

Gospel John Chapter 1 Verses 1-18 -- John Karmelich

1. Years ago, when I first studied John Chapter 1... a Bible teacher really helped me to understand the introduction to the Gospel of John.
 - a) He read John Chapter 1, Verse 1, which says: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.
 - i) But that's not how he said it.
 - ii) He said it this way:
 - b) 'In the Beginning was the Word'.
 - i) Period.
 - ii) Carriage Return.
 - iii) New Paragraph.
 - iv) New Thought.
 - c) "And the Word was With God."
 - i) Period.
 - ii) Carriage Return.
 - iii) New Paragraph.
 - iv) New Thought.
 - d) "And the Word was with God Word".
 - i) Period.
 - ii) Carriage Return.
 - iii) New Paragraph.
 - iv) New Thought.
 - e) If you can learn to meditate on (i.e think about) each aspect of Verse 1,
 - i) God can teach you wonderful things about
 - a) who God is.
 - b) what God is capable of doing.
 - c) what is Jesus' relationship to God.
2. One of the first questions to raise is why refer to Jesus as "The Word" ?
 - a) Why didn't apostle John just say
 - i) in the beginning was Jesus, and Jesus was with God and Jesus was God?
 - a) Why refer to Jesus as the Word?
 - ii) Well for starters, the name Jesus is not significant enough to describe our Lord.
 - iii) Our Lord Jesus the Christ, The King ,
 - a) Jesus is God, and always existed as God.
 - b) Jesus also existed with God,
 - c) Jesus was a separate entity from God the Father.
 - iv) But back to my original question:
 - v) Of all the names to refer to our Lord, why "The Word"?
 - a) Part of it is cultural.
 - b) To both the Jew and the Greek, "the Word", represents
 - (1) The divine thought of god
 - (2) Words are simply expressions of our thoughts.
 - (3) When you & I say something,
 - (a) first we think it,
 - (b) then we say it.
 - (4) You & I don't say anything that we don't *think out* first.
 - (5) Sometimes we don't think enough before talking.
 - (6) But our minds work that way.
 - (7) We think, then we talk.
3. That same principal works with God.

- a) He is “The Divine Thought”.
4. But there is another point John was trying to make:
 - a) If Jesus is “The Word”,
 - b) What is “The Word”?
 - c) What does “The Word” refer to?
 - d) Jesus answered that directly in The Gospel of John, Chapter 5, Verse 37:
 - i) Jesus was talking about the Word of God... He says to the religious leaders:
 - ii) "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. (John 5:37, New King James)
 - e) When the Muslims refer to God (“Allah”), they say God is “unknowable”.
 - i) But our God, THE GOD, **IS** knowable
 - ii) How do we know about God?
 - a) By studying his Word!
 - b) By mediating on (thinking about) His Word.
 - c) By applying His Word.
 - f) Now let’s go back to Verse 1:
 - i) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 - a) The Word of God is distinguished from God himself,
 - b) yet exists in a close personal relationship.
 - c) The Word shares the very nature of God.
 - d) The Word was an extension of the personality of God.
 - e) I like the paraphrase of the New English Bible that says:
 - (1) What the Word Was, God Was.
 - g) To Close Verse 1... I can spend hours teaching the possibilities about applying this verse to your life.
 - i) What I ask is that you spend time thinking about
 - a) each aspect of this Verse,
 - b) and how each aspect relates to you & me.
 - c) “In the Beginning was the Word” **PERIOD**.
 - d) “And the Word was with God” **PERIOD**.
 - e) “And the Word was God” **PERIOD**.
 5. Verse 2: He was with God in the beginning.
 - a) This is almost a double emphasis of the 2nd part of Verse One that says the Word was with God.
 - i) John is trying to emphasize a point.
 - a) God did not create Jesus.
 - b) God did not give birth to Jesus.
 - c) Jesus is not a mythical fable created by a bunch of Jewish guys 2,000 years ago.
 - d) Jesus was not some guy who could do a few magic tricks and thought more highly of himself than he was.
 - (1) No, He was God, He is God.
 - (a) That thought is so simple.
 - (b) Yet, we forget the implications of that thought.
 - (c) We fail constantly,
 - (d) and we lack faith,
 - (e) because we forget that Jesus is God.
 - e) Jesus was there (with God the Father) in the beginning.

