

# JOHN

AND THE WORD WAS GOD

## THE LIGHT SHINING IN THE DARKNESS

John 1:1–18

### RELATED SCRIPTURES

### STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 1.11.26

Genesis 1:1–31 | Isaiah 38:4; Psalm 107:20 | 2 Corinthians 5:17

### SUMMARY

There are four gospels in the New Testament. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are known as “the synoptics” because, to varying degrees, they offer a summary of Jesus’ life and ministry. The fourth gospel, John, is written differently with a distinct purpose. John begins his gospel with, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (v. 1). This serves as John’s introductory statement to the reader, effectively indicating that a failure to believe this statement renders the remaining words of this gospel as nothing short of blasphemous. John’s implication is that Jesus is “the Word.” To understand what John means by this, it’s helpful to look to the Old Testament to see how “the word” is used throughout scripture. First, John states, “In the beginning,” a direct reference to the opening words of Genesis, in which the Word was actively present at creation. Second, the scriptures use “the word” to refer to God’s revelation, as seen in Isaiah 38:4, “Then the word of the Lord came to Isaiah.” Lastly, “the word” also references the Lord’s salvation, as in Psalm 107:20, where those in desperation and sickness cry out to God, and the psalmist notes, “He sent his word and healed them.” In other words, God has revealed himself to his people through creation, revelation, and salvation, with the *clearest* revelation coming in the person of Jesus Christ, who embodies the fullness of his glory. Most importantly, John is—in no uncertain terms—telling his reader that *Jesus is God*—the deeds and words of Jesus *are* the deeds and words of God. With this foundation, John begins to articulate *why* the Word became flesh (v. 14). John explains that the Word was the agent of creation, and now this agent came into the world and invaded the created order he himself made, with the purpose of restoring it—bringing light where it was previously absent as he did in creation. However, now this agent of creation has his eyes set on a *new creation* (2 Corinthians 5:17), specifically, the hearts of his people, “who were born, not of blood nor the will of the flesh nor of the will of man but of God” (v. 13). In Jesus, God himself came to (re)create, reveal himself, and bring salvation to his people.

### GROUP QUESTIONS

Share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you from the sermon or your direct reading of John 1:1–18.

Why does John refer to Jesus as “the Word”? Why wouldn’t he just use his name and say something like, “In the beginning was Jesus . . .”?

Why do you think it’s so important to John that he establishes right from the beginning of his gospel that Jesus is God incarnate? How might that have an impact on how we read the rest of his gospel?

If there’s one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

### CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you pray, be sure to include today’s themes in what you bring before God.