

# John

## 1. The Word was God

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Let's do a Bible trivia. I am sure that the majority of you know that there are 66 Books in the Bible and they were written by 40 authors who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. Did you know there are 1,189 chapters and 31,240 verses in the Bible? Some of you are thinking, "Who cares? Tell it to someone who cares."

Out of 31,240 verses, the Book of John has 879 verses to talk about Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the Lord and God Himself.

Many Christians as well as non-Christians wonder, "Why do we have four Gospels? Couldn't God tell us about Jesus with one Gospel?" Let me put it in this way: To explain about what Jesus had done on earth more clearly we need to have four different perspectives. The ancient Christian writer Origen who lived in the second century gave a good answer: "There are not four Gospels, but one four-fold Gospel."

- **The Gospel of Matthew**, writing to the Jews, was interested in establishing the regal rights of Jesus as King of the Jews. In doing so, he traced the genealogy of Jesus back to David and Abraham through His earthly father Joseph. He sets forth Christ as the Redeemer – King of Israel, the Messiah promised to the forefathers.
- **The Gospel of Mark**, writing to practical minded Romans, was interested in capturing those shots of Jesus that showed Him as a servant. Consequently, we don't see a genealogy of Jesus, because servants didn't have genealogies. Yet, Mark had his eye on the activity of Jesus which would appeal to Romans.
- **The Gospel of Luke**, writing to a Greek audience, was focused on Jesus' humanity. So Luke traced Christ's genealogy all the way back to Adam through His earthly mother Mary. Throughout his account, Luke pictured the Son of man as Kinsman-Redeemer to the whole human race.
- **The Gospel of John**, writing to a timeless, universal audience, John stressed the deity of Christ and His unique relationship with the Father.

### A. THE AUTHOR AND THE TIMELINE

It is obvious that this Gospel was written by the beloved apostle John who often described himself "the disciple whom Jesus loved" around A.D. 90. Does it mean Jesus didn't love the other disciples as much as He loved John? No, he was not comparing God's love toward him with others. Simply saying that Jesus loved him and John was grateful.

John was the one of Jesus' inner circle disciples with Peter and John's own brother James. It is the same disciple who reclined at Jesus' side at the last supper. He was the one who was chosen to take care of Jesus' mother Mary by Jesus at the foot of the Cross.

Obviously, John was a man of warm affection with power of love that he learned from his Savior Jesus. In his Gospel, we can easily find the love between the Father and the Son of God and God's love toward mankind.

## **B. THE THEME OF THE BOOK**

The theme of this Book is located almost near the end.

*John 20:31 But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life.*

One word can sum up this Gospel of John – “Believe”. We have 66 Books, 1,189 chapters and 31,240 verses of truth in this Bible. But if the majority of people choose not to believe it, it does not benefit them one bit. Just because they don’t believe the truth, it doesn’t mean that it does not exist. Oh yes, the truth exists whether people believe it or not.

If we choose to believe the truth of God, He will start to show us and make it known to us that we could not understand before with a carnal mind.

## **C. THE INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE BOOK OF JOHN**

Let’s go over a few things before we get into the first verse of this Gospel.

- 1) John was probably the last Gospel written, and written in view of what the previous three had already said. This is one reason why John is so different from Matthew, Mark and Luke which are known as ‘Synoptic Gospel’. Synoptic means “see-together” and the first three Gospels present Jesus’ life in pretty much the same format. The first three Gospels focus more on what Jesus taught and did, but John focuses more on who Jesus is.
- 2) There are significant events in the ministry of Jesus that Matthew, Mark and Luke include that John leaves out, including Jesus’ birth, baptism, temptation in the wilderness, the Last Supper, the agony in Gethsemane, the Ascension, demonic confrontations and parables. Yes, there are no parables in the Gospel of John.
- 3) The first three Gospels center on Jesus’ ministry in Galilee. John centers his Gospel on what Jesus said and did in Jerusalem. That is the reason the majority of the Gospel of John covers the incidents that happened within 30 days before Jesus’ death and resurrection.
- 4) John shows us who Jesus is by highlighting seven signs – a.k.a. miracles – of Jesus. Six of these miracles are not mentioned in the first three Gospels. John alone tells us of the wedding feast at Cana; of the conversation with Nicodemus; of the woman at the well; of the raising of Lazarus from the dead; of Jesus washing the disciples’ feet; of the teaching about the Holy Spirit as the divine Comforter and so on. It fills what other Gospels missed.
- 5) John shows us who Jesus is by allowing Jesus to speak for Himself in seven dramatic “I Am” statements.