6. Verse 3: "Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made".
 - a) If you ever meet somebody Jewish, here is a great question to ask.
 - b) Jews can not accept Jesus as God because they believe God is one (singular).
 - c) Next time you meet someone Jewish, ask this question:
 - d) In Genesis, Chapter 1, God says Let **US** make man in **OUR** image (emphasis added).
 - i) Then ask your Jewish friends, "Who is God talking to?"
 - a) Genesis Chapter 1 says "Let **US** make man in **OUR** image" (Gen. 1:26)
 - (1) This usually stumps them
 - b) They might say: "We'll God was talking to the angels".
 - c) The response is to quote from the word of God:
 - d) "But the Bible says: "Let **US** make man in **OUR** image"
 - (1) How can angels have an image of man?
 - (2) Are you saying that angels have the power to create man?
 - (3) I don't think God gave angels the power to create.
 - (a) Only God can create.
 - (b) So again, who was God talking to?
 - (i) If they are interested, you may want to show them Colossians 1:16 that states that all things were created through Jesus.
7. The Gospel of John, Chapter 1 verse 3: "Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.
 - a) Verse 3 is a bit clumsy in the Greek because it is excessively literal..
 - i) God is the creator of everything
 - ii) And the Word, (Jesus Christ) is his agent
 - iii) He states it positively
 - a) "Through him all things were made"
 - iv) And again negatively
 - a) "without him nothing was made that has been made."
 - b) There is a good parallel verse in Colossians 1:16 and 17:
 - c) For by him (being Jesus) all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created **by** Him and **for** Him. (Colossians 1:16 NKJV)
 - d) Verse 17 of Colossians says; "He (Jesus) is before all things, and in him all things hold together.
 - i) Next time you think God can't fix your problems,
 - a) remember who you are talking to.
 - ii) Do you believe Jesus created all things?
 - iii) Do you believe all things all held together by Jesus?
 - a) Then why we do we worry so much?
 - b) Why do we try to fix things ourselves?
 - e) Remember what Jesus told us to do in the Gospel of John Chapter 6, Verse 28
 - i) In Verse 28, someone in a crowd asked Jesus ""What must we do to do the works God requires?"" (John 6:28b, NIV)
 - a) Jesus answered, "The work of God is this:
 - b) to believe in the one he has sent." (Verse 29)
 - (1) Just believe!
 - (2) It sounds so easy.
 - (3) But it is so hard for us
 - (4) Because we refuse to let go! We want to do it our way.
 - (5) This is where we are stubborn & rebellious before God.

