

FINDING THE MESSIAH

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN



A REVIEW OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

DAY ONE Observation

John 1-12 record Jesus' **public ministry** to Israel. John 13-17 record Jesus' **private ministry** with His disciples. John 18-21 record Jesus' **universal ministry** to all humanity through His death and resurrection.

As we conclude our series on the Gospel of John, re-read some of the key passages in John and reflect on the things that you learned during this study. Pray and ask God to speak to your heart as you read these passages from John 1-11. Mark words or phrases that stand out to you. Record the main message or your thoughts next to each paragraph.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (1:1-5)

¹³No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. (3:13-18)

²¹Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. ²²You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. ²⁴God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” (4:21-24)

²¹ For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. ²² For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. ²⁴ Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. (5:21-24)

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³ He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. (10:10-15)

²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” ²⁷ She said to him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.” (11:26-27) (ESV)

What titles or descriptions of Jesus do you see in these passages?

What actions of Jesus do you see in these passages?

What responses to Jesus do you see in these passages?

DAY THREE Interpretation

In interpretation, you are digging deeper into the passage in order to better understand its meaning. A word study on a key word and/or looking up parallel passages can help you in your understanding.

Go to blueletterbible.org and type “John 3:16” into the “Search the Bible” box. Next click on John 3:16 to bring up the verse in the Greek (or select “Interlinear” from the Tools menu). Find the word translated as “believe” and click on the Strong’s number (G4100) to bring up the Greek word, its definition, and its usage in other passages in the New Testament.

What is the Greek word for “believe”? _____ (Use the transliteration.)

How many times is it used in the NT? _____ (See KJV Translation Count)

“Believe” is a key word in the Gospel of John, being used 109x in 86 verses in John.

What is its definition? (Click on *Vine’s Expository Dictionary* under Dictionary Aids)

Mark the following verses in John that use the word “believe.” Take note particularly of what we are to believe, what true belief looks like, and what are the results of our belief.

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name (1:12)

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (3:16)

He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. (3:36)

And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me all that I *ever* did.” So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word. Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard *Him* and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.” (4:39-42)

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. (5:24)

Therefore they said to Him, “What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?” Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.” (6:28-29)

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life. (6:47)

Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive... (7:37b-39a)

He said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you." And he said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Him. (9:35b-38)

Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. (10:25-28)

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (11:25-26)

I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness. (12:46)

For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. (17:8)

And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. (20:30-31)

What does it mean to believe on Jesus Christ? What do we need to know about Jesus?

What other actions accompany true belief in Jesus Christ?

What does God promise us when we believe on Jesus Christ?

DAY FOUR Devotion

Read the following excerpt from J.C. Ryle's *Expository Thoughts on John*.

1:1-5. The five verses now before us contain a statement of matchless sublimity concerning the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ. He it is, beyond all question, whom John means, when he speaks of "the Word." No doubt there are heights and depths in that statement which are far beyond man's understanding. And yet there are plain lessons in it, which every Christian would do well to treasure up in his mind.

We learn, firstly, **that our Lord Jesus Christ is eternal.** John tells us that "in the *beginning* was the Word." He did not begin to exist when the heavens and the earth were made. Much less did He begin to exist when the Gospel was brought into the world. He had glory with the Father "before the world was." (John 17:5.) He was existing when matter was first created, and before time began. He was "before all things." (Col. 1:17.) He was from all eternity.

We learn, secondly, **that our Lord Jesus Christ is a Person distinct from God the Father, and yet one with Him.** John tells us that "the Word was *with* God." The Father and the Word, though two persons, are joined by an ineffable union. Where God the Father was from all eternity, there also was the Word, even God the Son--their glory equal, their majesty co-eternal, and yet their Godhead one. This is a great mystery! Happy is he who can receive it as a little child, without attempting to explain it.

We learn, thirdly, **that the Lord Jesus Christ is very God.** John tells us that "the Word was God." He is not merely a created angel, or a being inferior to God the Father, and invested by Him with power to redeem sinners. He is nothing less than perfect God—equal to the Father as touching His

Godhead--God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds.

We learn, fourthly, **that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things.** John tells us that "by Him were all things made, and without Him was not any thing made that was made." So far from being a creature of God...He is the Being who made the worlds and all that they contain. "He commanded and they were created." (Ps 148:5.)

We learn, lastly, **that the Lord Jesus Christ is the source of all spiritual life and light.** John tells us, that "in Him was life, and the life was the light of men." He is the eternal fountain, from which alone the sons of men have ever derived life. Whatever spiritual life and light Adam and Eve possessed before the fall, was from Christ. Whatever deliverance from sin and spiritual death any child of Adam has ever enjoyed since the fall, whatever light of conscience or understanding any one has obtained, all has flowed from Christ. The vast majority of mankind in every age have refused to know Him, have forgotten the fall, and their own need of a Savior. The light has been constantly shining "in darkness." The most have "not comprehended the light." But if any men and women out of the countless millions of mankind have ever had spiritual life and light, they have owed all to Christ.

