

JOHN

Chapter 1

Note from Kathy

As we begin our study of John's gospel, let's bear in mind it is best to approach God's word with a desire to hear truth and a heart ready to obey. There is no other book like the Bible. God's word is life, it is truth and it is living and active. We will find fresh mercy and grace there for us each day. Read the chapter at least twice. If you have the YouVersion app on your phone, you might try listening to the chapter several times before starting the study guide.

Genesis 1:1-3

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. ³And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light."

Observation

1. The first four words of the entire Bible are "In the beginning God..." John 1:1 begins very similarly, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was _____ and the Word _____. Verses 1-3 reveal the relationship between and the equality of two of the members of our Triune God. Everything our senses register, everything we see, hear, touch or taste finds its beginning with God. Write a sentence or two declaring the truth we have just seen in these two verses.
2. What did you see in verses 2-3 concerning all creation? Now read Genesis 1:1-3. What similarities do you notice?
3. Verse 4 identifies two of the qualities that are found in the One who created everything. What are those two qualities?
4. What is said about light in verse 5? Have you ever opened a door and the darkness flooded in? Have you ever walked in a room and it was so dark that you could not see a lit candle in your hand? What is true about light and darkness?



Logos – Word of God

Strong's Concordance defines the Greek word, Logos, as the essential Word of God, Jesus Christ, the personal wisdom and power in union with God, his minister in creation and government of the universe, the cause of all the world's life both physical and ethical, which for the procurement of man's salvation put on human nature in the person of Jesus the Messiah, the second person in the Godhead, and shone forth very clearly from His words and deeds.

John 1:20, 23

"²⁰I am not the Christ. ²³John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, 'I am the voice of one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the path the way for the Lord,'"

Doxa

Doxa is the Greek word for glory, splendor, brightness, magnificence, excellence, preeminence and majesty.

Charis

Charis is the Greek word for merciful kindness

Altheia

Altheia is the Greek word for true in any matter under consideration—excellence

Galatians 3:24-25

"So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian."

5. In verses 6-8 we are introduced to a man. Fill in the chart below with some of the things you learn about him.

Who commissioned this man, called him and gave him authority?	God
What was his name?	
What had God called him to do?	

6. It is unfortunate but the world did not recognize the light that had come. Verse 11 said he came to his own, his creation, and how did his people respond?
7. But the good news is "to all who receive him, to all who believe" verse 12 tells us we are given the right, (the power and authority) to become _____.
8. Verse 14 helps us clarify verses 1-13. Look back to verse 1, who was with God before creation? _____
9. The One and only Son came from the Father, full of grace and truth. The writer of this gospel uses words that we might hear if we were in a court of law—words such as "testify" and "witness." When someone gives testimony it is a serious matter. What was John the Baptist's testimony concerning this One?
10. John testified that we have seen the glory of the one and only Son. John went on to say he is the only Son who came from the Father full of grace and truth. Using the provided definitions of the Greek words "Doxa," "Charis" and "Altheia," write your own description of the One and only Son of God.
11. In John 1:17 we are reminded that the law was given by Moses. Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. The writer of Galatians asks the question in Galatians 3:19, "What purpose does the law serve?" And then he answers his own question in Galatians 3:24-25. The tutor or schoolmaster spoken of in Galatians 3 was a trusted slave assigned to a young Jewish boy; he went with him everywhere and was constantly teaching. He was often very strict causing the boy to long for the day when he would be free from this instructor.

What was the purpose of the law?

What did the law do for us?

What did Jesus Christ bring?

What did Jesus do for us?

