

John 1:1-5 (Teaching)

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- [0 : 0 0] Good morning. Good morning. Don't turn with me, if you will, to the Gospel of John first chapter.
- I assume that we're going to go all the way through the Gospel of John, Lord willing. To be honest with you all, on a personal level I've struggled with beginning a longer book in the Scriptures to teach.
- I say that's personal reasons that I have, but today we'll begin the Gospel of John. You all may or may not have heard me say in the past that John is the best place for new converts to start.
- As far as they're reading the Scripture, John is a very simple book. It's very easy to understand. That's where I refer all new converts to begin with John.
- Unfortunately, new converts, where's the first place they want to jump to? They want to go to the book of Revelation, for whatever reason, for whatever purpose. I don't know why that is, but that seems to be where they all want to go.
- [1 : 1 6] Now we've gone through first John, we've gone through second John, we've gone through third John, and now we're beginning the Gospel of John. This is the same John that wrote the book of Revelation.
- This does not mean that if and when we finish the Gospel of John that we're going to jump to Revelation. So don't assume that. As much as I would like to do that, I don't believe we'll head that direction.
- But Gospel of John is a unique Gospel. John's Gospel is not part of the synoptic Gospels which are composed of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.
- Matthew, Mark, and Luke's Gospels are written basically with the same format, the same way, and they tell a lot of the same accounts.
- We've got granted at different points throughout their Gospels. Mark's Gospel, in fact, Missy and I were talking about it just on the way to churches. Mark only has 16 chapters in his Gospel.
- [2 : 1 7] Luke has 24, and Matthew has 28, and I'm not horribly mistaken. But regardless, they all tell a lot of the same accounts that happen, a lot of the same miracles in those Gospels.
- John is not like that. In fact, with the exception of the Feeding of the Thousands, the exception of the events surrounding John the Baptist, and the exception of the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, John's Gospel is completely unique with those exceptions.
- You find those things that we just listed in the other Gospels, but most of the other things that we find in the Gospel of John, you do not find in the synoptic Gospel, and that's what makes it unique.
- John is known as writing the Gospel of Love. He's known, he never refers to himself by name in his Gospel, he refers to himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved.

But something that you need to remember as we go through John's Gospel is that he was also named one of the sons of thunder. He and his brother James, they were sons of Zebedee, and Jesus nicknamed them the sons of thunder, and he wouldn't have done that for just no good reason.

[3 : 41] He would have done that because they were just that. They were thunderous, they were boisterous, they were loud, any of those things. But John, much like Peter throughout the Scriptures, we all know Peter in the Gospels, Peter's the one that stuck his foot in his mouth all the time.

Peter's the one that spoke up when he really should have kept his lips zipped. And John, I feel, was much the same way. However, once we get to the book of Acts, we start seeing a change in Peter.

I mean, we get to the end of the Gospel of John, and we see Jesus reconciling with Peter. We know that Peter denied Christ three times.

We know that he'd done this before the Cuckoo, just as Jesus predicted that he would. But when we get to the book of Acts, we start seeing a change in Peter. We see Peter boldly stand up before thousands of Jews and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

And by the time we get to 1st and 2nd Peter, we see him using words that we would never expect boisterous Peter to use. Folks, that's the change that Jesus Christ and he alone can make in our lives.

[4 : 58] I'm not the person that I once was. I don't do the things that I used to do. I don't say the things that I used to say. I don't hang out in the places that I used to hang out. And it is not because I made a change.

It's because Christ made a change in me. And John is much the same way, though. We're reading John's Gospel, where, in Luke's Gospel, I'm sorry, where Jesus is on his journey, if you'd like to say it that way.

He's going from town to town, region to region, preaching the Gospel. And he comes to a village of Samaritans and they wouldn't receive him. You read about this in Luke 9.

Stay tuned because if the Lord doesn't change my mind, I'll be preaching from Luke 10 this morning when that time comes. But in Luke 9, you read about this and you read about John and James, the sons of thunder, wanting to call down fire from heaven, the same way that Elias did as the Scripture puts it, the same way that Elijah did.

