

Date: September 9th, 2025

John Section: John 1:1-18

Key Text: John 1:7

Main Idea: Jesus as the Incarnate God-Man

Genre: Theological Narrative

Author: John

Audience: Primarily second-generation believers, Jews, and Gentiles; needing encouragement and clarity about Jesus' identity.

Setting: Likely AD 85-95, in a context of synagogue opposition and emerging false teachings.

Quote of the Week: "A child can bathe in [John's Gospel] but an elephant could swim in it." - Sinclair Ferguson



John Preview:

Highlight:

The Gospel of John is a unique New Testament account of Jesus' life, written by the Apostle John, the beloved disciple. John's Gospel is not merely a biography but a theological portrait, revealing Jesus as the eternal Son of God who became flesh to bring life and light to the world. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, John emphasizes signs and discourses that unveil Jesus' divine identity and mission. From the opening words—"In the beginning was the Word"—to the climactic resurrection appearances, John presents Jesus as the one in whom God's glory is revealed, calling all to believe in Him for eternal life. This Gospel is rich with imagery (light, life, bread, water, shepherd, vine) and repeatedly centers on the theme of belief.

Focus of John:

- **Purpose of John:**
 - John tells us his purpose plainly: "But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." (John 20:31).
- **Themes in John:**
 - Jesus is the Word made flesh
 - Jesus reveals God's glory
 - Eternal life is found in Him alone
 - Belief is the way to life
 - Life flows only from union with Christ
- **Our Response to this Truth:**
 - Believe in Him – Abide in Him – Live by His Word – Trust in His promises – Love as He loved

3:30 Ministries: Who We Are?

- Purpose of 3:30:
 - To provide a student-led, Christ-centered ministry whose goal is to make Christ known on Carroll's campus and beyond.
 - In alignment with WBC:
 - **Our Vision is:**
 - "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 11:9b)
 - **Our Mission is:**
 - "**18** And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Go therefore and **make disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)
 - **As a Ministry:**
 - 3:30 is always focused on **exalting Christ above all else** and holding scripture as our highest authority.
 - We want to lead and equip others to faithfully discern scripture in community.
 - We also want to provide quality fellowship opportunities for college-aged individuals in the Waukesha area.
 - At 3:30, we wish to complement the local gathering of the Church and the shepherding of elders, not as a substitute for it.
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- This whole thing started way back before my time, when a group of four girls who attended Carroll decided that the Bible studies that were offered at the school were simply not getting the job done as far as what they needed for community and for studying the word of God.
 - They decided that the weak kubaya teaching that they were getting was simply not enough and that there was more to studying the word of God than just trying to find "your truth" from the passage. And so 3:30 was born, and out of that have come years of God's faithfulness in providing leaders and students who are hungry to learn more about Jesus and to spend time in community.
 - Our main goal at 3:30 is very plain and simple: it is to point weary and broken Christians back to Christ and call them to rest in the person and work of Jesus. We want people to read the scriptures and see them as they were intended to be seen.
 - It is not just a rule book about things that we need to do in order to be good people, but it is the ultimate story of redemption that is carried out all throughout scripture. It's a story of our brokenness, and it shows us just how in need we are of a savior.
 - And then on the flip side, it gives us the hope that we all long for. It shows us the one who came down to die for us and to take on the wrath of God so that we could be justified before His righteous throne.

- And this is why you are going to hear the gospel all through every lesson that we teach. It's because the whole Bible is, in fact, about Jesus! You may not always leave here with a checklist of things you need to do to be a good person. But you will always be presented Christ!
 - Sometimes our application from the scripture is just to look at the work of Christ and to look at the majesty of God and sit back and admire His glory and the grace that He has extended to us. And from that, flows a heart that desires to go and live for the glory of God and for the good of those around us.
 - We know that life is going to be messy, and we won't always look like we have been changed, but we celebrate the fact that we have been changed by the grace and mercy of God, and that has empowered us to live for His name.
 - This is the reason that we meet every week: it's because Jesus has changed our lives, and this is what has united us!
 - The gospel is the only reason that we have any hope in this life, and the gospel is what brings us together. Everything in our Christian life flows from the fact that we have been united with Christ, and because of that, we celebrate all that we have in Christ!
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Why did John write this? Other events that aren't found in other gospels?

