

CCF Study Notes
Tuesday 7 AM Study
10 January 2006
John Chapter 1

Before beginning to read from John's Gospel let's pray and ask that God would help us to

1. **Believe** in Jesus Christ as He is depicted in John's gospel,
2. **Receive** Jesus as God's Son and as your Lord and Savior and
3. **Allow** all that you do to flow out of your relationship with Jesus Christ.

Read through the first chapter of John's gospel and outline the chapter, dividing it into sections. Many chapters of the Bible divide nicely into seven sections. This one is no exception.

As we have looked at the gospels we have seen that both the words and the structure of each gospel account are inspired by the Holy Spirit. There is nothing random about the order of the material in each gospel. Consider the wide variety of material found in this first chapter of John's gospel. Is there a reason for such diversity? Does the organization of the first chapter of John's gospel seem to communicate a message to the reader?

Consider the first five verses of John's gospel. What is the problem with believing that the universe in general or human life in particular came into existence as the result of a long series of random events? Who is insulted by that view? Why do some people tenaciously hold to such views? What role does Jesus play in the universe? What role does God's Word play in the universe? What role can Jesus play in each of our lives?

What is the purpose of the first verses of John's gospel? Are they merely philosophical ramblings? Are they some sort of challenge to the reader? Do these verses address some specific issues among believers or unbelievers? What is emotional content of these verses? Do these verses express worship?

Look at the various individuals or groups of people who appear in the first chapter of John's gospel. Throughout the gospels this will be a useful way of understanding the account better. Who are the individuals or groups in the account? How are they interacting with Jesus? ...with each other?

One word occurs over and over in describing John the Baptist? What is it? Follow this word through John's gospel if you have the tools to do that. It is an interesting study to consider who uses this word and who it is used to speak of. There is also an odd three word phrase that John the Baptist uses repeatedly to speak of Jesus. What is it? Consider also John's sermon recorded in John 3:27-36. What does John 3:30 and this three word phrase say about evangelism, about how we are to tell others about Jesus?

The purpose of John the Baptist's ministry was "that all through him might **believe**." No this word "believe" is the central word and concept of John's gospel. (How many times is it used in John's gospel?) John's gospel was written that **all** might believe in Jesus Christ. How does John the Baptist's ministry make faith available to **all** people? Are there any people we should avoid telling the good news about Jesus Christ? Are there any people who can't believe?

To understand the concept of "Light" as it is used in John's gospel read John 1:10-13. These are the central verses of this chapter – though they look more like they belong over with John 3:16. Why are these verses here? How do they describe this "Light"? Notice that the word "light" isn't even used in these verses – yet is clearly implied by their context.

Consider now John 1:14-18 and lay these verses beside the first chapter of John's first epistle, I John 1. John was a very practical, down to earth fisherman. (He never names himself in his gospel account. Do you see a place where the Apostle John may appear in Chapter 1? Where would John have gotten his extensive and unique material about John the Baptist?) John points out that Jesus came down to earth as a man – a man that John walked with for three years. Sometimes we make Jesus a sort of ideal, abstract entity rather than a man. But he walked the dusty roads of Galilee and Judea. What are the things that most stand out in John's memory concerning Jesus? Notice the change to first person plural in verse 16. This is our experience as well! Compare these verses also with Hebrews 1:1-4.

Consider John's testimony concerning himself in John 1:19-28. Why did John come baptizing? Compare John 1:29-30 as well. What is the prerequisite to Jesus being revealed to us? How did John the Baptist make straight the way of the Lord?

Consider John's testimony concerning Jesus in John 1:29-34. What did Jesus come to do? Why was Jesus "preferred before" John? Why did John come? What was the mark which identified Jesus to John the Baptist? Why did Jesus come out to be baptized by John? (Or at least one reason...) Notice how John clearly identifies Jesus in John 1:34! Look again at John 3:34-36. One of the unique qualities of Jesus is that He was given the Spirit without measure! He wasn't just filled. He wasn't just overflowing. He became the very limitless source of the Holy Spirit. So how do you know somebody has been with Jesus?

When Jesus says, "Come and see!" in verse 39 where is Jesus inviting them to? What is Jesus inviting them to do? Think about it and put yourself in this passage for a moment...

We don't know much about Andrew. But we know that when Andrew was called he called his brother, Peter. Peter would later confess that Jesus was the Christ because the Holy Spirit would reveal this to Peter. Notice that Andrew already knew this and was telling Peter about it! Are we those who are going out and telling others what we have found in Jesus? We may not all be bound for greatness like Peter. But maybe we could be like Andrew.

Who else is using these words, "Come and see"? Nathanael came and saw and believed – though he really hadn't seen much. Notice the content of Nathanael's declaration and the firmer basis that Jesus offers for faith. We will see that the gospel of John is organized around seven miracles of Christ. Each miracle reveals some important truth about Jesus Christ and His Kingdom.

We see some men at the end of this chapter who act very decisively and firmly in believing and receiving Jesus. What happened here? How can Jesus have this kind of impact in our lives? And just who is this Jesus?

Spend some time in reflection and prayer. How has Jesus Christ been revealed to you? Are there things that He has done for you that serve to enable your faith? Is there good reason to open every area of your life to His entry and scrutiny? Let Jesus in! Too often He has been left standing at the door.