1:6-13. We see, firstly, in these verses, **the true nature of a Christian minister's office.** We have it in the description of John the Baptist--"He came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe." Christian ministers are not priests, nor mediators between God and man. They are not agents into whose hands men may commit their souls, and carry on their religion by deputy. They are witnesses.

They are intended to bear testimony to God's truth, specially to the great truth that Christ is the only Savior and light of the world.

We see, secondly, in these verses, *one principal position which our Lord Jesus Christ occupies towards mankind*. We have it in the words, "He was the true light which lights every man that comes into the world." Christ is to the souls of men what the sun is to the world. He is the center and source of all spiritual light, warmth, life, health, growth, beauty, and fertility. Like the sun, He shines for the common benefit of all mankind--for high and for low, for rich and for poor, for Jew and for Greek. Like the sun, He is *free to all*. All may look at Him, and drink health out of His light. If millions of mankind were mad enough to dwell in caves underground, or to bandage their eyes, their darkness would be their own fault, and not the fault of the sun. So, likewise, if millions of men and women love spiritual "darkness rather than light," the blame must be laid on their blind hearts, and not on Christ. "Their foolish hearts are darkened." (John 3:19; Rom. 1:21.) But whether men will see or not, Christ is the true sun, and the light of the world. There is no light for sinners except in the Lord Jesus.

...We see, lastly, in these verses, *the vast privileges of all who receive Christ, and believe on Him*. We are told that "as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become you sons of God, even to those who believe on His name." ...To them He gave the privilege of being God's children. He adopted them as members of His Father's family. He reckoned them His own brethren and sisters, bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh. He conferred on them a dignity which was ample recompense for the cross which they had to carry for His sake. He made them sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

1:14. The main truth which this verse teaches is *the reality of our Lord Jesus Christ's incarnation, or being made man*. John tells us that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

The plain meaning of these words is, that our divine Savior really took human nature upon Him, in order to save sinners. He really became a man like ourselves in all things, sin only excepted. Like ourselves, he was born of a woman, though born in a miraculous manner. Like ourselves, He grew from infancy to boyhood, and from boyhood to man's estate, both in wisdom and in stature. (Luke 2:52.) Like ourselves, he hungered, thirsted, ate, drank, slept, was wearied, felt pain, wept, rejoiced, marveled, was moved to anger and compassion. Having become flesh, and taken a body, He prayed, read the Scriptures, suffered being tempted, and submitted His human will to the will of God the Father. And finally, in the same body, He really suffered and shed His blood, really died, was really buried, really rose again, and really ascended up into heaven. And yet all this time He was God as well as man!

Did the Word become flesh? Then He is One who can be touched with the feeling of His people's infirmities, because He has suffered Himself, being tempted. He is almighty because He is God, and yet He can sympathize with us, because He is man.

...Did the Word become flesh? Then let us see in our mortal bodies a real, true dignity, and not defile them by sin. Vile and weak as our body may seem, it is a body which the Eternal Son of God was not ashamed to take upon Himself, and to take up to heaven. That simple fact is a pledge that He will raise our bodies at the last day, and glorify them together with His own.

What stands out to you from Ryle's words? Why?

DAY FIVE
Application

Consider the truths that you have learned this week and seek to apply what you have learned to your daily life.

What thought or truth impacted you this week as you reviewed the Gospel of John?

Take time to reflect on the different titles and descriptions of Jesus in the Gospel of John.

- The **Word** who created all things and took on human flesh (1:1, 14)
- The **True Light** which shines in the darkness (1:5; 8:12; 9:5)
- The **Son of God** who reveals the grace and truth of God (1:14, 18)
- The **Lamb of God** who takes away the sin of the world (1:29)
- The **Savior of the world** who saves people from every nation (4:42)
- The **Bread of Life** who gives life and nourishes our soul (6:35)
- The **Good Shepherd** who knows us, calls us by name, and gives His life for us (10:11-14)
- The **Resurrection and the Life** who conquers death and gives us eternal life (11:25-26)
- The **True Vine** who sustains us and enables us to bear fruit (15:1-8)
- The **Messiah** who will reign as King over the Jews and over all the earth (1:49; 20:31)

Which title or description encourages you the most today? Why?

- Spend time in prayer thanking God for His grace and truth in Jesus Christ.
- Share with someone the things that you have learned in the Gospel of John.
- Ask God for the opportunity to bear witness to His love to someone this week.