## **D. IN THE BEGINNING**

*John 1:1 In the beginning*

This opening should remind Genesis 1:1 to many Bible student. But are they the same beginning? For that question, you are thinking, “I think this is a trick question. I don’t think I am going to answer that one.” No, they are not the same beginning, not even remotely close. To understand this, we have to go to Genesis 1:1.

*Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

This ‘beginning’ starts at the creation of God where time starts.

But the 'beginning' from John's Gospel goes far beyond that. It is the beginning that can not be measured by our concept of time, because time had not been created by the Lord yet. It was when our eternal God alone existed.

God is before time and after time since time itself is a part of God's creation. It is impossible to try to put God in our definition of time. God is not ruled by it in any form or shape.

## **E. WAS THE WORD**

*John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word,*

Some of you are thinking, "Are we going to study this Book like this? Dissecting the whole Gospel a couple of words at a time? It will take twenty years to finish this Gospel of John." Nah, just today. But if you stay with me on this, you will see why apostle John started it in this way.

The word 'Word' in Greek is 'Logos', of course, we get our English word 'logo' from this word. What is so special about this?

The idea of the 'logos' has deep and rich root in both Jewish and Greek thinking that we don't get in our English word.

When ancient Jewish rabbis referred to God, especially in His more personal aspects, in terms of His word, they often spoke of God Himself as "the word of God." We can find a good example of this from ancient Hebrew editions of Exodus 19:17.

*Exodus 19:17a Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet the word of God.*

*Exodus 19:17a Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God  
NKJV*

The Greek philosophers saw the logos was the power that set the world in perfect order and kept it going in perfect order. They saw the logos as the "Ultimate Reason" that controlled all things.

John meets both Jews and Greeks where they are at, and explains Jesus in terms they already understood.

## **F. THE WORD WAS WITH GOD**

*John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,*

Did you get that? It says, "the Word was with God". You don't say, "I was with me." You have to be at least two different persons to use the word "with". Do you not? In other words, from the beginning when there was no one, no time existed with the exception of God Himself, this Word was with God. This is such a brilliantly simple sentence to verify the second person of the Trinity of Christianity.

The preposition "with" in this phrase "*the Word was with God*" indicates both equality and distinction of identity along with association. Within context of the first portion of this first chapter of John, we all know that the Word is Jesus. That means that Jesus was with God the Father in equality and distinction of identity.

Then, skeptics would say, "How would John know about this? He was not born before the time exists as you said?" The answer comes from 2 Timothy 3:16-17 that we studied for ten weeks.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

## **G. THE WORD WAS GOD**

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

I tell ya what, guys, it doesn't get any better and clearer than this – "the Word was God." As I have mentioned many times before, all the cults deny the deity of Jesus Christ, but with this simple sentence apostle John hush them all.

Jehovah's Witness says that there is only one God that is Jehovah. But they destroy their own doctrine when they come to this very verse. Jehovah's Witness' 'New World Translation' read like this:

"In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was **a** god." Jehovah's Witness' 'New World Translation

Their own translation is saying that there is more than one god. Which one is correct? Only one Jehovah or Jehovah plus a small god?

So is theirs a correct translation? The claim of the Watchtower defending their translation of John 1:1 is that because before the second time "God" is used in the passage, no article appears. As you can see in your Bible, it is written "God" and not "the God".

In answer to this approach to Greek grammar and translation, we can only refer to the multitude of other times in the New Testament where "God" appears without 'the' article. If the Watchtower were honest and consistent, they would translate "God" as "god" every place it appears without 'the' article. But it seems that their Greek grammatical rule only applies when it suits the purpose of backing up their false doctrinal beliefs of the Watchtower.

In the main resource the Watchtower uses to establish their claim – The Kingdom Interlinear, the Watchtower quotes a well-known Greek authority, Dr Julius Robert Mantey to make him appear to agree with their translation. But Dr. Mantey's comment has been misquoted, he has even written the Watchtower, and demanded that his name be removed from their book.

## **H. APPLICATIONS**

1) If some choose not to believe the truth of God, it doesn't mean that it does not exist. It only means that they don't get the benefit of knowing the truth and they will be eternally lost.

2) We should not put God in our concept of time limit, because He is the One who created it and the Creator cannot be ruled by a creature.

3) John 1:1 is the genealogy of Jesus Christ as the Messiah. He is God and He has been coexisting with the God the Father from the eternal beginning.