



## Gospel According to John

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## Christ: From the Beginning John 1

### Jesus Christ and the World: *John 1:1-14*

#### *Christ: A Light in the Darkness: John 1:1-5*

The Word is a name given to the Son of God. A word is something said, a way we communicate with one another. Jesus is how God the Father spoke to mankind, the way He communicated with His creation. (Hebrews 1:2)

The Word, Jesus, was "in the beginning" which refers to Christ's eternal state. The same phrase is found in Genesis 1:1 and it means before creation. In Genesis the phrase was used in connection with God and in John chapter one it refers to Jesus Christ. It declares that Jesus existed before creation, that He is God.

Jesus was with God, equal to Him in all areas. This insinuates a friendship or union. It implies that Jesus was equal to God and shared in all His glories. (John 17:5) The Word was God. Jesus was with God and possessed the same characteristics and qualities as God the Father. He **was** God and did not become God. Being God, Jesus is the Creator of all things and creation is the greatest

proof of deity. (Hebrews 1:2; Colossians 1:15-17)

The Word was Life. (John 5:26, 11:25) Jesus is the source of physical life and the giver of spiritual life. (Genesis 2:7; John 6:33; Ephesians 2:1) Without Jesus Christ, there is no life at all. The Word was Light. (John 12:35, 21:25) We are able to see and live with discernment because of light from the sun. Light is often used to denote knowledge. (Ephesians 5:13) Jesus came to teach and impart knowledge to mankind so that our spiritual eyes would be opened. In the midst of a sin-darkened world, Jesus Christ brightly shines. (Matthew 4:16; Acts 26:18; Ephesians 5:8) He came into this world, in order to instruct sinners in the correct way. (John 14:6) Sadly, the world did not comprehend or admit the light, similar to shades preventing light from filling a room. The sin-hardened hearts were unable to comprehend the light; confused because of sin the world rejected Jesus Christ. (John 3:19)

### ***Christ: A Light in the World: John 1:6-14***

John the Baptist was the witness of the light. Sent from God, he had divine authority to be a witness of Jesus Christ, the Light unto the world. John preached a divine message to all, so that all might believe.

The Word was the true light and not false, deceptive, or dangerous. (John 12:46) Jesus lights every man that comes into this world. He has enlightened all men, giving each a natural conscience and moral compass. (Luke 2:32; Romans 2:15) It is not a divine spark within because all are spiritually dead in trespasses and sins but an understanding of right and wrong. (Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1)

Jesus made Himself known through His presence, teachings, and miracles. Though

## **Places of Interest**

**Bethabara** - It is believed to have been a small ford on the east side or bank of the Jordan River, across from Jericho.

**Bethsaida** - Located on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, it was the residence of Andrew, Peter, and Philip. It was a small town near Capernaum.

**Nazareth** - It was located in the hills halfway between the Sea of Galilee and Mt. Carmel. Nazareth is never mentioned in the Old Testament and it was considered an immoral town with a bad reputation. The people of Nazareth refused to hear Jesus and sought to throw Him over the cliff. (Luke 4:16-30)

incredibly blessed, His people, the Jews, refused the Messiah. Those that receive Him are given power to become the sons of God. This is power for a new birth and it is not of blood – our inheritance, not of the will of the flesh – what we have done or will do, and not of the will of man – what others have done for us. This power is provided by Jesus Christ and is reserved for those that believe on His name. Salvation is a result of God's work in our heart. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

The Word became flesh. (Hebrews 1:1-6; Philippians 2:6-11; Galatians 4:4-5) The day Jesus was born in Bethlehem He took on the form of a man. (Hebrews 2:14, 10:5) In doing so, Jesus Christ dwelt among His creation. The word for 'dwelt' literally means to tabernacle or encamp. Jesus took up residence upon earth and resided with those

## The Four Gospels

**Matthew** – Focused on Jesus the King

**Mark** – Focused on Jesus the Faithful Servant

**Luke** – Focused on Jesus the Son of Man

**John** – Focused on Jesus the Son of God

He created, similar to dwelling in a home. Through the years God has shown a great desire to dwell with His people. He communed directly with Adam in the Garden and appeared often to the patriarchs. He instructed His people to build a tabernacle in the wilderness and when completed He blessed them with His presence. Today, He takes up residence within His people. (1 Corinthians 3:16-17) When He became flesh Jesus did not set aside His Deity. He remained God while on earth, His glory being too great for human flesh to conceal.

