There is no evidence that he ever resented the greater prominence of his brother Peter; and he never tried to parlay that relationship into any special privilege for himself, as did James and John. As one of the twelve apostles, his name is inscribed upon the foundations of the Eternal City coming down from God out of heaven (Revelation 21:14).

**And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone...** This new name assigned to Andrew's brother means "stone" or "pebble"; and for the connection this has with the foundation of the church and such things as the so-called primacy of this apostle. "Cephas" is a Syriac word, and is equivalent to the Greek word Petros, which we render "Peter." Both mean a stone, a portion of a rock. Petra means a rock, Petros a piece of rock. Peter was the latter, not the former.



## Pastor Hank's Notes on The Gospel of John: Believe!



**Chapter One Outline:** This chapter falls easily into two main divisions: (1) The Prologue, Verses 1-18. (2) John the Baptist's Testimony to Jesus and the Calling of Disciples, Verses 19-51. Thus, aside from the Prologue, this chapter records the events of only four days of Jesus' Ministry. John opens his Gospel in this Chapter, with declaring both to the Godhead and Manhood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Testimony of John the Baptist is here given to the Person and Glory of Christ. The calling of Andrew and Peter. The Account of Nathaniel.

### Jesus and the Calling of Disciples, Verses 19-51:

#### Verse 43

43 The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

If we only had John's Gospel we might think that this was the first time Jesus had met these men from Galilee. The other gospel accounts inform us that Jesus had met many of them before; yet this was His formal invitation to Philip.

**Follow me...** There was nothing dramatic recorded about the call of Philip. Jesus simply said to him, "**Follow Me,**" and Philip did.

Here Jesus is now clearly claiming the authority to 'call' disciples, for Philip is the first one that Jesus positively calls in this way. This calling of disciples is in contrast to the Rabbis whose disciples simply chose to follow them.



### Verse 44

44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

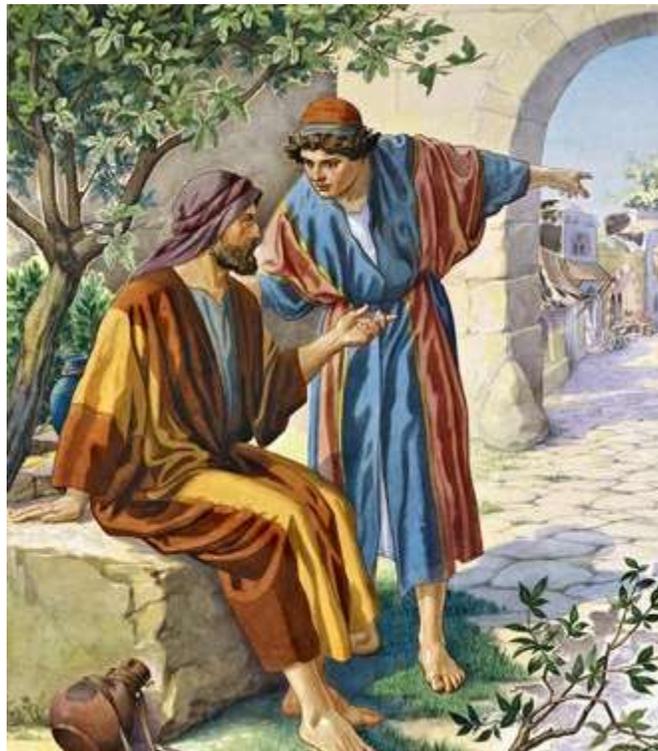
These men were probably previously friends, being from the same town. Bethsaida means fishing house which would be appropriate since they were fishermen. James and John had been fishing acquaintances of Peter and Andrew.

**Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter...** Of their *birth* probably, for they seem to have *lived* at Capernaum (Mark 1:29). Mark locates Peter's house in Capernaum (Mark 1:21 and 29). John relates that he was from Bethsaida. Resolution centers in the fact that Peter (and Andrew), most likely grew up in Bethsaida and later relocated to Capernaum in the same way that Jesus was consistently identified with His hometown of Nazareth, though He lived elsewhere later.

### Nathaniel overcomes prejudice to follow Jesus, Verses 45-51:

#### Verse 45

45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.



Philip wants Nathanael to know too, and finds him to tell him of the Messiah, the Christ. He reminds Nathanael that the Messiah had been promised by Moses and the prophets. Even though Philip believes Jesus is Messiah, he is looking at the flesh side of Jesus, because he says Jesus is the son of Joseph of Nazareth.