And Jesus rebukes them for it. And that in and of itself shows us the demeanor that John the Apostle had. John's Gospel here that we're reading, the date range varies, depending on what commentator you might be reading, what church historian you might be referring to.

[6 : 27] Most people put the writing of the Gospel of John about between 85 and 90 AD. Some people put it slightly before that, some people even put it after that.

There are some people out there though that put it as late as 300 AD, but that has since been proven to be false because of some certain pepperis that was found, some certain scrolls that were found that were dated about 115 AD that contain bits and pieces of the Gospel of John.

So with all this in mind, with everything in mind who John was, and we've read through 1st, 2nd, 3rd John, we got a good idea of who John was.

And you all remember when we were going through 2nd and 3rd John that I said those were more than likely, I wasn't there, I don't know for sure, but they were more than likely the very last things that were written for the New Testament Scriptures.

And you might say, well, Spencer, the book of Revelation comes last, and this is true, this is so. I can't argue that, but you also got to consider that Moses wrote Genesis through Deuteronomy, and I can assure you Moses wasn't there when the earth was formed.

[7 : 44] So just because a book falls in a certain place in the Scripture does not mean that it's in chronological order in the order that we find it in the Scriptures.

So with all this in mind, we'll begin the Gospel of John, the first chapter and the first verse. Now, before we start, I said this is the most simple Gospel, but John starts out with some complex stuff.

Not complex to the point where we can't understand it, but complex to the point where people would have a hard time comprehending exactly what he was saying, particularly the Jews, they would have a hard time with this.

So I said it is a simple Gospel. It's the simplest book in all Scripture, in my opinion, to understand. Gospel of John 1st chapter and 1st verse, in the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God. It seems simple enough just to read it, but folks, this goes deep.

This goes very deep, just this one statement here, one sentence that John has written, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

[8 : 56] He is saying that, he is making the statement that Jesus Christ is God in this first line of the Gospel of John. He is proclaiming the deity of Jesus Christ, which has been argued since the New Testament days.

Whether or not Jesus Christ was the Son of God, whether or not Jesus Christ was God, come in the flesh. Folks, there is no argument because Scripture plainly states that Jesus Christ was these things, and John is asserting that truth and saying in the beginning was the Word.

Who was the Word? That was Jesus Christ, and the Word was with God, meaning not only that it is personal, but it is also plural. Just like Genesis 1-1, we read in the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.

The Hebrew word that you use there for God in the creation is Elohim, which is the plural form of God, which means not that there was more than one God, but that God existed in the same three persons in the very beginning of this thing, that He exists in now, and that He existed in in John's day, and that He will exist in for all of eternity.

It has always been plural. It has always been three persons making up one triumphant Godhead, and that will never change. It is eternal, it is immortal, and nothing can be done to change that.

[10 : 23] In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God, stating that Jesus Christ was not only the Son of God, but He was and is God manifest in the flesh.

Now some of you may be aware that there's a certain cults out there, and Jehovah's Witnesses aren't the only ones. There's certain other sects that will take this very verse, and they'll insert an indefinite article there.

They'll say the Word was with God, and the Word was a God. They'll add that indefinite article there, and it's just that, it's indefinite. And that Word for God there is changed to a lowercase G instead of an uppercase G.

Folks, that's a complete twisting of what the Scripture says, it's a complete twisting of what the Scripture teaches. Jesus Christ was and is God, and there's nothing that can change them.

Why would they do that? Why would these certain cults do that? Because they want us to believe that there is something that we can do in order to become divine ourselves.

[11 : 31] These cults teach that Jesus Christ was a man, but He became a God, not that He was God, but that He became a God. And therefore, we can also become gods.

And one day after we're passed away and long forgotten about on this earth, we can rule our own universes, and we can rule our own planets, and we can have the say so in these things. And folks, all that is, is a temptation for man.

Why? Because man wants power, man wants authority. We're wired that way, we naturally want these things. And this is why they would change that to say such a thing that the Word was a God instead of the Word was God.

