

Who is Jesus Christ?

Introduction to the Book of John

John 1:1-5

We are launching into the book of John this morning and will be in this book for the whole year. Really the gospel of John can be summed up into two verses found in John 20:30-31 ***“Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”*** Our goal with going through this book is to believe either for the first time or the strengthening of our belief and to live for Christ! 1. For Salvation, to believe in Christ 2. For Strengthening, to Live for Christ.

Authorship: Most evangelical scholars believe John, the beloved disciple of Christ recorded in (Jn 13:23; 19:26) was the author. Early church tradition, specifically Irenaeus, attributed this gospel was written by John the disciple. Another clue would be the fact when the Son’s of Zebedee are mentioned, and John wasn’t mentioned by name. Here’s how I know it was John: in John 20:4 ***“Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.”*** John was the other disciple! Men are competitive. If the author was John, then it was probably written around A.D. 90, before his death. Something unique about the gospel of John is that it gives 40% of its attention to the week before the crucifixion, beginning with His triumphal entry. It also makes sharp contrast such as light and darkness, love and hatred, etc. We’ll see these contrasts as we go through this book. I believe authorship is important here because it gives us the perspective of Jesus from one of His closest friends. Where Matthew’s gospel is uniquely directed to the Jewish people of the day, and Luke from a detailed account that a physician would convey, John offers an insight specifically and unapologetically designed to show everyone the need to believe in Jesus Christ.

If you are a new Christian, the book of John is great for you! If you are a seasoned Christian, the book of John is great for you! If you are not a Christian at all, the book of John is for you!

Here are the first five verses of chapter one answering two great questions. Who is Jesus and why did He come?

Who is Jesus Christ? (John 1:1-3) These three verses offer us a lot of insight!

- a. Jesus has always existed. (vv. 1, 2) *“In the beginning was the Word...”* and *“He was in the beginning with God.”* The word “beginning” here means source or origin. John uses the concept from the book of Genesis, *“in the beginning,”* to convey Jesus as the Word. This would have appealed to both the Jew and the Greek to show the incarnational embodiment of total authority, power, and revelation of God in the form of man.
- b. Jesus is God. (v.1) *“and the Word was God.”* John makes it known that Jesus is God. This trinitarian idea is perhaps the clearest and most direct declaration of the deity of the

Lord Jesus Christ found in Scripture. Every other religion can not deal with this fact! Jesus is either a liar, a lunatic, or He is Lord. I like what C.S. Lewis said, “Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and if true, of infinite importance. The only thing it cannot be is moderately important.”

- c. Jesus is the Creator (v.3) In Colossians 1:15-16 Paul makes this same statement: *“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.”*

Why did Jesus Come? (John 1:4-5)

- a. Jesus came to give mankind life (v.4) To forms of life that are common in John’s writing, Zoe (spiritual life) and Bios (physical life). In this context Zoe means all of life. The fact that you and I are alive is the sovereign work of Christ! Christ gives us life physically and spiritually. We see this in **Genesis 2:7** *“then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.”* We also see this in the spiritual form of life in **Romans 8:10** *“But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life (zoe) because of righteousness.”* Look at the second part of verse 4: *“the life was the light of men.”* Both words zōē (life) and phōs (light) are used in this verse. A good illustration is that electricity gives both light and power. No electricity, no light, no power. Without Christ, no life (eternally) and no light (clarity of purpose). Christ both gives life and clarity! Later Jesus will call himself the light of the world in John 8:12. Listen to another one of John’s writings in **1 John 5:12** *“Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”*
- b. Jesus came to destroy death (v.5) Acts 26:18 conveys this: *“to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.”* Light exposes sin, darkness hides sin. Darkness leads to death; the light of Jesus Christ leads to life in Jesus Christ! When you have clarity that you are a sinful person, in need of Jesus to save you, and give you life, you have come to the light of Jesus Christ. The light will always destroy darkness! Jesus came to destroy darkness; He came to destroy death through faith in Him.