Interesting facts about the gospel of John:

- Although we can almost certainly conclude that the author of the gospel of John was a Jew, the work of the gospel of John is considered to be anonymous. But it does contain some hints to its authorship.
 - This is the only gospel that refers to one of the apostles as the disciple whom Jesus loved (13:23; 19:26) rather than by name.
 - This disciple is identified as the eyewitness who “is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things” (21:24), and his presence at the last supper shows that he was one of the twelve.
 - Any careful reader will notice that John, son of Zebedee, who was one of Jesus’ three closest disciples, is not mentioned by name in the gospel. It is difficult to explain the omission of the name unless one concludes that John wrote the gospel himself.
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John 1:1-18 - The Prologue

Prologue as an intro into the Gospel of John

- The prologue to John serves as a poetic introduction into the rest of the book; it introduces Jesus as the Word and as the God-Man that is seen throughout the rest of the book. The prologue includes allusions to numerous places within John and other places throughout the bible.
 - These 18 verses are very common throughout contemporary Christianity; this text has so much literature on it, and I hope that it has not become dull to all of you. My hope in this study is that I can bring encouraging reminders that lighten and refresh the heart, and also bring new theological truth from this text, and that truly is the beauty of this text, in that it has so much theological depth yet so simple reminders that bring us back to the character and the person of God and of Christ.

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- This passage mirrors Genesis 1 in so many ways, but what does that mean concerning John and the biblical context of the book?
 - Jesus is not a new character in God's redemptive story. Let's look at some times Jesus has appeared throughout the OT that many scholars at the time would be familiar with.
 - The garden, not only was Jesus the force in which creation came to be, but whenever there is an embodied form of God, it is Jesus.
 - Genesis 1:8 "And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day."
 - The angel that stopped Abraham from killing Isaac was Jesus.
 - "The angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, 'By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord.'"
 - Moses talking to God at the burning bush.
 - "There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush... God called to him from within the bush, 'Moses! Moses!'"
 - The Angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon (Judges 6).
 - The captain of the Lord's army before Jericho (Joshua 5).
 - The significance of this is multi-layered, it demonstrates so much about the character of Jesus as God, and also it amplifies the power of the words he speaks during his time as man on the earth.
 - When Jesus says, "You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life."
 - To the Pharisees in John chapter 5, not only is he pointing out the fact that the Kings, Judges, and the Torah point towards a better king, but he also is pointing out that the OT is an account of HIS work.
 - He prophesied about himself in the garden when he made the first sacrifice and said, "He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel". This seed promise is Jesus, and who is giving this seed promise, the Son of God, Jesus!
 - Later in John, when Jesus says "Before Abraham was, I am", he said that, knowing that he had said it before. Directly alluding to his own words in Exodus.
- **What does this passage say about Jesus?**
- **Does anyone happen to know what the significance of The Word (logos) is in this passage?**

- John is echoing the creation story with logos, showing that Jesus is bringing a new creation, not only in his incarnation but also in sinners. Through his blood, we are resurrected and born again (John 3) into a new creation.
- Jesus as God (second person of the Trinity) in verse 1.
 - “The Word was with God and the Word was God.”
 - From a human perspective, this does not make sense. How can one be something while also being outside of that same thing? Yet our God is different from us, he is 3 persons in 1 being, 3 who's in 1 what. He is outside of our comprehension, infinite, all-powerful, all-knowing, and omnipresent.
- Jesus is the Light of the World in verse 4.
 - This is a direct hyperlink to later in John when Jesus says I am the light of the world. Christ comes as the light of the world, reforming darkness into light, chaos into order, evil into good.
 - Light and darkness are inherently different, darkness is completely opposed to the light, but whatever is touched by the darkness is completely changed, a new creation, a reality in which the darkness cannot win, light has complete and ultimate victory over the darkness before the battle begins, and once the light has completely overwhelmed the darkness, there is no darkness left.
- This fact is something that is so important in the context that John is writing to. The problem that sin can't dwell with a holy God is a problem that humanity has tried to overcome since the fall. Each time Israel tried to remove their sin, it had to be put onto something else; that was the point of offerings, sacrifices, and, in a sense, the Law.
 - On the other hand, when Jesus removes sin, he does not become blemished; he is the light of the world, he removes our sin and it does not leave a trace, he removes our sin so perfectly that when God looks down on his children, he sees the glory of God revealed through us. That is the beauty of the light of the world, that his light is so contagious and beautiful that even broken, depraved sinners become infected and changed internally by this light.
- Jesus is the dwelling place of God in verse 14.
 - “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us”, this word “dwelt” can also be translated as tabernacled, directly referencing the place that God dwelt with his people throughout the history of the nation of Israel.
 - Now, John is introducing the new tabernacle as God himself; he is the God who becomes flesh to dwell among broken sinners.
- The source of grace upon grace in verse 16.
 - “From his fullness we have received grace upon grace.” This is the means by which we are born again, and the language used here is similar to the language we see throughout the bible.
 - Psalm 23:5 “my cup overflows”, Exodus 34:6 “merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness”, Ephesians 1:7 “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us.”