Don't believe that garbage when you hear it. You turn from that, you run the other direction. The Bible plainly states, and the Bible teaches over and over and over, Jesus Christ said himself, that He was God.

And if Jesus Christ said it himself, there is no reason in the world that I shouldn't believe it. So don't believe those things when you hear them. You'll hear them quite often. Like I said, J.W. is aren't the only ones that think along those lines.

[12 : 43] They're the most prevalent and most known about it. There's other so-called Christian cults out there that also believe these things. You be careful what you listen to. You be careful what you believe.

You believe this Word that we're reading now. Verse number two, the same was in the beginning with God. Once again, stating not only the deity of Jesus Christ here, but speaking of the eternity of Jesus Christ.

If you'd rather call it the foreverness of Jesus Christ. He was there in the beginning, and this goes beyond the in the beginning that we read in Genesis 1-1.

We know there in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. But folks, God was there in all three persons before the heaven and the earth were ever created, before the foundations of the world were ever laid, were ever part of this universe.

For the universe was created, God was, and God is now, and God will continue to be on into the future. There is nothing that can stop that.

[13 : 55] There is nothing that can get in God's way. God is, and that's the end of it. There is no argument there, but the same was in the beginning with God.

And again, this goes back to the folks that we were just talking about. Saying that the word was a God, saying that Jesus was made into a man after he became, after he came to this earth, after he lived his life, after he done, basically it's almost the same thing as sainthood and Catholicism.

You live your life, you do these things, so on and so forth. And then the church is what decides that you are a saint or you are not. And Brother Verde not too long ago at all done a very good job explaining that if we are indeed born again Christians, if we've been saved and washed clean in the blood of Jesus Christ, then we are considered saints according to the scripture.

There is no church, there's no bishop, there's no diocese that can make me a saint. Almighty God is what made me a saint. Who made me a saint? There is no one here on earth that can do so, but God in heaven is the one that does that.

The same was in the beginning with God. This word, Jesus Christ, was in the beginning with God. He was and is part of the Godhead.

[15 : 19] Verse 3, all things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made. This is something that we as Christians need to keep in mind.

If you are anything like me, and I do this quite often when I'm reading the Old Testament, and I'm reading about God, every time I read about God, or every time I read the word Lord, anything along those lines, all I think about is God the Father.

That's all I think about. When I read in the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth in Genesis 1-1, I think about God the Father. I don't know why that is.

You might be in the same boat that I am in, but the Bible here plainly states that Jesus Christ is the creator of all things.

He's the creator of everything. He's the creator of me, He's the creator of you, He's the creator of earth, He's the creator of the universe, the sun, the moon, the stars. If you read that the Lord said in Genesis 1, let there be light, it was Jesus Christ that was saying, let there be light.

[16 : 26] Now I'm not moving you in a direction of Jesus only. I've done stated a few times this morning that it's a triune Godhead. It's God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, and they forever make up one Godhead, one triune God.

However, according to what we read here in John, all things were made by him. You're reading the book of Colossians that by him all things consist, meaning all things continue, all things are held together.

All things is all things as far as that goes. There's no lines to read between there, no reason to go grab a commentary and figure out exactly what the Bible is trying to say.

All things were made by him. The folks that were made by him, they were made for him, and they were made for his glory. You and I were created for the glory of God.

Every drunk that's out here on these streets, every dope pit, every prostitute, they were all created for the glory of God. You and your symbol condition, before you were saved, you were still created for the glory of God.

[17 : 37] All creation was made for the glory of God, including the earth, including the birds, and all the animals and critters that we see flying and creeping around. Everything was made to do one thing.

It was made to glorify Almighty God. It was made to glorify its Creator. We need to keep that in mind. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made.

Without him was not anything made that was made. And I've heard people take this to the extreme, and you'd be careful with folks like that. People say, what about plastic?

What about glass? What about this? What about that, folks? Those things all have natural properties about them. Glass is made from what? It's made from heating up sand.

Where'd the sand come from? God made it. Where's plastic come from? The number one ingredient in plastic is petrol or petroleum. Where's petroleum come from?

