

March 13, 2022

“The Word Became Flesh”
Lesson 2 of Unit

John 1:1-14

Intro

If someone wanted to learn about creation in the Bible, Genesis would be a logical starting place. The first two chapters give numerous details about God's creation of the world that we know. The New Testament also discusses creation, with Jesus as the Creator. A couple of these passages are Col. 1:15-17 and Hebrews 1:2. Perhaps the best known of the discussions of creation is found in John chapter 1, where John writes about Jesus' role in creation. But this text goes beyond the Genesis version of events...

Read John 1:1-14

1. vs. 1-2: “In the beginning was the *Word*...”

The Greek word for “word” is *logos*

From *logos* we get the word “logic”, and orderly and systematic pattern of thinking

We also get the ending *-ology*, the orderly and systematic study of a subject

(psychology, biology, etc)

The ancient Greek philosophers saw the world's order, but didn't understand its origin

Their idea was a universal ordering principle beyond human control

They called this principle “logos”

To them, “logos” was an impersonal force, or a god or goddess

John used the term to explain who Jesus truly is

He is the *logos*, the creator of the orderly, systematic world, the force behind it

In Gen. 1, God speaks the world into being; speaking is the Word, the *logos*

“The Word was with God, and the Word was God”

This is a hard concept for many

Being “with” suggests separateness

“Was” indicates oneness

How can it be both?

John is a Jew, so he knows there is only one God

He also presents his readers with another truth—God's nature is complex

Jesus is eternal (“in the beginning”) and He is God Himself

2. vs. 3: This verse continues the description of the Word

Who He is and what He does

John here describes the Word's part in creation

“Through Him all things were made”

“Without Him, nothing was made that has been made”

These statements allow for no room to see anything different but what is there

Jesus wasn't a minor part of the creative process—He was the primary agent of it

This idea is repeated by Paul in Col. 1:16

This verse also shuts down the idea that God created Jesus

Some misread/misunderstand Col. 1:15/18 to be saying this

Jesus is the creator of all things—he didn't create Himself!
The idea behind being called the "firstborn" is one of priority
Jesus comes first because of what He has done

3. vs. 4: This verse brings up two key elements that describe Jesus

"In Him was life..."

There is no truly fulfilling living apart from Christ

Jesus has eternal life in Himself

Jesus came to earth to bring eternal life to those who follow Him

"...and that life was the light of men"

Jesus' life is man's light

Think of this in terms of God's divine enlightenment for mankind

We don't understand who God is and His will apart from Jesus

4. vs. 5: This verse is speaking primarily of the figurative meanings of light and darkness

In Genesis 1, light is created and separated from the darkness

Note that darkness isn't created; it is merely the absence of light

Light always overcomes darkness—there is no darkness that overpowers light

What does it mean that "the darkness has not understood it (light)"?

The word "understood" or "comprehend" has a different meaning than we think

It carries the idea of "seizing" or "having mastery over"

This verse is saying that darkness has no mastery or power over light

John isn't saying the forces of darkness don't understand Jesus

He's saying those evil forces have no power to control or defeat Him

We can see the resurrection is the victory of both light and life over darkness

5. vs. 6: John shifts from Jesus' character and role in creation to John the Baptist

Note that John the Baptist was "sent by God"

God is in control of shaping the events that led to Jesus' human life

6. vs. 7: God sent John the Baptist to be a "witness" of Jesus' divine character and purpose

John got to see the Holy Spirit come upon Jesus at baptism (John 1:32-34)

John was allowed the insight to see that Jesus was "the Lamb of God" who would be the perfect sacrifice for mankind's sins (John 1:29, 36)

John knows that Jesus will bring the Holy Spirit to his followers (John 1:33)

7. vs. 8: John the Apostle here writes about John the Baptist's role and character

The Baptist isn't the light—only Jesus is the light

John knows this, and acknowledges Jesus' superiority (1:35-37, 3:30)

John the Baptist is a witness to who Jesus truly is

John points people to Jesus, not to himself

8. vs. 9: John now switches back to Jesus, moving from creation to His human existence

He says that Jesus "was coming into the world"

He describes Jesus as "the true light"

John the Baptist witnesses of what he sees and knows regarding Jesus

This info is all accurate, but not as complete as what Jesus can reveal

All truth comes from God, truth being one of God's essential characteristics

Jesus has come into the world as God (see John 1:1)

What John tells his readers about Jesus is a revelation of God's truth

The purpose of this "true light" is to give "light" to every man

9. vs. 10-11: These two verses describe a sad and ironic situation

Jesus made the world (vs.3)

He came into the world He made and was not recognized (acknowledged)

He came to His own (Israel), and they didn't accept Him

All those who rejected Him have rejected light, life, and truth

10. vs. 12: The previous two verses describe those who rejected Jesus

This verse is about those who accept Him

These "believed in His name"

In who He is and what He has done

If you place faith in a person's name, you place faith in the person

Personal faith / choice is at the forefront here

A person has chosen to "believe in His name"

Just as Adam and Eve chose to disobey God, these choose to believe Jesus

Because of this choice, God allows them to become His children

11. vs. 13: This "birth" into God's family is uniquely spiritual

It isn't by "natural descent", meaning a child born in the normal physical way

It isn't the result of a human pregnancy—"a husband's will"

This "rebirth" is caused by God

This is a new creation of a new life, from God Himself

See 2 Cor. 2:17, James 1:18, and 1 Peter 1:23

12. vs. 14: John wraps up this section of ideas with some reminders of what he has just said:

1) Jesus is the Word, came to earth as a human being, and lived our lives

2) He came from heaven, was with God, and has the same glory as God

3) He is full of grace and truth

For the first time in this gospel, John puts in a personal comment

"We have seen His glory..."

Jesus was seen by His disciples, who saw His divine nature on a daily basis

The term "glory" was used by Jews for God alone

John's use of this term is another confirmation that Jesus is God

That Jesus was with God, is the "One and Only" is another confirmation of His deity

John also presents Jesus as fully God and fully human while He was on earth

He "became flesh" and "we saw His glory"

The human Jesus was "full of grace and truth"

These are both dominant qualities of God

Application: Chapter One of John's Gospel presents Jesus as He truly is: fully God as He was with the Father from the beginning, creating everything that exists. He possesses all of the qualities of God, in that He has the eternal life of God, the light of God, and the glory of God.

John shows that Jesus came from heaven to become flesh, a human being just like us, for the purpose of giving life and adoption to those who recognize and accept Him for who He is.

Prayer: Father God, thank You for Your plan of salvation, which sent Jesus to earth to become a human being. Thank You for Jesus revealing the divine nature of God to all people, and your gracious gift of salvation to those who accepted Your truth. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.