



THE GOSPEL OF JOHN: LESSON 2 *"COME AND SEE"*

In this first chapter, John doesn't begin his writings by arguing with the local heretics, but instead, by presenting convincing facts proving that Jesus is God. In his prologue, John introduces the main theme of the entire book, which is the Incarnation of Christ; God becoming man in the person of Jesus Christ (see also Philippians 2:5-8). He wants his readers to know, right up front, that Jesus is eternal. He's the Creator, the source of life, and the expressed image of God's glory. John refers to Jesus as the "Son of God" nine times in the Gospel, and "the Son" nineteen additional times. We must remember that John was a Palestinian Jew and for him to make the claim that Jesus was God would be considered blasphemous. John was about 90-100 years old at the time he wrote this Gospel and was fully convinced that Jesus was fully human and fully divine.

John has a very repetitive style of writing. Notice the words he repeats as he tells his story. After reading chapter 1, the reader is left with uncompromising evidence ... Jesus Christ is indeed the Son of God.

First Day

1. Read John 1:1-51. List the repeated words, phrases, or thoughts. List the characters you meet.

2. Read John 1:1-18 again. Observe the facts in this first section by answering the following questions:
 - A. Who is Jesus?

B. What did He come to do?

3. Was there ever a time when Jesus did not exist?

John calls Jesus "The Word," which comes from the Greek word "logos." This is a title for Christ that only John uses. Logos is the final and absolute revelation of God embodied in God's own Son. Jesus Christ is the logos because in Him all the purposes, plans, and promises of God are brought to a final and absolute realization. William Barclay put it another way: "The mind of God became a person."

4. Why do you think John used that expression for Jesus?
(What's the purpose of a written or spoken word?)

John opens his Gospel by alluding to the opening words of the creation account in Genesis 1:1 to establish the deity of Christ. These words were radical to the first century listener. This was Jesus of Nazareth they were talking about. How could He be God? John is pointing out the pre-existence of Christ. Jesus always was and always will be. The "Word" was with God, implying an intimate fellowship with the Father throughout all eternity. The "Word" was God because Jesus always was (and is) fully God. He is God in every way, though He is a separate person from God the Father. John is building his case for the Trinity, meaning "tri-unity" or "three in one." (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) Jesus is distinct from the Father; two separate persons, but they are intimately involved so their thoughts and purposes are one (John 10:30). Three persons, 1 purpose and action. Ray Stedman said, "God has revealed a complexity in His personality. We conclude that He exists as 3 persons, sharing the divine essence, so that there is one God expressed in 3 individual persons (Genesis 1:26). J.I. Packer said, "John sets the mystery of the Trinity at the head of his Gospel because he knows that nobody can make heads or tails of the works of Jesus of Nazareth until he has grasped the fact that this Jesus is in truth, God the Son."

5. Explain Jesus' role in creation. How does that prove His deity? Also read 1 Corinthians 8:6 and Colossians 1:16-17.

The word "life" is used more than 35 times in this Gospel, and is obviously another reoccurring theme. It's interesting that John begins His Gospel with life and also ends it with life (20:31).

6. What do the following verses tell us about the life John is talking about? John 3:16, 5:24, 6:40, 14:6.

7. John called Jesus "Light." He uses this word 21 times. Why is Jesus referred to as light? Read John 8:12, 11:10, and 12:36. How is Jesus a revealing light? A guiding light? An enlightening light?

8. What effect does light have on darkness?

9. How did the world receive Jesus?

10. Is the world still hostile to the "Light" today? How and why?

11. So far we know that Jesus is eternal, had no beginning and has no end, is the Creator of the universe, the source of life and light. What effect do these truths have on your life?

Let's end here for now. Tomorrow we'll continue our study of the Incarnation of Christ. Spend some time meditating on verse 1 today. Let Jesus be magnified in your thoughts.

Memory Verse of the Week: "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name."
John 1:12

Second Day

Review your memory verse. Have you received Him?

1. Begin today by reading John 1:1-18 again. What gift is given to those who receive Christ?
2. John uses the word "believe" many times. In your own words, explain what it means to "believe in His name."
3. Verse 13 tells us that we can't become children of God "by blood." What does that mean?

The word "believe" means to be convinced that Jesus is truly the Son of God, who became one of us, took our sins upon Himself, died on the cross, rose from the dead, and is again with the Father. Your mind needs to be made up. But it needs to be more than an intellectual belief; you must receive Jesus Christ at His Word, and accept His commands. It means receiving without question what He says as truth and acting upon it. The new birth is available to those who receive Him, not simply believe with their minds.