8. Verse 4: "In him was life, and that life was the light of men."
 - a) In Jesus was life.
 - i) This is true both for natural man, and born-again man.
 - ii) Even if a man *never heard* of Jesus,
 - a) the evidence of the existence of God is all around us.
 - (1) God holds people accountable based on *what they know*.
 - (2) For a cross reference see Romans 1, Verse 20.
 - b) And for born-again person, Jesus is the life *within* us.
9. Verse 5: "The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it."
 - a) The Greek word translated understood or comprehend (at the end of verse 5) can either mean extinguish or understand. Both meanings are applicable in this verse, for the darkness could neither understand nor extinguish Jesus.
 - i) A Bible teacher named Jon Courson put it this way.:
 - a) "For 3 hours, the earth was darkened,
 - (1) when it seemed the Light of the world was extinguished.
 - (2) But 3 days later, he was back to shine in our hearts
 - (a) as the Bright and Morning star."
 - b) Jesus says in Chapter 8 of the Gospel of John:
 - i) "I am the light of the world."
 - ii) Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, (I underline never)
 - iii) but will have the light of life." (John 8:12 NKJV)
 - c) All the "spiritual" light (i.e. understanding) that we have in us, comes from Jesus.
 10. The next few verses deal with the introduction of John the Baptist.
 - a) John the Baptist came as a witness for Christ.
 - b) The Gospel of the John is full of references to "witnesses"
 - i) Witness of Father Chapter 5 32-37
 - ii) The Son as witness of Himself. Chapter 8:14-18
 - iii) The Holy Spirit as a witness. Chapter 15:26
 - iv) The Witness of the Works (miracles) of Christ 5:36 & 10:25
 - v) The Witness of Holy scriptures 5:39
 - vi) The Witness of disciples 15:27
 - vii) The writer of the book (John), who refers to himself as "The disciple whom Jesus loved". 19:36 21:24
 - c) Remember John the Gospel writer's emphasis is on who Jesus is.
 - i) There is a law in the Book of Moses that "by two or three witnesses a thing shall be established" Deuteronomy 19:15b
 - ii) The writer of this Gospel establishes witnesses for credibility.
 - iii) Beginning with John the Baptist.
 11. Back to the Gospel of John Chapter 1:
 - i) Verse 6 There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John.
 - ii) Verse 7 He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe.
 - iii) Verse 8 He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.
 - b) The main points being made is.:
 - i) John the Baptist was called by God.
 - ii) His ministry was to point the way to Jesus.
 - iii) And he himself, was not the Messiah (Messiah is the Jewish word for "king". "Christ" is from the Greek "kristos" that also means King.)
 - a) "Christ" was not Jesus' last name. "Christ" means Jesus.
 - b) A better title for Jesus would be Jesus *the* Christ.

- c) By the way, our ministry is to be like John the Baptists.
 - i) We are called to be witnesses of Jesus.
 - ii) We are called to point people to Him, not to us.
 - iii) Our lives, not our debating skills, are supposed to be a witness for Jesus Christ.
 - iv) We are going to get more into John the Baptist's ministry next week,
 - a) so that's enough of John the Baptist for now.
- 12. Verse 10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. (Verse 11) He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.
 - a) Notice in Verse 11, the word "his own" is used twice.
 - i) "His own" the 1st time, it is used in the neutral in Greek, refers to creation.
 - ii) "His own" the 2nd time, is used in the human form, & refers to humanity.
 - b) In other words, when Jesus came into the world.,
 - i) all of creation acknowledged Him.
 - a) The winds obeyed Him (Jesus rebuked the wind in Mark 4:39).
 - b) Water supported Him (Jesus walked on water Matthew 14:26)
 - c) The rocks were ready to cry out to Him (Luke 19:40).
 - ii) **Human** nature is the only part of nature which refuses to worship God.
 - a) To quote one of my favorite little poems:
 - (1) "Jesus was crucified on a cross of wood,
 - (2) but He made the hill on which it stood!"
- 13. Next Verse, Verse 12 Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God--
 - a) Verse 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.
 - b) Verse 12 & 13 are a list of how you can and can not be a child of God
 - c) These verses state that you can't get into heaven
 - i) by having Godly parents or grandparents (vs. 13: born not of natural descent)
 - ii) A priest or pastor can't get you into heaven (vs. 13: nor of human decision)
 - iii) You can't get into heaven by marriage (vs. 13: a husband's will)
 - d) Only 1 way, born of God:
 - i) Only those who are *called* by God,
- 14. Verse 14, (This is a great verse to memorize!):
 - a) The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
 - a) This is probably one of the most radical ideas of the whole Bible
 - b) The idea of **GOD**, creator of all things becoming flesh.
 - ii) One of my favorite examples is the "anthill example".
 - a) It goes like this. Suppose you saw a group of ants in an anthill.
 - (1) You watched those ants every day.
 - (2) You watched them grow.
 - (3) You became very fond of those ants.
 - (4) You want to communicate to the ants
 - (a) how much you love them!