Jesus is the only begotten of the Father. The term 'only-begotten' literally means an only child and John applies it only to Jesus Christ. (John 3:16-18; 1 John 4:9) Man, the angels, and devil are all created beings. (Hebrews 1:4-7) Jesus, being God, is full of grace and truth, grace towards all men and truth for all men. The reason He became a man was to bring grace and truth to mankind. Jesus dwelt among men in order to bless them.

### **Jesus Christ and John the Baptist: *John 1:15-34***

#### ***John's Witness of Christ: John 1:15-18***

John the Baptist was sent to prepare the way for the Messiah. He was a voice in the wilderness and his preaching broke the 400 years of silence of God from His people. John was born about six months before Jesus and his preaching took place previous to Jesus Christ's ministry on earth. Though John appeared first, he knew Jesus was greater.

John spoke concerning God's grace. He reminded the people that Moses gave the law. (Hebrews 3:1-5) The law was good and perfect because it came from God. It became burdensome because men are sinners and unable to keep it. (Acts 15:10) The law constantly reminded the people that a Saviour was required. (Galatians 3:24) Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Where the law failed, Jesus prevailed. He provided grace for sinners unable to keep the law. Only God is able to save sinners.

John spoke concerning God's greatness. No man has seen God, He is invisible and He is a spirit. (1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:27; John 4:24) Jesus has declared God, revealed Him so that we might know Him. (Hebrews 1:1-4) Through Jesus we gain an understanding of God because Jesus is the image of the invisible God. (Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3) Only God is able to reveal Himself to mankind.

#### ***John's Record Concerning Christ: John 1:19-34***

John the Baptist conversed with the leaders of Israel. These were the men set aside to perform the temple services and may have been sent to investigate John and his ministry. Being spiritual leaders of the nation, they were correct to question John.

First, John verified he was not the Messiah. He was often mistaken for the Messiah but he never accepted praise or

worship. (Luke 3:15) Second, John verified he was not Elijah. Malachi prophesied that Elijah would be sent to prepare the way for the Messiah. (Malachi 4:5-6) This was not to be the literal Elijah but one in the spirit and power of Elijah. (Luke 1:17) Finally John verified he was not an Old Testament prophet. The Jews were anticipating a prophet that would lead them like Moses but John was not one. So who was he? That's what the Jewish leaders wanted to know. John responded by stating he was the voice of one crying in the wilderness. He answered by announcing his ministry instead of exalting himself. John truly came in the spirit and power of Elijah. (Matthew 3:3)

Next the Pharisees interrogated John the Baptist. The Pharisees were ceremonial bigots that lived by tradition and strictly kept the law. Because of their tenacity for the law, they probably acknowledged that a Messiah would appear. Perhaps they hoped to discover John's identity and find out if he was the Messiah. They questioned John's practice of baptism. It was new and never a part of their ceremonial worship. Baptism represented a cleansing to make one clean. It was reasonably thought to coincide with the coming of the Messiah. (Ezekiel 36:25) Since John was neither Christ nor Elijah, they wondered why he baptized. They were searching for his authority to baptize and to initiate a new ceremony. John confirmed that he baptized with water. He did not establish a new religion but prepared the way for the much anticipated and longed for Messiah. John knew Jesus was among them and that He would change many things that they were accustomed to. He also reproved them for not knowing Jesus; they were not prepared for Him though the prophecies made it clear the Messiah would appear. John believed Jesus to be great, so great that John was

unworthy to even bow before Him and unloose His shoestraps, the task of a servant or slave. There is no comparison between the greatest of men and Jesus Christ; Jesus is infinitely superior.