12. Who did the Jewish leaders send to question John the Baptist?
13. What questions did they ask John?
14. With great humility John answered those questioning him. He had no desire to shine a light on himself. What was John's response?
15. The next day after being thoroughly questioned by the priests and Levites, John saw Jesus coming at a distance and declared, "Look the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" Anyone who heard John would have understood what he meant. What does John imply when he announces Jesus is the Lamb of God?
16. According to John 1:33, John knew that Jesus was the Son of God, because he had been told to watch for something. What was he watching for? The details of this event are also recorded in Matthew 3:13-17.
17. In John 1:35-51 we see things beginning to change for John the Baptist and his ministry. Scripture tells us that it was the day after all the questions from the priests and Levites. John once again saw Jesus passing by him. What did he faithfully declare?
18. After the focus was brought on Jesus, what did some of those following John do?
19. Who did Andrew find and persuade to come and see the long-awaited Messiah?
20. The next day, Jesus was leaving Galilee and he called Philip to follow him. Who did Philip share this good news with? _____
In spite of this man's response, what did Jesus say about him?
21. When Nathanael came to Jesus, it didn't take much to convince him that this was the Messiah. Nathanael was an Israelite who had eagerly awaited this day. What did Jesus tell him?

Matthew 3:13-17

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. ¹⁴But John tried to deter him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?' ¹⁵Jesus replied, 'Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.' Then John consented. ¹⁶As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.'"

Application

1. As you read verse 3, did you stop to consider the fact that you were uniquely created by Him? Your life is part of God's divine design. Is this how you view your existence?
2. In the Observation section, we very carefully looked at the facts the author pointed out concerning God's word and the manifestation of the word. God took on human form and lived on earth. Those alive at the time were able to see him just as we see one another today. John the Baptist clearly stated his purpose was to point others to the light and prepare the way for the One. We live in a world that is filled with darkness, but the word of God tells us that light can never be conquered by darkness. Do you feel the light shining on you at this time? Are you focusing on the light, or are you focusing your attention on the darkness around you?

Ephesians 5:8

"For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light..."

Psalms 119:105

"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."

Our focus is always our choice. Read Ephesians 5:8 and Psalms 119:105. What steps could you take, or changes could you make, to improve your focus and help you point others to Christ?

3. John the Baptist knew exactly what God called him to do. He was to serve as a witness—to testify that Jesus was the one and only Son of God. The purpose of this testimony was to point us to our Savior. What is God's purpose for your life?

If you are a child of God, a believer and follower of Christ, is your purpose really that much different than John the Baptist's?

Would you say you are fulfilling your purpose?

Ask God for eyes to see the opportunities you are given to testify. Often John's testimony was only one or two lines long. Look back over this chapter and highlight John's words. Share with your small group any opportunities you had to share your testimony and discuss how you might develop more opportunities in the future.

4. The law came in Moses' day and clearly exposed sin. It reveals how far we have missed God's mark. We do not take offense when a mirror reveals our condition; quite the contrary, we are grateful it showed us what we could not see. Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. This grace is the merciful kindness by which God exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ in repentance. How are you allowing God's word to tutor or instruct you?

James 4:14

*"Why, you do not even know
what will happen tomorrow?
What is your life? You are a mist
that appears for a little while and
then vanishes."*

When God's word brings attention to something in your life that is contrary to His plan, how easily are you able to make the necessary changes?

When my children were small I told them quite often, "Obedience is not obedience if it is not immediate." The way to God's blessing is always the way of obedience.

5. In Matthew 11:11 Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist." In this chapter, we have seen the humility and trustworthiness of this man John. He did not search for ways to advance himself and his ministry but over and over looked for opportunities to point to Christ. He carefully carried out the assignment given him by God. This life is not a dress rehearsal. The next 24 hours are not guaranteed to anyone. James 4:14 reminds us that our life is like a vapor of steam that quickly disappears. What are you planning to do today that will be of eternal benefit?
6. Perhaps my favorite part of this chapter was when Andrew went to find his brother to tell him, "We have found the Messiah." The text tells us he brought him to Jesus. I too have family members I long to see come to the truth that Jesus is the Messiah. Do you have someone who comes to mind as you read this? Why not stop and pray for them right now? Prayer is a wonderful way we can participate in the salvation of others. Perhaps you are like me and you have said all you can in order to help them see the wonderful gift that is theirs. Now we must live a life that reveals the truth that Jesus is all I need!
7. Jesus promised Nathanael that by following him he would see amazing things. Following Jesus today is just as amazing. When we are truly following Jesus, we will have spiritual insight to see things of divine purpose. What miraculous things have you seen lately?

Key Places in John



The broken lines (·-·-·) indicate modern boundaries.