

The *Good News* that John Wrote

*...that you may believe that
Jesus is the Christ, the Son of
God, and that believing you
may have life in his name.*

John 20.31

Life in the Spirit

Objectives of the Class

- To behold in our hearts the glory of Christ
- To participate more deeply in life in the Spirit
- To become more conformed to His image

Overview

John 1:1-18

Prayer Before Reading Scripture

Shine within our hearts, loving Master, the pure light of Your divine knowledge and open the eyes of our minds that we may comprehend the message of Your Gospel. Instill in us also reverence for Your blessed commandments, so that having conquered all sinful desires, we may pursue a spiritual life, thinking and doing all those things that are pleasing to You. For You, Christ our God, are the light of our souls and bodies, and to You we give glory together with Your Father who is without beginning and Your all holy, good, and life giving Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Watch
John 1:1-18

Study

John 1:1-18

Background: The Septuagint (LXX)

- Translation of Hebrew Old Testament in Greek
 - By “70” Jewish scholars (hence LXX)
 - In Egypt in 3rd c. BC.
- Was the Bible of New Testament writers
- Is the Old Testament of the Orthodox Church

John 1.1: *In the beginning*

Gen 1.1 In the beginning God **created** the heavens and the earth.

2 The earth was without form and void, and **darkness** was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.

3 And God said, “Let there be **light**”; and there was **light**.

Jhn 1.1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God; **3** all things were **made** through him, and without him was not anything **made** that was **made**. **4** In him was life, and the life was the **light** of men. **5** The **light** shines in the **darkness**, and the **darkness** has not overcome it.

John 1.1: *In the beginning*

Gen. 1:1 Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν.

Gen. 1:2 ἡ δὲ γῆ ἦν ἀόρατος καὶ ἀκατασκεύαστος, καὶ σκότος ἐπάνω τῆς ἀβύσσου, καὶ πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἐπεφέρετο ἐπάνω τοῦ ὕδατος.

Gen. 1:3 καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεός· Γενηθήτω φῶς. καὶ ἐγένετο φῶς.

Jhn 1.1 Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος, καὶ ὁ Λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος.

2 Οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν. 3 πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν ὃ γέγονεν. 4 ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν, καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων, 5 καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει, καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν.

John 1.1, 1.3 and the Creed

Πιστεύω εἰς ἕνα Θεόν, Πατέρα, Παντοκράτορα, **ποιητὴν οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς, ὁρατῶν τε πάντων καὶ ἀοράτων**. Καὶ εἰς ἕνα Κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ, τὸν ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς γεννηθέντα πρὸ πάντων τῶν αἰώνων· **φῶς ἐκ φωτός**, Θεὸν ἀληθινὸν ἐκ Θεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ, γεννηθέντα οὐ ποιηθέντα, ὁμοούσιον τῷ Πατρί, **δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο**.

I believe in one God, Father Almighty, **Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible**. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages; **Light of Light**, true God of true God, begotten, not created, of one essence with the Father **through Whom all things were made**.

John 1.1: *was the Word* (ὁ Λόγος) - Logos

- The term was rich in significance both for Greeks and Jews
- “By the time that John writes his Gospel, the Word is close to being recognized as a personal being, and it has roles relating to the manner in which God created the world and to the way in which God reveals himself to the world that he brought into being.” (UBS THB John, p. 7).

John 1.1: *the Word was God*

- Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος.
- Christ is divine and a person of the Trinity
- Christ is separate from the Father
- Ὁ Θεὸς (with definite article) usually refers to God the Father
- Also see: John 20.28; Titus 2.13

John 1.2: *He was in the beginning with God*

- Οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν.
- The Logos' relationship with God is eternal

John 1.3: *all things were made through Him*

- The Logos' relationship with the universe

John 1.4: *In him was life*

- The Logos is the source of ***Life!***

John 1.4: *and the life was the light of men*

- In this verse, light = revelation
- Creation is a revelation to all people (Rom 1.20)
- Christ's life is a revelation to us (Heb 1.1-3)
- What He created and how He lived =
 - Revelation
 - Light

John 1.5: *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

- In general, darkness = the absence of light
- In this verse, darkness =
 - Absence of the knowledge of God
 - Absence of the life of God
 - Willful suppression of the light of God
 - Evil, sin, death
- καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει, καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν.
- GNB: *the darkness has never put it out*

Background:
**Anointing, and
the expected Messiah**

Jewish Priests Were Anointed

- The Lord spoke to Moses: Take the finest spices: of liquid myrrh...sweet-smelling cinnamon...aromatic cane...cassia...and...olive oil; and you shall make of these a sacred anointing oil blended as by the perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil.
- You shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, in order that they may serve me as priests

Exodus 30:22-33

Jewish Kings Were Anointed

- The LORD said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.”
- Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward.

1 Sam. 16.1, 13a.

God's Promise to King David

- I have found my servant David; with my holy oil I have anointed him;
- Once and for all I have sworn by my holiness. I will not lie to David. His line shall continue forever, and his throne endure before me like the sun. It shall be established forever like the moon, an enduring witness in the skies.”

