

John: The Gospel of Light and Life
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Chapter 1 Discussion
The Word Made Flesh (pgs. 15-23)

Opening Prayer

Holy God of light and life, thank you for your Son, Jesus Christ. Thank you for Jesus' follower who so long ago wrote the words of this Gospel so that we might know Jesus Christ and live in relationship with him. Bless our time together as we study this, Gospel. Open our hearts so that we may be receptive to your word. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Bible and Book Study and Discussion

Opening Sentence:

“John is unique among the Gospels.”

The three Gospels are referred to as the *Synoptic* Gospels.

Synoptic means “to see together” in Greek. (pg. 9)

- Who wrote the Gospel of John?
- The Gospel of John is anonymous as the author is not identified by name.
- When was the Gospel of John written? (pg. 10)
- Most scholars date the Gospel of John to sometime during the last two decades of the first century.
- According to tradition, all other disciples had been put to death.
- Only John remained.
- John would have known the Gospels and pre-Gospels written by others were circulating, but his would be different from theirs.
- His would have included material that theirs did not have.
- But focus more intentionally on the question so Jesus' identity and importance.

- What is the central question addressed in this Gospel? (pg. 11)
- The central question is “what is the meaning, or spiritual significance of Jesus’ life.

The Word Made Flesh:

-Read John 1:1-3 (pgs. 26) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1804)

- What is the premise of the Gospel of John, as introduced in the prologue?
 - Jesus embodies God’s word.
- What is the Greek term that John uses for “the Word?”
 - Logos
- What does “the Word” or Logos mean as it is used in John’s Gospel?
 - Logic and logical
 - God’s heart
 - God’s reasoning
 - God’s mind
 - God’s purposes
 - God’s character
 - God’s desire to communicate and create.

-Read John 1:14 (Pg. 27) (Cultural Backgrounds Study bible pg. 1804)

- The premise of the bible is that the God who created the universe wants to be known by human beings.

Read John 1:3-5 (pg. 26) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1804)

- The author describes “darkness” in several ways: spiritual blindness, failure to understand what it means to be human, despair, hopelessness, and evil.

- How do you describe darkness?
- Answers will be personal

Grief

Despair

Anxiety

Depression

Mental illness
Alcoholism
Drug abuse
War
Killing of innocent people
Famine or starvation
Homelessness

- How have you experienced darkness?
- **Answers will be personal**
- Where is there darkness in our church, our community, and around the world?
- **Answers will be personal**
- What does John say about light in the prologue?
- **Answers will be personal**
- How does Jesus bring light into your life?
- **Answers will be personal**
- How can we “knock holes in the darkness” and be the light of Christ for others, both as individuals and as the church?

In Him Was Life

- Read John 20:31 (pg. 163) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1856)
 - What is John’s reason for writing the Gospel?
- **“These things are written so that you will believe that Jesus is the Christ, God’s Son, and that believing, you will have life in his name.**
- Read John 3:16 (pg. 50) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1811)
 - **Luther call this the “Gospel in Miniature.”**
- What does “eternal life” mean in John’s Gospel?
- **Eternal life is not only life after death**
- **It also is experiencing life in Christ in our earth lives.**

- How have you experienced the reality that eternal life begins now in our life on earth?

- **Answers will be personal**

- **Read John 5:24 (pg. 55) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1818)**

- How have you “passed from death into life” in your life here on earth?

- **Answers will be personal**

- What does it mean to have new life in Christ?

- **Answers will be personal**

-Read the invitation on pg. 23

- In what ways have you put your trust in Jesus Christ?

- **Answers will be personal**

- Are there areas of your life where you do not trust in Christ?

- **Answers will be personal**

- If there are, what holds you back?

- **Answers will be personal**

- When you find yourself in darkness, what does it mean to trust in Jesus to be your life and life?

- **Answers will be personal**

Hymn Study and Discussion

“ ‘Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus”

- How do the phrases of this hymn speak to you?

- **Answers will vary, allow time for the group to read the selected verses.**

‘Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus

I

’Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to take Him at His word;
Just to rest upon His promise;
Just to know, Thus saith the Lord.

Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him,
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er,
Jesus, Jesus, Precious Jesus!
O for grace to trust Him more.

2

O how sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to trust His cleansing blood;
Just in simple faith to plunge me,
'Neath the healing, cleansing flood.

Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him,
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er,
Jesus, Jesus, Precious Jesus!
O for grace to trust Him more.

3

Yes, 'tis sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just from sin and self to cease;
Just from Jesus simply taking
Life, and rest, and joy, and peace.

Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him,
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er,
Jesus, Jesus, Precious Jesus!
O for grace to trust Him more.

4

I'm so glad I learned to trust Thee,
Precious Jesus, Savior, Friend;
And I know that Thou art with me,
Wilt be with me to the end.

Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him,
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er,
Jesus, Jesus, Precious Jesus!
O for grace to trust Him more.

Session in Closing

Journal (Personal/Optional)

- Specifically, what do I want to explore or work on this week?
- What questions do I still have about the PROLOGUE to John's Gospel and the topics we discussed?

ø- Answers will be personal

Food for Thought.....

The word Gospel has two meanings in this study:

- 1. The good tidings or good news of Jesus Christ*
- 2. The books that tell the story of Jesus Christ: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.*

Closing Prayer

Jesus, I trust in you, that you are God's Word in flesh. I trust that you are the light of the world. Illuminate my darkness. Help me to walk in your light and to love and follow you all of my days. In your holy name. Amen.