

The Word of God John 1:1-3

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INTRODUCTION

The gospel of John is an amazing and important book. John's gospel includes different subject matter than the other three gospels. John covers about 3 to 4 years of ministry while the other gospels cover only 1 to 2 years. John also includes lengthy teachings (or discourses) rather than short summary statements like the others.

In describing salvation John uses the term eternal life rather than the kingdom of God. If you were teaching a Jewish audience about salvation you would focus on the times Jesus used the words the **Kingdom of God**. If you were addressing a gentile audience you would want to focus on the times Jesus used the words **eternal life**. By the time John wrote this gospel the church was comprised of many more gentiles than Jews.

Another central theme that frames this amazing book is **the glory of God**. John is interested in glorifying The Triune God with special focus on the glory of The Son. In John 1 The Son is glorified as The Word who created everything by His spoken command.

In John 2 the miracle of turning the water into wine is framed as; **"the first time Jesus manifested His glory."**

Later in the book there is the glory chapter. John is rightly focused on giving Jesus Christ the glory due His great name. I have to skip background material that will appear on our web site.

AUTHORSHIP - WHO WROTE THIS BOOK

There is a great deal of evidence that John wrote this book. Early church father such as **Polycarp** (who knew John personally) and **Irenaeus** claimed it was his gospel.

In addition you have very strong internal evidence of John's authorship. The author speaks of himself as the one most loved by the Lord Jesus. There are only three who could make that claim; Peter, James and John. The names of Peter and James are used by the author, therefore John must be the author.

THE DATE OF THIS GOSPEL

It seems as if John is aware of the other gospels. I believe this to be true because it seems as if John includes material that the other gospels did not include. In addition he writes as a person who has had some time to prayerfully consider the implications of Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection.

Another factor in dating this later in the 1st century is that John is clearly taking on the Gnostics in the first chapter. The Gnostics taught that Jesus was not God. They taught that He did not truly die but removed himself from His body and watched from the side. Gnostics taught that Jesus was not sinless, that He had a wife, that He was a sometimes emotional and confused character. And they taught He was a created being.

John countered these strange occult based teachings. Since the gnostics did not gain influence until later in the 1st century and John is

countering their false claims, there is little doubt that this gospel was the last one written; and written at the later part of the century.

Some claim John could not write so fluently in considering his age. He may have been around 80 years old in 85 AD. However, John was still writing in his later years as attested by Polycarp and other witnesses.

The last two books John wrote were 3rd John and The Revelation which were completed between 90 to 95 AD. With that in mind this gospel was penned around 85AD.

PURPOSE OF THIS GOSPEL

The highest purpose of this gospel is summed up in John's own words.

John 20:31 (ESV)

³¹ but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

If you want to know who Jesus Christ is, this book is for you. If you want to understand how to obtain eternal life this is the book. Note: We are going to be preaching out of the ESV. Let's begin this amazing book by reading today's text.

READING THE TEXT

John 1:1-3 ESV

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things

were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

PREACHING THE TEXT

John 1:1 ESV

Vs 1 In the beginning was the Word,

A MIRROR OF THE OLD TESTAMENT BEGINNING

This gospel mirrors the way in which the Old Testament began:
Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth”

John intentionally places Jesus Christ The Word exactly where you would expect God to be; in the beginning. John is telling us that this God who created the heavens and earth in Genesis 1 is The Son of God John described in John 1.

ETERNALLY PREEXISTENT

In the beginning WAS The Word. The word “**was**” is a very important word. The “**was**” is written in the Greek imperfect tense, which means “**was continuing.**” In fact, the entire first verse carries this sense of continuing forever.

Here is the way one research commentary transliterates this passage with a focus on the word “**was**” continuing forever.

Transliteration Emphasis on “Was” = Continuing

“In the beginning was continuing the Word, and the Word was continuing with God, and the Word was continually God.”

Or as one of my friends accurately (though ungrammatically) concluded,

“Jesus always was *was-ing!*”

Jesus Christ The Word was ALWAYS there and is always continuing.

Our minds have a difficult time grasping eternity past. We were made with an expiration date. We are born and we die and so it is for every living thing. But not so for God.

One of the qualifications of being God is that you can not be bound by time and space. You exist above the arch of time and space. You existed forever and yet you had no starting point. Time has no hold on you. Space has no hold on you. Matter has no hold on you. You created time, space and matter in which the universe and people could hold together and fashion world history, but you are not bound in what you created. He was there first, with the Father and Spirit.

Colossians 1:17

¹⁷ And he is *before all things*, and in him all things hold together.

BEFORE ALL THINGS

This passage confirms with no question that everything we see that is comprised of matter had a beginning point. And before that specific point in eternity in which The Son said; ***“let there be time and matter and space”*** The Word of God was there. He was there to see the

creation of time, space and matter. And He is the one who spoke the will of God into existence.

And the one who spoke time, space and matter into existence by His command continues to hold them together.