[18 : 38] It comes from the ground. God made it. You'd be careful if you believe all this stuff about fossil fuels, and that's where oil comes from. Folks have had it.

If that was the case, there was an awful lot of dinosaur on this planet. If we're still pulling their decomposed innards up out of the ground, all these decades later since the internal combustion engine has been made, we're still pulling all those up.

This place was covered with dinosaurs. That's not the case. Folks, God made it. God made these things. Therefore, and granted, maybe man did make plastic.

Maybe man did make glass, but he made them out of things that God put here for him to make them. God has blessed mankind. Not only with the things to make things that will benefit us and that will help us, but he has blessed mankind with the knowledge to utilize those things in such a way.

Folks, we can use plastic to glorify God. We can use glass to glorify God. We can use anything to glorify God. That's why God put these things here, and that's what God expects out of us, is to glorify him.

[19 : 59] All things made by him and without him was not anything made. That was made. Like I said, I've heard people take that to extremes, but if you take the man-made things that we have here on this earth, they're made with things that God put here for us.

We cannot make our own dirt. We cannot make our own sand. We cannot make our own petroleum. We can't do these things. Folks, might take that to another extreme and say, what about synthetic oil that we've been using for probably about 20 years now?

Folks, that stuff is made with things that God supplied us with. We cannot make anything. If we could, we would be God, and we cannot do that.

Only God can create. Only God can create, and God can certainly destroy. We read several accounts of that throughout the scripture. Verse four, In him was life, and the life was the lot of men.

In him was life. In whom was life? In the word was life. This word that we read about in verse four, the word being Jesus Christ. Folks, this written word that I hold here in my hand, this written word that you hold in your life, and maybe you have on a table at home, or on your nightstand, wherever it's at.

[21 : 19] This is a living word of God. Folks, there is another living word of God whose name is Jesus Christ. And in him is life.

And he is the only place of life. He started life. Once again, going back to Genesis one, when we read that God created the heaven and the earth, and we read that God said, let there be light, and we read that God commanded the oceans to make the fish and the fowls of the air, and God commanded the land to make all the creeping things.

God began life, and he is the only one that was ever able, or is able to do that, because he is life himself. He's the only one that can or is available to do so.

And we'll look at each other and we'll say, well, I have children. I created life. No, God created that life. God might have created that life within your womb using things that he designed you with, but God created that life.

You're Christians all the time saying, I can't believe we created life. We created this little bundle of life. No, you didn't. God created that. God creates that. And that life is created in his own image, just as you are.

[22 : 37] Just as Adam and Eve were created in the image of God, just as their children and their children and their children own up to present day right now in 2023, all life, all human life, I should say, is created in the image of God.

And I could go off on a tangent there, but I'm not going to. In him was life, and the life was the life of men. The life of Jesus Christ was the life of men.

And folks, the life of Jesus Christ is still the life of men. This is in past tense that we're reading it in right now, but it is still the life that Jesus Christ lived is still the life of men.

How can we say that? Well, you read the accounts that we have in the gospel. You read the accounts of Jesus coming into crowded areas or one-on-one encounters, whatever the case was.

In John chapter three, when Nicodemus comes to Jesus by night, he came into the light. He came to where the light was. And what did that light do?

[23 : 44] It exposed the glory of God for one. I ain't saying that it blinded Nicodemus or anything along those lines, but Jesus Christ's life here on earth, he come to do one thing. He came to glorify God, yes, and he came to be the propitiation for our sins, to be the sacrifice that needed to be made because we were incapable of following God's moral law.

Yes. What else does it do other than show the glory of God? It exposes man's sin. That light will shine into your heart. It will reveal what you are.

It will reveal what you are in the sight of God. I'm talking about lost people right now. It revealed to me what I was and who I was in the eyes of God.

But praise God, once regeneration happens, once salvation has been granted unto a lost soul, the Bible says God looks on the heart.

That doesn't change. He's forever God. In the Book of Malachi it says, I'm the Lord and I change not. So he can still look on my heart. What does he see? He sees his righteousness.