The day after John's conversation with the Pharisees he saw Jesus and proclaimed Him as the Lamb of God. This took place upon Jesus Christ's return from being tempted in the wilderness. (Matthew 4:1-11) While the religious leaders interrogated John, Satan tempted our Lord and Saviour. The lamb was important to the Jewish people. A lamb was killed and eaten at the Passover time. (Exodus 12:3-11) A lamb was offered every morning and evening for worship. (Exodus 29:38-39) A lamb signified meekness and was a picture of the Messiah. (Isaiah 53:7) Jesus Christ was the Lamb of God. He was chosen, appointed, and approved by God the Father. He would make atonement and take away the sin of the world. (1 John 2:2)

When John baptized Jesus, he saw the Spirit descend from heaven in the form of a dove and abide with Christ. (Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22) This was confirmation that Jesus was the Christ and John was convinced that Jesus was the Son of God. He knew Jesus would baptize with the Holy Ghost. John performed the outward





memorial of the inward action. Jesus would perform the inward action of the outward memorial. Only God is able to change a heart.

## **Jesus Christ and His Ministry:**

### ***John 1:35-51***

#### ***John, Andrew, and Peter Convinced Jesus was Christ: John 1:35-42***

Andrew and John were John the Baptist's disciples. It was the apostle John's manner not to mention his name. (John 13:23, 18:15, 19:26, 20:3, 21:20) Instead of building his own personal ministry, John the Baptist pointed people to Jesus. He proclaimed Jesus as the Lamb of God and Andrew and John followed after Him.

They were met with a question, "What seek ye?" Jesus was prepared to hear their requests. They respectfully called Him Rabbi, master, and asked about His dwelling. Jesus invited them to join Him. This occurred at the tenth hour of the day, ten o'clock in the morning according to Roman time. The activities of the day remained unrecorded but their lives were changed. They were convinced that Jesus was Christ.

Andrew immediately went to his brother Simon Peter and told him about the Messiah, Jesus Christ. This was done so Simon could enjoy Christ's presence like Andrew did. Simon went with Andrew and Jesus beheld him, looked upon him intently with understanding. Jesus already knew Simon and He gave him a new name, Cephas meaning a stone. He was known as Peter and that day he was convinced that Jesus was Christ.

#### ***Philip and Nathanael Convinced Jesus was Christ: John 1:43-51***

The next day Jesus went into Galilee

and there He found Philip, who was from Bethsaida, the hometown of Andrew and Peter. Philip was brought to Jesus through no intervention but Jesus Himself. Philip, convinced that Jesus was Christ, immediately shared his discovery with Nathanael, he found Jesus. This was his viewpoint, though we know Jesus found him. Philip shared his experience with Nathanael and stated that Jesus was the One prophesied to come, the Messiah.

Nathanael was also known as Bartholomew. John never mentions Bartholomew and the other gospels mention Bartholomew but not Nathanael. Philip and Bartholomew are linked together in the lists of the apostles. (Matthew 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:14) Nathanael responded with sarcasm because Philip stated that Jesus was from Nazareth, a town with a bad reputation. Nazareth was small, seemingly insignificant, and never mentioned in the Old Testament. Nazareth was considered to be immoral and the people of the town would later refuse to hear Jesus and attempt to throw Him over a cliff. (Luke 4:16-30) Nathanael allowed his prejudice to get in the way of the truth. A preconceived idea prevented him from believing on Christ. Like many today, he accepted a premise as an established truth. Philip did not attempt to argue or reason with him, Nathanael's mind was influenced by his prejudice. Philip simply asked Nathanael to meet and consider Jesus himself. His argument was, "come and see what I have already found." Nathanael went.

Jesus greeted Nathanael with a statement concerning his heart; he was an Israelite without guile – deceit or craftiness. They had just met and Jesus claimed to know his motives, Nathanael was curious. Jesus proceeded to tell him that He saw him under

the fig tree before Philip found him. The fig tree may have been a place of prayer and meditation for Nathanael. Perhaps he had wrestled with something earlier that day. Jesus determined Nathanael's character based upon what was done in secret. Jesus did that which only God is able to do – know the inner thoughts of men. Because of this, Nathanael was convinced that Jesus was the Messiah. He addressed Him with respect, as Rabbi or Master. He recognized His deity, the Son of God. He recognized His authority, King of Israel.

Nathanael displayed simple faith. He believed Jesus was God based upon one event. Jesus promised him he would see much more. Nathanael would witness great works from God's Son Jesus Christ; this was just the beginning.

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