

Sonoraville Baptist Church
Sunday, July 18, 2010 – 6:00 PM
Rev. Steve Skates, Pastor

SERIES: PORTRAITS OF JESUS
Jesus: The Word of God - John 1:1-18

Introduction: The Gospel of John was written by John in about 85 AD. It was the last of the four Gospels written. By the time this book was circulated among the Christian community, the other Gospels were fairly well known. The first three Gospels are called the Synoptic Gospels. "*Synoptic*" means "*to see together.*" This means that the first three Gospels contain many of the same stories and teachings, but told from a different angle. Yet, each fully inspired by the Lord.

John's Gospel is different! Through John's eyes, we see a side of Christ that the other Gospel writers don't reveal. John was part of the inner circle. He was a part of the handful of Disciples that was with Christ during some of His most private moments. In these 21 chapters, John presents a new facet of His divine character. I hope to preach in the coming weeks from each of these views of Christ that John gives us. We will call this series Portraits of Christ.

In this first chapter, John paints a picture of Jesus: The Word of God, and it's that image that we focus in on this evening. Let's look together at Jesus: The Word of God. Three truths are revealed in these verses about the Word of God. First, He is:

1. The Preexistent Word (1-3)

As the preexistent Word of God, Jesus is portrayed in four aspects here. He is:

A. The Constant Word (1a) - According to this verse, Jesus has simply always existed! He didn't come into being in Bethlehem, but He has been here throughout all eternity. In vs. 1, The word "*was*" means "*always has been.*" Contrast this with the word "*was*" in verse 6. This word used concerning John the Baptist means "*to become.*" John became, but Jesus always has been! Thank God He is the constant, unchanging Word of God - **Hebrews 13:8 (NIV)** says, "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever!*" That is why the Christian can depend on Jesus. He said, "*Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.*" (**Hebrews 13:5 NIV**). But also, Jesus is portrayed as:

B. The Communing Word (1b) - This phrase says that Jesus "*was with God.*" That is, He was present in the heavenlies, in the presence of God, yet He stood as a distinct Person. When this phrase is taken alongside the other 2 in this verse, the reality of the Trinity is seen. This verse teaches us that Jesus is God, yet He is still a unique being.

You see, Jesus wasn't an afterthought with God. He wasn't conjured up as a last-minute solution when things got out of control. According to Genesis 1:26, Jesus was there when God moved to make man in His image - According to Rev. 13:8; Eph. 1:4; Titus 1:2; 1 Pet. 1:19-20, Jesus was already with God when the plan to redeem the world was formulated. Since before time began, Jesus was with the Father. We also see Him here as:

C. The Controversial Word (1c) - When Jesus came preaching repentance, people thought He was strange. When He began to heal and perform miracles, people thought He was a prophet of God. When He spoke the Word of God with power, people thought He was amazing. However, when Jesus claimed equality with God, people thought He was crazy. To many folks, He stopped being a blessing and became a controversy when He claimed to be God. In **John 14:9 (NIV)** Jesus answered Philip's misunderstanding when He said, "*Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?*" People still have problems with these truths! They are willing to accept the carpenter's son named Jesus, the humble Jesus, the teaching Jesus, the meek Jesus, the serving Jesus. But, they refuse to acknowledge the God/Man Jesus Christ. He is still 100 % God and 100% man all wrapped up in one.

It is best summed up by Paul in **Philippians 2:5-8 (NIV)** "*Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!*"

Here, Paul sets forth in clear, concise language the fact that Jesus existed before Bethlehem. That He

willingly humbled Himself and came to this world as a servant. Jesus is God in human flesh! Finally, Jesus as seen here as:

D. The Creative Word (3) - This tells us that Jesus was the energy behind the creation of the universe. He spoke and it was! He stood on the edge of nothing and spoke all this into existence.

I am grateful that this God is my God, that this Savior is my Savior! I'm glad that I can know Him the free pardon of sin and that salvation is in His control. The worries and pressures of life begin to grow dim when confronted with the power and might of our all powerful Savior.

These four truths, taken as one give us the clear teaching that Jesus is the pre-existent Word of God. He has always been and He always will be! Thank God, there will never be a day throughout eternity that doesn't include Jesus! No matter where we wind up, or what we have to face as we travel through this world, we can rest assured that the pre-existent One is, and always will be, there for us. He is the pre-existent Word of the Living God!

But not only is He preexistent, we also see Him as:

2. The Personal Word (14)

This verse is one of the clearest in all the Bible regarding the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. Incarnation being a fifty cent word, simply means "*God in the flesh.*" Let's notice:

A. The Manner Of His Incarnation – Vs. 14 tells us that "*The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.*" The manner of His incarnation is a mystery. How could God become a man? The answer to this question lies in the mind of God alone. All we know is that God chose a virgin named Mary and caused her to miraculously conceive and bring forth a baby. I do know that on that night when Jesus was born, God had come to earth. Somehow, the Word, became flesh! While Jesus himself had existed from all eternities past, He took up on Himself a robe of flesh there in Bethlehem. The Creator was born to the creature. God placed His life in the hands of mortals. What a scene that must have been!