- The grace that he bestows upon us is not reluctant or “just enough,” but it is grace upon grace, grace overflowing from the fullness of the creator of the universe. The power of recreation that turns our hearts of stone into hearts of flesh is the power of his grace, grace overflowing.
 - Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law in verse 17.
 - Many see this verse and respond that grace and truth are somehow opposite the law, or rather that the law is incomplete or bad in some way. In contrast, this passage shows that Jesus fulfills the law.
 - In our study of Galatians, we studied the purpose of the law and the part that it played in redemptive history, and we surmised that while the law was insufficient to save, the fault lies at the hands of the sinner, not the law or the lawgiver.
 - Furthermore, this passage points to the fact that **WE** are not enough, not the law. Our sinful nature has completely separated us from God, and only by a miracle will that relationship ever be mended, yet a miracle happened when Jesus humbled himself to become man, bringing grace that would overcome all shortcomings.
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Discussion Questions:

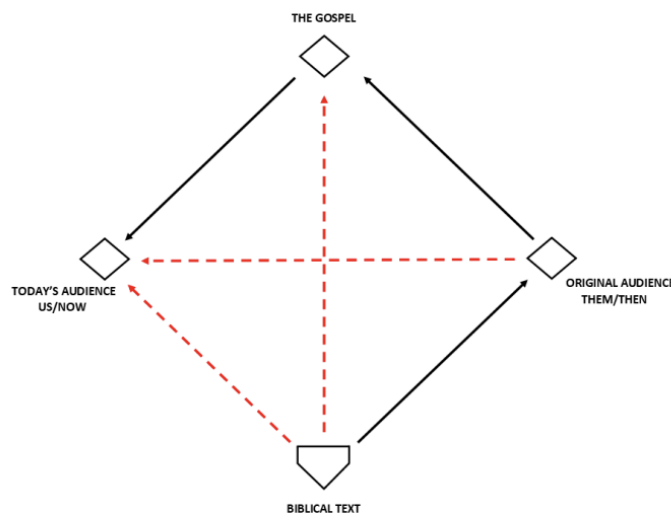
- **How can studying this text shape the way we read the rest of John?**
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Other Helpful Resources:

- **He Must Increase Podcast by Connor Shady & Adam Tredeau (Official Podcast of 3:30!)**
- Theocast: Recent Episodes Titled
 - *Stop Dehumanizing Jesus*
 - *In the Beginning, Jesus...*
- Waukesha Bible Church John 1 Sermons (Find on YouTube)

ANOTHER WAY TO GO ABOUT THIS IDEA: THINK BASEBALL

- When preparing and studying scripture, our focus is to always stay true to the scripture.
- In order to best do this, we use a method called the Simeon Trust method, which simply lays out a process to faithfully discern the Bible.
- FIRST:
 - Understanding who the text was written to. (The Audience)
 - Understanding why the text was written. (The Purpose)
 - Understanding the structure, genre, context, emphasis, and melodic line of the text.
 - In a nutshell: The first step focuses on understanding what the text meant to its original audience.
- SECOND:
 - Once we have done this, we must filter it through the Gospel.
 - This means understanding when and why this text was written in reference to the cross. → Is it pointing to the coming of Christ (OT), is it pointing to Christ and what Christ has already done (NT), is the text speaking of law, is it speaking of the Gospel, etc.
- THIRD:
 - Once we've understood the text's original meaning/audience, and have filtered it through the Gospel lens, we are able to determine what it means to us now. Without this process, the proper application of the Bible is essentially impossible.
- COMING HOME: Once we understand the appropriate application of the text, our legwork essentially stops, and we become fully reliant on the Holy Spirit to work in us.



The Gospel: *We Can't, God Can, Jesus Did!*

- **Sin.** None of us can escape it. Because of it, we are spiritually dead and in need of life. Our debt before God is insurmountable. It is the biggest problem any of us have since there is nothing we can do ourselves to pay that debt. God's standard is perfection, so no amount of good works or religious activities is enough.
 - 1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience - 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. (Ephesians 2:1-3)
- **But God...** These two words are some of the most powerful words in the Bible. God is merciful and loving. He did what we could never do in and of ourselves. He saved us by grace alone and gave us new life in Christ.
 - 4 **But God**, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ - by grace you have been saved - 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:4-7)
- **Jesus saves.** He is God's gift to us. He paid our debt before the Father. And through his death and resurrection, we are raised to eternal life. There is nothing we can do to earn it. It is only through Christ that we live a life pleasing to God.
 - 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10)