

John_1

John - Introduction

Author: Apostle John, son of Zebedee and Salome

- A fisherman by profession
- Not a great deal is told about his life (we know much more about John the Baptist than we do about the apostle John)

We know that he was from a wealthy family

- Hired servants – *Mark 1.20*
- Salome was a woman of wealth – *Luke 8.3*
- John had his own home in Jerusalem – *Matthew 19.27*
- John was told to take care of Jesus' mother
- John knew the High Priest at the time of the crucifixion

John was one of the "inner three apostles": Peter, James, John

- Only three were present for many events (example: the Transfiguration)

John lived a long life – he wrote *Revelation* about 95 A.D.

John was a very deep thinker (Luke = reporter style)

- John gives the meaning behind the facts

John had one purpose in writing this gospel: Read John 20.30-31

- The word "*believe*" is used 94 times in some form
- 90% of the material in *John* is not found in the first three gospels – very little overlapping
- On the other hand, many events found in the other gospels are omitted in *John*: birth of Jesus, baptism and temptation of Jesus, Mt. of Transfiguration, the parables, many miracles (only seven in *John*)
- Other works of John: *1-2-3 John, Revelation*
- He is called the apostle of love, but he calls people liars and antichrists in his writings

John 1.1-4

V1 – Does this remind us of another scripture? Gen. 1.1

- What does v 1 tell us about the age of Jesus?** He already was in the beginning; he did not begin in the beginning (he was not created)
- See *John 8.58* – same language as used in *Exodus 3.14*
- See *John 17.4-5, 24* – before the creation
- "Word of God" = a relationship of Father and Son = from eternity
- Significance of "God was the word"?** It would have limited the Godhead to Jesus, but "*the Word was God*" allows for other parts of the Godhead
- Why not "a god" (Jehovah Witness New World translation)?** Blasphemous to a Jew – *Isaiah 43.10-13, Deut. 6.4-5*
- The Jehovah Witnesses are inconsistent in their translation: *Matt. 5.9, 6.24, Luke 2.40, John 1.6, 12-13, 18, John 3.2, 21* (See: *Kingdom of the Cults*, p. 75-76)
- Summary of v 1: Jesus is deity

V2 – A summary of v 1, for emphasis

V3 – **What is the relationship of Jesus to the creation?** He brought the creation into existence

- We all owe our existence of Jesus
- The Gnostics taught that matter is inherently evil
- John: No, even matter was made by Jesus
- Nothing created was created other than by Jesus
- This means that Jesus could not have been a created being; he could not have created himself

V4 – Three things Jesus has been called: Word, Life, Light

- In what sense is he "life"?** Physical and spiritual
- In what sense is he "light"?** Truth shining into the hearts of people
- Most life requires light in order to live
- A major theme of John: Jesus is the light of the world

V5 – **Does sin enjoy light or darkness?** Darkness

- What is the relationship between sin and darkness?** One goes with the other

John 1.6-8

V6 – **Which John is this?** John the Baptist

- A good, classic sentence, even in English
- How did John know that John the Baptist had been sent from God?** Prophecy in *Malachi 4.5-6*
- See *Matthew 17.13* – According to Jesus, John the Baptist was the fulfillment of *Mal. 4*

V7 – **The goal of John the Baptist?** To witness (preach the truth) about Jesus

- John the Baptist was committing himself on the deity of Jesus
- When we testify at a trial, we can't remain neutral – we are committed

V8 – **Why did John add this comment?** Some would want to worship him (take his name)

- John the Baptist's work was very important in laying the groundwork for the coming of Jesus
- But Jesus was still the light

John 1.9-13

V9 – According to brother Guy N. Woods, Jesus was not a reflector, but he is the source of light (sun vs. moon)

- How are we enlightened by Christ?** By means of the word

V10 – Astonishing – the "true light" came into the world

- What was the reaction of the world?** It would have nothing to do with him
- Incredible: people don't want to hear the truth

V11 – **Who were "his own"?** The Jews

- Why should the Jews have been the first to accept Jesus?** They had the Old Testament

(Hebrews 1.1-3)

V 12 – John doesn't want to leave a negative impression
-Though the Jewish nation rejected him, many people did accept him

V 13 – How are we "born of God"? Predestined? No, we believe in Jesus

John 1.14-18

V 14 – Great significance to the verb "*became*"

- Was Jesus eternally flesh or spirit? Spirit – he became flesh
- Jesus dwelt ("pitched his tent") with mankind
- See 2 Cor. 5.1 for this same usage
- What does this tell us about this life? Temporary
- What were the 12 apostles privileged to do? See Jesus in his glory
- Where did they see his glory? 2 Peter 1.16-18 – the Mt. of Transfiguration
- How many sons of God are there? Only one that was begotten
- How are we then the children of God? Adopted (Eph. 1.5)

V 15 – Testimony of whom? John the Baptist

- What was John the Baptist's opinion of Jesus? Superior to John the Baptist
- Why superior? He existed before John the Baptist

V 16 – Beautiful language (like reading poetry)

- Luke = like a newspaper article
- Our blessings come from the "*fullness of Christ*"
- How much grace is extended to us? More than enough

V 17 - "Law" = Pentateuch (the Jews worshipped the Pentateuch)

- What came through Christ? Grace and all revealed truth

V 18 – "*See*" probably means to see in such depth as to fully understand

- Occasionally in the Old Testament, did people "see" God? See Exodus 3 (burning bush), Joshua 5.13-15 – "captain of the Lord of Hosts" (Jesus in his pre-incarnate form)
- But how can we "see" God today? By studying the life of Jesus in the Scriptures

John 1.19-28

V 19 – What did the Jews in Jerusalem do? Sent a delegation (probably from the Sanhedrin) to interview John the Baptist concerning rumor that he was the Messiah

- Their question? "Who are you?" (Not just his name was desired!)