4. Explain verse 14 in your own words. What great spiritual truth is taught?

Verse 14 is sometimes called the "greatest single verse in the New Testament." This one statement explains the whole reason why John wrote his Gospel. It was a hard statement to receive. The Jews had a hard time believing that Jesus was the Promised Messiah, and the Greeks were appalled at the thought of God taking the form of a human body. To them, the body was evil, a place where the spirit was held hostage.

The word "flesh" (*sarx*) refers to our physical being and human nature in all its weakness and capacity to sin. Jesus became fully human and "dwelt" or "tabernacled" or "pitched His tent" with us. Charles Swindoll said, "At the Incarnation, deity funneled itself into humanity. That humanness then "tabernacled" among us." This is a reference to the tabernacle in the wilderness, which was a temporary place where man could meet with God. (Exodus 25:8; 33:7,11)

5. Why is that fact so important to you and me?

6. How was the Law given according to verse 17? What did the arrival of Christ bring? Also read Romans 5:21 and 6:14.

The word "declared" in verse 18 is from the word "exegesis," meaning "to explain, expound, or to draw out." Ray Stedman said, "If we would see the Father, we must focus on the Son."

7. Read John 1:18 again. How did Jesus "explain" or "expound" on God the Father? (Read Colossians 1:15 and Hebrews 1:3)

8. Are you focusing on the Son? Reflect for a moment ... where has your focus been today?

The Bible does not teach the "universal brotherhood" of man, or that every person is a child of God. John 1:12 says that we must "become children of God." Verse 13 tells us we must be born of God and John 3:3 says we must be "born again." We are all born once physically, but we must be born again spiritually. To do that we first must realize that we are sinners and we all fall short (Romans 3:23). Because of our sin we were alienated from God. He is a perfect God; we are a sinful man. How do we bridge that gap? Jesus became a man, taking on the sins of the whole world. He actually became sin for us and paid the penalty for them so we wouldn't have to face death (2 Corinthians 5:21). He became the final sacrifice for us as He was crucified on the cross. He died, was buried, and rose again on the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). That's the Gospel, or the "Good News" in a nutshell. That's good news for us because when we accept Christ, He becomes our way to the Father. Our sins have been atoned for, He paid the price once and for all. We have been forgiven, made clean by the blood of Jesus. We now have the privilege of living forever in Heaven with God; we've been given the gift of everlasting life (Romans 6:4-23).

This is where the "believe and receive" comes in. If you have never received Him, first you must confess you're a sinner. Repent of your sins and ask Jesus to forgive you (1 John 1:9). He promises to do that. Then believe. Romans 10:9-10 says, "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation." Ask Jesus to come and live inside you and receive Him into your heart (John 1:12). Make Him the Lord of your life, the ruler of your heart. Give Him prominence and priority in your life. Once you have done that, you are "born again!" You are now a Christian, a disciple and follower of Jesus Christ.

If you just did this, share your decision with someone. Tell them about the Good News! Your group leader would love to know and will try to answer any questions you have. You just made the most important decision of your life. Ray Stedman said, "Jesus is the ultimate crisis -- the decision that must be made, the question that must be answered yes or no, accept or reject—in every human life. Every human being must sooner or later deal with Jesus of Nazareth."

9. When did you "receive" Christ into your life? Briefly share your testimony of how you met Jesus of Nazareth.

10. Is there anyone close to you that needs to receive Christ as their Savior? Spend some time today praying for that person.

Third Day

Spend some time reviewing your verse. Let the full meaning of it sink down deep into your heart.

1. Read John 1:19-34. We are first introduced to this man in verses 6-8. John brings his first witness to the stand. Meet John the Baptist. Please read Luke 1 and Mark 1:1-8 to get more details on who this John is, and write a brief character sketch on this interesting character. Include a description of his wardrobe, his family, and his message.

2. What did Jesus say about John the Baptist in Matthew 11:11? Why?

John definitely had a distinct look and preaching style. He also had a very powerful message. Many people came from Judah and Galilee to hear him preach. So many, in fact, that it made the religious leaders a little nervous. John the Baptist was getting too much attention, so they decided they better go and check him out.

3. Who did the high priest send to hear John the Baptist preach?
4. What was their first question?
5. How did John answer them?