[24 : 56] He sees Christ. He sees the light that is the life of man. He sees the whole purpose that Christ came, which was to destroy the works of the devil, according to what John wrote in his little epistles, to destroy the works of the devil, how so by becoming a sacrifice on the cross, by shedding his blood and making a way that we could be reconciled unto God.

That's the destruction of the works of the devil. That's the destruction of the works of darkness, period. It's not only the life that Christ lived, but the death that he suffered and the resurrection that we just got through celebrating a week or so ago.

All of these things destroyed the works of the devil. They destroyed the darkness. They destroyed this evil. And they still have the same power to do so.

And it was life and the life was the light of men and the light shone in darkness and the darkness comprehended it none. The light shone in darkness. We just briefly talked about that a little bit.

And not only shone in the darkness of the day that John was writing in, what darkness might John have been pinpointing here? Well, for one, there was darkness as far as the Roman government keeping the Jewish nation oppressed.

[26 : 22] And as they had for hundreds of years at that point, that could have been the darkness he was talking about, but when you take it on a spiritual plane, you get it on in a spiritual sense.

It was spiritual darkness that we would be talking about. He says, the light shone in darkness and the darkness comprehended it none. Now, you read this in the way that it's written and it's written correctly.

I'm not saying that it's not, but the light shone in darkness. That's present tense to light shone in darkness. And the darkness comprehended, that's past tense. The darkness comprehended it none.

What does this word comprehended mean? It actually has two, a twofold meaning. It's a great big Greek word. Now, if I'm not horribly mistaken, it's *compilabannus*.

That this Greek word here is used. It has two meanings behind it. One is just what we read in our King James Version. It comprehended it not.

[27 : 23] It didn't understand it. But the other meaning, the second meaning to this Greek word is it could not control it. It could not overtake it.

So which did John mean when he used this word? I personally think that he might have meant both. It means it's got both of those meanings because the darkness could not overtake the light.

And folks, it works that way in our natural world. Darkness cannot overtake light. Darkness itself cannot. Can we make it dark? Of course, we can go over and hit a light switch right now.

It's going to be a whole lot darker in this room than what it is. But that is not darkness taking over light. That is us removing light from a specific place. And that's exactly what darkness is.

It's the removal of light. But this line that we read here in verse five is the light, shanathan, darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.

[28 : 20] The light shined. And folks, that's not just it done at one time. That word shineth, that's perfect tense. It's a continual shining into the darkness and the light of Jesus Christ is now and forever will be shining into the darkest parts of men's hearts.

The darkest parts of their lives. And it will be exposing their evil deeds. That's what John says to Nicodemus in John chapter three. He says that men love darkness rather than light.

Why did they do that though? Because their deeds were evil. They love darkness rather than light. But since I've become a born again child of God, I love the light a whole lot better than I do the darkness.

And I run to the light. I go to the light. I want to abide in the light. I want to make my dwelling there. And I want the light to expose my sin.

Even as a born again child of God, I want the light to expose my sin not so that I could relish in it and not so that I can relive it in my mind but so that I might repent of that sin.

[29 : 26] Why? Because that's what the scripture commands of us. That's what God expects of his children. I want the light to expose it. But it says the darkness comprehended it not.

Comprehended the light not. It didn't understand it. Didn't get it however you'd like to phrase that. But also it could not control it. And it certainly could not overtake it.

And it was the case in John's day when he wrote this. And it's the case now. The darkness cannot overtake the light. As much as the world tries to snuff out the light of Jesus Christ and it tries on a daily basis to do so.

As much as it tries to do that, it tries to snuff out the church, it tries to snuff out preaching. And if it can't snuff it out, it tries to water it down. As much as the world tries these things, it will not ever snuff out the light that Christ is.

Why? Because Christ is immortal, Christ is eternal. And everything about him, every attribute of his, everything about Jesus Christ is immortal as well.

[30 : 33] That's why it will never overtake, it will never overcome, it will never control, and darkness will never comprehend the light. And I'm going to stop right there in the first five verses of John.

The next part we get into, John the Baptist. We won't delve into that this week. Anybody got any questions or comments on any of that?