Nathanael is today generally understood to be the same person as Bartholomew, one of the Twelve; Nathanael being the personal name, Bartholomew (son of Tolmai) the patronymic.

## Verse 46

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

**Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?...** Nazareth was an obscure place and not even mentioned in the Old Testament, but it does not follow that Nazareth was extraordinarily wicked. Nathaniel's question does not mean that Nazareth was any more sinful than other similar places; but it indicates that Nazareth simply did not fit the preconceived notions that people had about where to look for the Messiah.

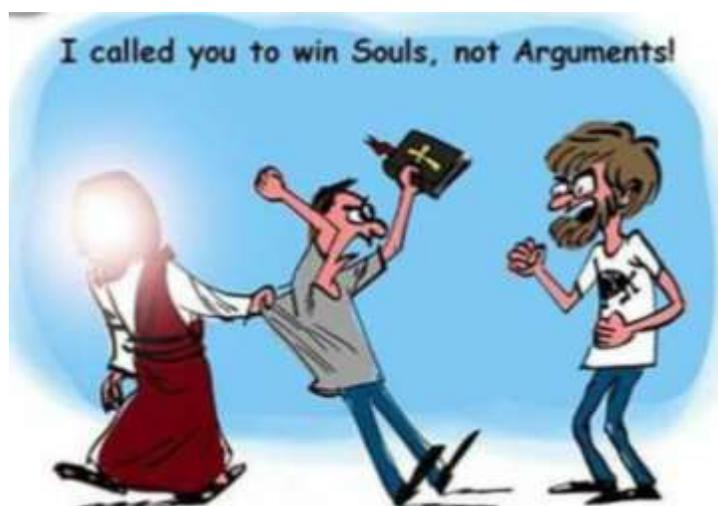
**Come and see...** Instead of arguing against Nathanael's prejudice, Phillip simply invited him to meet Jesus for himself.

**Note: This is a Great Point here!** Come and See Is an Excellent Evangelistic Model.

By nature, People tend to argue.

By learning, People tend to preach.

By culture, People tend to moralize.



But "Come and See" is a different model: Witness!

That phrase - "Come and See" - shows up four times in the Gospel of John.

In John 1:39, Jesus invites two men to "come and see" where he was staying. **This was an invitation to fellowship and to relationship.** At least one of these men (Andrew), left this encounter really excited about Jesus.

In John 1:46, Philip tries to talk to his friend Nathanael about Jesus and begins to get some push-back. So he does what I wish I would do more often. He resists the urge to argue or moralize or preach. **Instead, he invites Nathanael to "Come and See."**

In John 4:29, a Samaritan woman runs back to her town, fresh off of an encounter with Jesus. With breathless gasps, she tells everyone she can about her conversation with Jesus. "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" she exclaimed. "Come, See" makes sense here, **so she invites.**

Lastly, in John 11:34, Jesus has just lost a friend. Lazarus dies and his family mourns him. Jesus shows up during the funeral and meets with the family. He asks where the body is and they reply "Come and See." Jesus weeps. And then raises Lazarus from the grave.

**"Come and See"** is a deeply Biblical Model of Evangelism, a model that flows from our trust in God, a model that relies on God's activity.

**Have you ever invited someone to "Come and See Jesus"?**

**What Does Jesus' Invitation to "Come and See" Mean for Us Today?**

We are invited into a relationship with God, but it is up to us to accept the invitation!

Come and see Jesus for Yourself! Spend time with Jesus!

Tell others about Jesus! Bring them to Jesus! Tell them to "Come and See!"

**"And he brought him to Jesus" (Verse 42).** Andrew didn't just talk the talk; he walked his brother to Jesus. It's like saying "Don't take my word for it, let me show you." What a beautiful picture of coming alongside someone and going on a journey with them to see Jesus for themselves.

We sometimes timidly invite family, friends and neighbors to Christmas and Easter Services or other special Church events in the hope that they might catch a glimpse of Jesus. **But why wait until then?** We know that Jesus is with us by the power of His Holy Spirit, yet some of us only See Jesus for ourselves....

**Verse 47**

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

Jesus gave him a wonderful compliment. The sense is that there was nothing tricky or deceptive (**guile**) in Nathanael. No deceit, no fraud, no hypocrisy. He is really what he professes to be - a Jew, a descendant of the patriarch Jacob, fearing and serving God. Something not always found even in God's own people!