This verse says that God "*made his dwelling*" among us. It literally means that the eternal Jesus pitched His tent here among mortal men. He lived among us, worked among us, prayed among us, suffered among us and died among us. God walked the dark hills of this earth and was unrecognized by many who came into close contact with Him. What a tragedy that men came in contact with the Savior and still failed to recognize Him.

Whenever our President goes to another country, it costs the US and the other government millions of dollars and much frustration to accommodate him there. Yet, when he arrives, they usually give him a royal welcome. 2,000 years ago, The King of Kings, God in the flesh came to Jerusalem and they killed Him. Isn't it amazing that the President of the United States of America is safer in this world than God was.

B. The Mystery Of His Incarnation - The Word was made flesh. This word carries the meaning "*to appear in history, to step onto the stage.*" There in Bethlehem, God stepped out of eternity and onto the stage of human history. He became the face of God and a perfect example of God's willingness to save mankind. When He was here on earth and through the record left to you and me, we can see that Jesus came to this world to reveal God to man. He did this through flesh and bone- 1 John 1:1.

Often, I envy those men, but then I remember the words of Jesus - **READ John 20:24-29**. Not everyone who saw Jesus on this earth came to faith in Him!

C. The Majesty Of His Incarnation - "*We have seen His glory*" (14). John actually saw the glory of Jesus in a very real sense. In Matthew 17, John, along with James and Peter, went with Jesus upon a mountain. There Jesus allowed the veil of His flesh to be pulled aside and He revealed the glory that was behind it. However, His greatest glory was revealed the day He allowed Himself to be nailed to a cross and died for sinners. On Calvary, the glory of God was in sharp focus! After all, that was the reason Jesus left Heaven and came to live among men. He took upon Himself a robe of flesh so that He might be able to die for mankind. That is what He did for each and every one of us. To me the greatest evidence of the glory of God is the broken body of Jesus Christ having demonstrated His love for me in the clearest of terms, Rom. 5:8. Finally, we see in vs. 18:

3. The Proclaiming Word (18)

According to this verse, Jesus came to reveal God to man. The phrase "*made him known*" means "*to unfold.*" Everything the Lord did was simply in an effort to unfold more of the revelation of God to man. Men needed to see God not just as a Lawgiver, but also as a lover - not only as a judge, but as a justifier – not as some stern, hateful being, but as a saving, caring God. Jesus did just this by His life. Jesus came to put God on display before

men and He did this in two primary ways.

A. He Came To Proclaim Light (4-9) - He came to a world in spiritual darkness and opened the curtains of grace revealing the truth of God to men wandering in darkness. Jesus came to illuminate the pathway of men toward God. This light will accomplish one of two things. It will either cause men to repent of their sins and run to the opened arms of the Lord, or it will cause them to reject the light and continue on their course of darkness. One will lead to salvation; the other will lead to damnation!

Thank God for the light that He gave fallen man! Now, we don't have to be bound by the cut-and-dried rules of Law but are free to respond to His grace. And, praise the Lord, this light reaches out to all men (v. 9) Even me!

B. He Came To Proclaim Life (10-13) - Jesus came to His people, who had His Word and were living in His promised land. He came to tell them that there was a way to come to the Father and to experience eternal life. In one of the saddest verses in the Bible, (vs. 11) John says that they refused this call from the sinner's friend to come to Him. However, verse 12-13 make it clear that anyone who will respond positively to the light of God and will come to Jesus and receive Him into their heart and life will experience the new birth and will enter into eternal life.

John makes it clear in verse 13 that this life comes not by our natural birth (not by blood), not by our own good works (not the will of the flesh), not the work of another, (the will of man), but only through the will of God. And, just what is the will of the Father? **READ John 6:36-40.**

There is only one entrance into life and that is through the Son of God. He is the Door, and He is the Way. If anyone will enter into life, they will enter through Jesus!

Conclusion: I can't say that I understand all the truths of this passage, but I can say that I like them. I just praise the Lord for revealing Himself and His Father to people like us. I am glad that sinners like us can come to Jesus by simple faith and can be eternally saved by His grace. I may not know a lot about this Book, but I am glad I know the Word of God personally today. How about you? If you have never met Jesus in the free pardon of sin, now is your time. Jesus stands ready to reveal the Father to you. He waits for you to respond to His light so He can give you of His life. Will you do what you need to do and come to Jesus?