

Glory Revealed

Week 1 - John 1:1-18

A major theme runs through John's Gospel: Jesus is the Son of God and He grants eternal life to those who believe on Him. He writes, "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:30-31). "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

I. The Declaration of His Deity - John 1:1-5

John declares Jesus to be eternally God. To equate Jesus with God was a bold declaration. John was a Jew and was conscious of the impact of his words and reaction of blasphemy it would evoke in his Orthodox Jewish readers. Without stammer or stutter, without hesitation or halt, John boldly declares Jesus to be God.

- a. The Word was in the beginning - eternally God
- b. The Word was with God - equally God
- c. The Word was God - essentially God

John referred to Jesus as "the Word." A word is an expression of a thought. Hebrews 1:3 says, "He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power."

God had been silent for 400 years. The world was shrouded in darkness until... "the Light [shone] in the darkness" (John 1:5), revealing His glory!

II. The Manifestation of His Ministry - John 1:6-13

John, the apostle, introduces his next theme: Jesus is the Light. He begins by making mention of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ. John the Baptist was the first true prophet in 400 years and had the privilege of introducing Jesus to the nation of Israel. According to Matthew 3:1-2, John the Baptist "came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

John the Baptist testified about Jesus and the saving power of the gospel. The world, at large, "did not know Him" (John 1:10). Even the nation of Israel, with all its spiritual advantages, was blind to their own Messiah. "He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him" (John 1:11). But for those of us who have believed (surrendered to, committed to, entrusted) in Jesus, God welcomes us into His Kingdom and makes us to be "children of God" (John 1:12).

Well, verse 13 speaks of the new birth: "*Which were born, not of blood ...*" (John 1:13). Now, what does that mean? That means we were not—we are not—saved by natural generation; that is, because our parents are Christians, that doesn't make us Christians. We cannot inherit it. We are born not of blood. It's not handed down through the bloodline. "*Nor of the will of the flesh*" (John 1:13)—it is not by natural generation; it is not by natural determination. Salvation is not the works of men's hands. It is not the will of the flesh. It is not by good deeds. It is not by living a good life. Not by natural generation, not by natural determination, but by supernatural regeneration—we are "*born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the [work] of man,*

but of God” (John 1:13). That means that God, the God-man who died for us, now provides for us a new birth. (Dr. Adrian Rogers, from his sermon *The Reason for the Season*, Dec. 1985.)

III. The Revelation of His Humanity - John 1:14-18

Jesus took on human flesh. He identified with us in order that we might identify with Him through His substitutionary atoning death! He “became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14). The word “dwelt” literally means “tabernacled” among us, an Old Testament reference the Jews would easily recognize.

The tabernacle “represented the place of the law, the abode of God, the source of revelation, the site of sacrifice, and the focus of worship. Now in the new covenant, Jesus provides all these.” (*Holman New Testament Commentary: John*, p. 13).

The tabernacle was dull and dreary looking from the outside, covered with badger skins. Inside, it was glorious and indescribably beautiful, illumined by the gold lampstand. What a picture of Christ in His humanity (see Isaiah 53:2). God Himself, housed in the body of an unassuming Jewish rabbi! For those of us who have believed on His name and received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, we see the exquisite beauty of the Son of God in all His glory, “glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

John contrasts God’s giving of the Law with God’s sending of His Son. “The Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ” (John 1:17).

Warren Wiersbe observes, “John did not suggest that there was no grace under the Law of Moses, because there was. Each sacrifice was an expression of the grace of God. The Law also revealed God’s truth. But in Jesus Christ, grace and truth reach their fullness; and this fullness is available to us” (*The Bible Exposition Commentary*, p. 286).

The Law revealed sin, but it could not redeem us. Christ, our substitute, “through His own blood...entered the holy place once for all time, having obtained eternal redemption” (Hebrews 9:12). Christ paid our sin debt and made a way for us to be reconciled to the Father! Grace and truth were married together and perfectly displayed through His humanity. Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Jesus is the visible expression, the revelation of the invisible God. “No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the father, He has explained Him” (John 1:18).

The Holman New Testament Commentary on John notes, “Jesus is the very essence of God and, according to this verse, his purpose in coming to earth was to exegete, to interpret, to explain the heavenly Father” (p. 14).

Colossians 1:15 says, “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.” Jesus is the visible expression of the invisible God. Glory Revealed! Hallelujah!