- b) One day, you saw a bulldozer coming across the field.
 - (1) You want to warn the ants to flee.
 - (a) How do you do that?
 - (2) If you jump up and down, you'll just scare them
 - (3) You can dig around the anthill and move it,
 - (a) but that way the ants would never know how much you loved them!
 - (4) The only way you could communicate
 - (a) is if you became an ant
 - (b) and told them how much you loved them!
 - (c) You showed them the way to safety, by trusting you!
 - iii) That is what Verse 14 is all about.
 - a) God becoming human, so he could communicate to us just how much he loved us!
- 15. There is a whole other aspect to Verse 14... and that is the Glory of Jesus Christ.
 - a) We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
 - b) In the Old Testament, there was the temporary place of worship, before Soloman built the first temple, simply called "The tabernacle".
 - i) From the outside, it was rather plain.
 - ii) It was covered in Animal skins... nothing special looking about it.
 - iii) It was only when you saw it from the inside
 - a) that you saw the Glory of God!
 - c) The same is true with Jesus!
 - i) From the outside, people don't see what is the big deal about Jesus.
 - ii) Jesus was so ordinary looking that Judas had to physically identify Him among the disciples.
 - d) Back to Verse 1: "To those of us who have seen his glory".
 - a) Jesus is far more than a human to those who know Him.
 - b) This is where we see the Grace and Truth of Jesus our Lord
- 16. Verse 16 From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another.
 - a) In the Greek, it literally says: grace upon grace,
 - i) This is the inexhaustible grace of God
 - ii) As Paul says in Romans 5:20:
 - a) "Where sin abounds, grace abounds more"
 - b) You can not exhaust the grace of God,
 - (1) if you embrace the Person of Jesus Christ!
- 17. Verse 17: For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
 - a) Here is a great quote I took from Jon Curson...
 - i) "The law was given on a quaking mountain
 - ii) Grace and truth were born in a quite manager
 - iii) The Law as written on tables of stone
 - iv) Grace and Truth were wrought in a heart of love
 - v) When the Law came down, 3,000 people died (Exodus 32:28)
 - vi) When the Spirit came down, 3,000 people were saved (Acts 2:41)
 - vii) The Law kills
 - viii) Jesus Gives live"

18. Last Verse 18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.
- i) God the son has been revealed to us.
 - b) Most of mankind will acknowledge there is a God.
 - i) Because there is no other explanation for life as it is.
 - ii) So if there is a God, what is he like?
 - iii) What does he want from us?
 - c) Jesus came into this world to answer these questions.
 - i) Verse 18 has stated that no one has seen God but Jesus,
 - ii) as Jesus is with God and Jesus was God.
 - iii) And Jesus has manifested himself in the flesh, to the world.
 - a) So that we can know what God expects from us.
 - b) Also, we can know just how much God loves us.
 - c) How? That's what the Word of God is all about.
 - (1) This is why Christians study it so much.
 - (2) It is a "Love Story" written to the believer!
 - d) Among the 66 Books that form the Bible is The Gospel of John.
 - i) This is the message of the Gospel of John
 - a) Who is Jesus
 - b) Who is God
 - c) And what does God expect from us
 - d) Which leads us back to the last part of Colossians 1:16
 - (1) all things were created by him and for him.
 - (2) We are made by God and for God
 - ii) As I stated last week,
 - a) Gospel of John 6:28
 - b) 28 Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"
 - c) 29 Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."
 - (1) In Him, we have eternal life...
19. Let's Pray: Father we thank you for these lessons. We thank you for what you have taught us about Jesus, and what you are going to teach us. Help us to learn from your Word just how much you love us and care for us. Help us to apply these lessons to our lives. We ask this in Jesus name, Amen.