**1 Samuel 3:10 (The Right Attitude)**

<sup>10</sup> And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.

**Verse 48**

48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

**Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me?...** Many a person would merely have accepted the compliment and kept his thoughts to himself, but Nathaniel expressed his amazement and asked the source of Jesus' knowledge. Christ's answer convinced him that the Savior's knowledge was not casual or superficial, but that it was absolute and perfect. There are no secrets from God. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Hebrews 4:13).

**Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the**

**fig tree, I saw thee...** There was something about this answer that filled Nathanael with astonishment! That Jesus knew of it and read his soul startled him and dissipated his unbelief. It is evident that it was from something that had occurred under the fig-tree that Jesus judged of his character. Jesus saw Nathanael's heart as well as his mere presence there.

**Ever wonder what Nathaniel was doing there under the fig tree?** Was he picking figs? Pruning? Was he simply resting and reflecting on the things that had transpired there in Jerusalem recently. Had he sought shade and shelter there? What was he doing and why did it have such an impact when Jesus mentions it?

As I studied this, I'm just speculating that the fig tree was a place that Nathaniel resorted to often for a private time of prayer. This was a common outdoor place of prayer during that time in that culture. Jesus had His garden of Gethsemane, Nathaniel had his fig tree. Of course there is not enough in the text to be truly dogmatic about it (I cannot build a doctrine on it); there is not enough to go on to be sure but I am convinced of it personally. Moreover, I am convinced that he was praying to God about the promised and long awaited Messiah. Jesus saw him in his worship and so knew him.

**Does Jesus See You Under Your Fig Tree? \_\_\_\_\_**

#### **Verse 49**

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

This was the testimony of Nathanael regarding Jesus. **Son of God** described the unique relationship of Jesus to God the Father, and **King of Israel** described His status as Messiah and **King**.

#### **Verse 50**

50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

**Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou?...** This is probably the understatement of all time. He Nathanael would see Jesus open blind eyes, make the lame to walk, open deaf ears, feed 5,000 men with five loaves and two little fishes, speak to the sea and have it obey, and even raise Lazarus from the dead. This is such a small thing in comparison. Jesus is pleased that just this made him believe.

Nathanael was amazed by what he already saw in Jesus, but Jesus told him that there was much, much more to see – **greater things than these**.

#### **Verse 51**

51 And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

Jesus promised Nathanael a greater sign than he had seen before, even to see **heaven open**.

The expression "Verily, verily" is unique to this Gospel, being used in it 25 times, always by Jesus, and having the equivalent meaning of "Truly, truly" "Most assuredly" or "Amen, amen."

### **Concluding Thoughts:**

This one chapter is singularly rich in Names, Descriptions and Titles applied to the Lord Jesus Christ. He numbers up the following twenty-one: The Word, God, Life, Light, The True Light, The Only Begotten of the Father, Full of Grace and Truth, Jesus Christ, The Only Begotten Son, The Lord, The Lamb of God, Jesus, A Man, The Son of God, Rabbi Teacher, Messiah, Christ, The Son of Joseph, The King of Israel, The Son of Man.

### **This chapter of John shows four ways of coming to Jesus:**

- Andrew came to Jesus because of the preaching of John.
- Peter came to Jesus because of the witness of his brother.
- Phillip came to Jesus as a result of the direct call of Jesus.
- Nathaniel came to Jesus as he overcame personal prejudices by a personal encounter with Jesus.

### **This section shows us four different witnesses testifying to the identity of Jesus.**

- John the Baptist testified that Jesus is eternal, that He is the man uniquely anointed with the Holy Spirit, that He is the Lamb of God, and that Jesus is the Son of God.
- Andrew testified that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ.
- Phillip testified that Jesus is the One prophesied in the Old Testament.
- Nathaniel testified that Jesus is the Son of God and the King of Israel.

How much more testimony does anyone need?

Collectively, the experiences of John the Baptist, and of Andrew, Peter, John, Philip and Nathaniel together give us an awesome picture of who Jesus is:

1. The Lamb of God – The Passover sacrifice (John 1:35)
2. The Messiah – God's Anointed One (John 1:41)
3. The One Moses and the Prophets wrote of (John 1:45)
4. Rabbi – my teacher (John 1:49)
5. Son of God – Divine (John 1:49)
6. King of Israel – Royalty (John 1:49)
7. The Son of Man (John 1:51)