V 20 – Any signs of deception on John's part? No, he gave a frank answer

V 21 – Other possibilities?

-Elijah – See *Malachi 4.5-6*

-**Read Matt. 17.13** – He was only Elijah in a symbolic sense

-**The prophet?** See *Deut. 18.18* – Jewish theologians made a false distinction between the Messiah and the Prophet

-See *Acts 3.22, John 7.40, John 6.14*

V 22 – They had learned only who he was not

V 23 – **Why didn't John give them his name?** His name was not important – he was only a herald

-John the Baptist quoted from *Isaiah 40.3* – a forerunner of Jesus

V 24 – John had drawn the attention of the Pharisees

V 25 – The Jews were frustrated – if he was nobody important, then why was he baptizing people?

V 26 – **Read Matt. 3.11**

-**What type of baptism will Jesus administer?** Holy Spirit and fire

-**When was Holy Spirit baptism administered?** *Acts 2* and *Acts 10*

-**Baptism of fire?** Still to come in the Day of Judgment

V 27 – Loosing a sandal was the job of a slave

V 28 – On the bank of the Jordan River

John 1.29-34

V 29 – **Why was Jesus called a lamb?** An innocent animal used in temple sacrifice

-Old Testament story where lamb took the place of a person about to die? *Gen. 22* – Abraham and Isaac (ram = male sheep)

V 30 – John clearly points out Jesus as the Messiah

V 31 – **Did John the Baptist know that his cousin was the Messiah?** No, so it seems

-But even though John the Baptist could not identify anyone as the Messiah, he still started baptizing people in preparation, based on his faith in God

V 32-33 – **How had God told John the Baptist he would recognize the Messiah?** A dove descending

-**When did John the Baptist see this?** At the baptism of Jesus

V 34 – **What was the testimony of John the Baptist?** He knew all of this to be true

John 1.35-42

V 35 – Two disciples of John the Baptist with him

V 36 – Did John the Baptist show any jealousy over his disciples? No

V 37 – What did the two disciples do? They followed Jesus

V 38 – The question of Jesus is the real question in life: *What do you seek?*

-**Their reaction?** Maybe some shyness

-**Their question?** Where are you staying?

V 39 – Tenth hour: 4 p.m.

-They probably stayed with him overnight

V 40 – Identity of one disciple? Andrew

V 41 – Why is Andrew to be commended? He brought his brother to Jesus (great thrill)

V 42 – What new name did Peter get? Cephas (stone)

John 1.43-51

V 43 – The calling of Philip – very little is known about Philip

-This shows that "ordinary" people can still be of great service to the Lord

-Some apostles had great natural ability: Peter, John, James, etc., but Philip was just an "average" person

V 44 – Hometown of Philip: Bethsaida

-Nathanael – only mentioned twice in the Scriptures – here and in *John 21.2*

-He is not listed as an apostle, but possibly he was also called Bartholomew

V 45 – Why did Philip use "we"? Probably already a group feeling was forming – he identified with that group

-**How did Philip identify Christ?** The one spoken of in the Old Testament

-**"Son of Joseph"** – incomplete understanding – or using the common designation for Jesus

V 46 – Where was Nathanael from? Cana – maybe some rivalry here

-**Did Philip argue?** No, just asked Nathanael to examine the evidence

V 47 – No "guile" – Greek scholars say this refers to bait in tricking people (example: the Trojan Horse)

-So Jesus was saying that Nathanael wasn't a malicious or deceitful person, but an honest man

V 48 – Reaction of Nathanael? Surprise

-An obscure person being identified – great surprise

-**Other examples of Jesus revealing the names and thoughts of people?**

-Peter – *John 1.42*

-Woman at the well – *John 4* (about her five husbands, etc.)

V 49 – Nathanael makes the good confession

V 50 – Nathanael would see greater things than these

V 51 – **Do we have any Old Testament reference to heavens opening and angels descending and ascending?** Yes – Jacob – (*Gen. 28*)

-**Any New Testament reference to a similar event?** No

-**Meaning?** The ways of God would be made clear to Nathanael

Summary of *John 1*:

This is typical of the language of the apostle John – very figurative and symbolic

Titles given to Jesus in *John 1*:

-v 1 – logos (word)

-v 1 – God

-v 4 – light of men

-v 9 – true light

-v 14 – only begotten from the father

-v 15 – greater than John the Baptist

-v 18 – only begotten God

-v 23 – Lord

-v 29, 36 – Lamb of God

-v 33 – one who baptized with the Holy Spirit

-v 34, 49 – son of God

-v 38, 49 – Rabbi

-v 41 – Messiah

-v 45 – he is described by Moses and the prophets

-v 49 – the King of Israel

Purpose of *John 1*? To set the stage for this gospel account

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