ETERNALLY IN RELATIONSHIP

Next the apostle adds, ^{Vs 1 continued} ***“And the Word was with God.”***
Literally, ***“the Word was continually toward God.”***

The Father and the Son were continually face-to-face. The preposition ***“with”*** in this case bears the idea of nearness, along with a sense of movement toward God. Some Greek texts are translated this way; ***The Word was toward God.***

John 17 will give us some insight as to the “toward-ness” or closeness of the Father and Son. Jesus says of the Father;

John 17:21

²¹ ***“I and the Father are one, I in Him and He in me.”***

Even though they have identities separate from one another, they are in some way powerfully and intimately connected. The word was so much “with” God that He existed in some way inside God The Father. Not only was the Word ***“with”*** God, John says...

^{Vs 1 continued} ***and the Word was God.***

The exact meaning is that the Word was God in essence and character. He was God in every way, though he was a separate person from God the Father.

One Theologian summarizes vs 1 this way; *Jesus was always existing from all eternity as God, in perfect fellowship with God the Father.*

vs 2 ***He was in the beginning with God.***

John tells the reader that Jesus Christ The Word was there in the beginning before time space and matter were created. He was there along with The Father and Spirit.

Jehovah's witnesses claim that Jesus was created by Jehovah God. But that is impossible given these and many other texts. If He was there at the point in time in which creation began then He existed before anything was made. In addition look at verse 3.

vs 3 ***All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.***

How many things were made through The Word? ALL THINGS. That means The Father chose to create every single thing that exists in time, space and matter through His Son The Word.

So there are only two option if you are a Jehovah's Witness and you read and believe a real bible. Either Jesus created Himself, or Jesus Christ The Word is The Son of God and shares the divine nature with The Father and The Spirit. Jesus Christ is God.

Genesis tells us 9 times that God “spoke” everything into existence. This “speaking God” is a reference to God’s Son The Word.

Genesis 1: 3 And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light.

Genesis 1:6 And God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.”

Genesis 1:9 And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.”

Genesis 1:11 And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.”

Who is the speaker who says things and they suddenly appear? John tells us this one who speaks for The Trinity is The Son of God, The Lord Jesus Christ.

Many passages in the New Testament tell us Jesus Christ, the Word of God was the speaker of creation. And by His will the things He spoke into existence continue to hold together.

Colossians 1: 16, 17 says: “For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities— all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.”

The same one who said; “let there be dry land” also continually says; “let all the molecules of the universe hold together. ***“let it continue***

to hold.” “Let it continue to hold.” “Let it continue to hold.” Here is another verse that confirms that the Word must continually decree that the universe hold together by His word.

Hebrews 1: 2, 3 adds: ***“In these last days [God] has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.”***

Revelation 4: 11 states: ***“Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”***

Also ***1 Corinthians 8: 6*** says: ***“Yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.”***

So in the beginning The Word was there. His part of creation was to speak the universe into existence. And one of His ongoing works is to continue to speak it into holding together. He was with The Trinity and He was part of the Godhead. Jesus Christ is Lord and God. Not one single thing that was created had it's origin outside the speaking of The Word. What an amazing God was have.

THE GREATNESS OF THE WORD

According to a researcher; There are about one hundred billion stars in the average galaxy, and there are at least one hundred million galaxies in known space. Einstein believed that we have scanned with our largest telescopes only one billionth of theoretical space. This means that there are probably something like (ten octillion) stars in space . How many is that? ... ten octillion is a 10 with twenty-seven zeros behind it. And Jesus created them all! Not only is He the Creator of the macrocosm of the universe, but also of the microcosm in the inner universe of the atom.

The text in Colossians explains that he holds the atom and its inner workings together (“ in him all things hold together”). At the molecular level and all the complexities of an atom, to the boundaries of the 10 Octillion stars and their galaxies, The Word spoke them into existence. And He continually holds every single molecule together by His will.

We can trust such a God with everything. Because he is Creator, he knows just what his creation, his people, need.

STORY: CHARLES STEINMETZ AND FORD

It was said of Charles Steinmetz, the mechanical genius and friend of Henry Ford, that he could build a motor in his mind, and if it broke down he could fix it in his mind. So when he designed it and actually built it, it ran with precision. One day the assembly line in the Ford plant broke down. None of Ford's men could fix it, so they called in Steinmetz. He tinkered for a few minutes, threw the switch, and it started running again. A few days later Ford received a bill from Steinmetz for \$ 10,000. Ford wrote back, “Charlie, don't you think your bill is a little high for just a little

tinkering!” Steinmetz sent back a revised bill: “Tinkering— \$ 10. Knowing where to tinker— \$ 9,990.”

.....End of Story...

ONLY JESUS KNOWS WHERE TO TINKER

Only Jesus knows where the tinkering should be done in the universe and in the intimate details of our lives to keep us in perfect running order. Christ always knows which screw to turn, which belt to loosen, and the most beneficial octane. He is our Creator.

CLOSING CHALLENGES

Do you feel like things are falling apart right now? Or do you feel like you are stuck and can't figure how to get things going again. You can call on your creator. He knows better than anyone how you were made and how you can be healed, comforted, restored, forgiven.

If The Son of God is this great and powerful, imagine what He can do to transform and heal and recreate your life!

TAKING IT HOME

1. Did you realize The Son of God who is called The Word is this great, this glorious and this powerful?
2. Did you realize that you owe The Word your life and existence? He is holding the molecules of your body and your environment together this very second.

3. What is broken in your life right now? Will you call in the one who made you in order to heal and fix and forgive and bless you?