6. Why did they think John might be Elijah? Read Malachi 4:5-6 and Luke 1:17.

7. Why did they think he may be a prophet? Read Deuteronomy 18:15.

8. What does John call himself?

9. What do John's answers reveal about his character?

10. Why were the leaders so confused?

John replies by quoting Isaiah 40:3. He knew exactly who he was and what he was called to do. He was simply the voice, the messenger, the forerunner for Christ. He didn't try to draw men to himself, but continually pointed them to Jesus. He was humble and obedient to the call God had placed on his life. He practiced the old saying ... "Stay humble or stumble."

11. How would you describe "who you are" to someone? Would you tend to glorify yourself a bit?

12. John was a great witness for Christ. He was a clear, loud, distinct voice. What kind of voice are you for Christ? Are you bold and unafraid? Timid and weak? Loud and clear? Shrill and piercing? Clear or confusing? Think about it ...

John's baptism was different than that of Jesus. John's baptism signified external repentance, motivating a change of behavior. Jesus baptized with the Holy Spirit, bringing the power to change.

13. What did John call Jesus in verse 29?

This phrase originated with John the Baptist and is the essence of the Christian message. Jesus became the sacrifice that fulfilled all previous sacrifices of the Old Testament. No longer would any sacrifices be required ... He is the Lamb of God!

14. John was preparing others for the coming of Christ. How can we also be a voice in the wilderness and prepare others for Jesus' soon return? How can we prepare ourselves?

Fourth Day

Continue to study your memory verse.

- 1.** Today read John 1:35-42. Describe how Jesus met His first two disciples. (The unidentified disciple is traditionally thought to be John himself.)

- 2.** What are the very first recorded words of Jesus in this Gospel?

- 3.** Did Jesus welcome the seekers? Does He still today? If possible, give Scriptures to support your answer.

- 4.** Jesus still asks us those words today... "What do you seek?" Or to put it another way, "What do you want out of life?" How would you answer that question?

Andrew and John followed Jesus as they saw John the Baptist pointing to Him. His testimony made them curious, and gave them a desire to examine Jesus more closely.

5. What about you? Do your testimony and your lifestyle make others curious and create a desire in them to examine Jesus more closely?

6. How can our lives cause others to turn away from Jesus?

7. What's the first thing Andrew did? Why is this type of evangelism so effective?

8. What did Jesus rename Simon?

I'm sure many words come to your mind when you think of Peter. Maybe words like, bold, intolerant, or impulsive. But Jesus named him Cephas, which is Aramaic for rock, which translates to Peter in the Greek. Jesus looked beyond his rough edges and saw his potential.

9. Do you, like Jesus, look past people's rough edges and see their potential? In your husband? Your children? If you struggle with this, ask the Lord to help you see them through His eyes.

In verse 41, "Messiah" literally means "Anointed One," the Deliverer, who was promised in the Old Testament to be a Prophet, Priest, and King of God's people.

We'll meet the next two men who become followers of Christ tomorrow. Have you told anybody about the Messiah lately? He still says.... **"Come and see."**

Fifth Day

Write out your verse by memory.

1. Read John 1:43-51. Jesus meets Philip, who immediately followed Him. Who did Philip go find right away? What was he doing?
2. What was Nathanael's response? Why?
3. How did Jesus describe Nathanael in verse 47?
4. What did Jesus reveal about His own character in verses 47-48?

Think of it. Jesus saw you. He knew you before you were born. He knew you'd be doing this lesson today. He saw you Just like He saw Nathanael.

5. How does that make you feel? What emotions does that thought stir up in your heart?

Nazareth was a dusty, insignificant, little village a few miles from where Nathanael grew up. Nathanael must have known his Old Testament and knew that the Messiah would be coming from Bethlehem. I think his response was open and honest. It was a good question! (Maybe because I ask a lot of questions, too!)

In verse 51, Jesus refers to Jacob's dream, found in *Genesis* 27 and 28. Jacob was fleeing from his brother Esau and stopped in Bethel where he fell asleep. He dreamed he saw a ladder reaching to Heaven, with angels ascending and descending. Here Jesus claims to be Jacob's dream come true. He is the ladder that will provide the way for man to reach God. He will become the bridge that will span the gulf between God and man.

Jesus calls Himself the "Son of Man." John MacArthur said this is "Jesus' favorite self-designation; it alludes to Daniel 7:13-14 and thus refers to the coming of the Messiah and His Kingdom."

6. Notice that Jesus called ordinary, simple men. Why is that significant for you and me?

7. This section reveals Jesus' omniscience; He knows everything. How does that encourage you in a situation you may be facing today?

That's it for today, ladies. There is so much in this chapter that we barely skimmed the surface. I pray that the Holy Spirit zeroed in on the places in your heart that He needed to. May you continue to point others to "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

"COME AND SEE"