Psalm 88 (89).22,29

God's Promise to King David

- "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness'"

Jeremiah 23:5–6

The Promised Anointed King

- **Messiah** is Hebrew for 'the anointed one'
- **Christos** is Greek for 'the anointed one'
- **John the Forerunner: “I am not the Christ...I came baptizing with water that He might be revealed to Israel.” (John 1:20, 31)**

When people read “anointed” in the Septuagint, it said χριστός (Christ), e.g. Psalm 2.2....

The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and his **anointed**, saying,

παρέστησαν οἱ βασιλεῖς
τῆς γῆς, καὶ οἱ ἄρχοντες
συνήχθησαν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ
κατὰ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ κατὰ
τοῦ **χριστοῦ** αὐτοῦ
διάψαλμα

John 1.6-8: *God sent his messenger, a man named John...who came to tell people about the light.... He was not the light...*

- John = John the Forerunner, a.k.a. the Baptist
- Jesus' baptism by John was the start of Christ's public ministry
- John was not the expected Messiah / Christ / Anointed
- His role was to reveal Jesus as the Christ that all might believe in Jesus

John 1.9: This was the real light—the light that comes into the world and shines on all people.

- ὁ φωτίζει (give light to, illuminate)
 - enlightens (RSV) vs.
 - shines on (GNB)

John 1.10: *The Word was in the **world**, and though God made the **world** through him, yet the **world** did not recognize him.*

- Meanings of the word “world” (κόσμος) as used by St. John:
 - **The planet earth / the material universe**
 - **The people who live on planet earth**
 - The world system that is under the sway of the prince of darkness (John 12.31; 15.19; 1 John 2.15)

John 1.11: *He came to his own country, but his own people did not receive him.*

- εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθε, καὶ οἱ ἴδιοι αὐτὸν οὐ παρέλαβον.
- “one’s own”, e.g. property, people, home, country...
- Own country = the country of the Jews
- Own people = the Jewish people
- παραλαμβάνω = to receive

John 1.12-13: *Some, however, did receive him and believed in him...so he gave them the right to become God's children...God himself was their Father.*

- believed in him = τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ (to those who believed in His name)
 - Name = the Christ - the promised Anointed King and God (John 20.28)
- the right = ἐξουσία = both authority (privilege) and power (the potential)
- Become God's children - by faith and baptism and the Spirit
 - To be in God's likeness
- Born by God's will and power, not ours or anyone else's

John 1.14: *The Word **became a human being** and, full of grace and truth, lived among us. We saw his glory ...*

- The eternal Logos **became flesh** (a human being)
 - In John's Gospel: **σὰρξ ἐγένετο**
 - The creed: **σαρκωθέντα** ἐκ Πνεύματος Ἁγίου καὶ Μαρίας τῆς Παρθένου (became man...)

John 1.14: *The Word became a human being and, full of **grace** and truth, lived among us. We saw his glory ...*

- **Grace (χάρις)**

- Unmerited love and kindness given to us by God
- The uncreated energies of God given as gift:
 - For God has revealed his grace for the salvation of all people. That grace instructs us to give up ungodly living and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this world, as we wait for the blessed Day we hope for, when the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ will appear. He gave himself for us, to rescue us from all wickedness and to make us a pure people who belong to him alone and are eager to do good. (Titus 2.11-14)

John 1.14: *The Word became a human being and, full of grace and **truth**, lived among us. We saw his glory ...*

- **Truth (ἀλήθεια)**
 - The ultimate reality, as rooted in the true God
 - The revelation of God
 - Col. 2.9: “For in him [Christ] the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily”
 - Jhn 14.9: “He who has seen me has seen the Father”

John 1.14: *The Word became a human being and, full of grace and **truth**, lived among us. We saw his glory ...*

- John 8.31-36: So Jesus said to those who believed in him, “If you obey my teaching, you are really my disciples; you will know the truth, and **the truth will set you free**.” “We are the descendants of Abraham,” they answered, “and we have never been anybody’s slaves. What do you mean, then, by saying, ‘You will be free’?” Jesus said to them, “I am telling you the truth: everyone who sins is a slave of sin. A slave does not belong to a family permanently, but a son belongs there forever. If **the Son sets you free**, then you will be really free.

John 1.14: *The Word became a human being and, full of grace and truth, lived among us. We saw his **glory** ...*

- **Glory (δόξα)**
 - Many meanings
 - Core meaning in the OT and John's writings:
 - the visible manifestation of the invisible God especially shown in His deeds or acts (UBS THB John)

John 1.14: We saw his glory, the glory which he received as the Father's **only Son**.

- **Only Son** (μονογενής < μόνος + γίνομαι)
 - “pertaining to what is unique in the sense of being the only one of the same kind or class” (UBS THB John)
 - Only-begotten, only-born
- Creed:
 - Καὶ εἰς ἓνα Κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ **τὸν μονογενῆ**, τὸν ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς γεννηθέντα πρὸ πάντων τῶν αἰώνων·
 - And in one Lord Jesus Christ, **the only-begotten** Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages;

John 1.15: *John spoke about him, “He comes after me, but he is greater than I am because he existed before I was born.”*

- Christ’s public ministry starts after John’s
- Christ existed in eternity

John 1.16: Out of the fulness of his grace he has blessed us all, giving us **one blessing after another**.

- RSV: And from his fulness have we all received, **grace upon grace**.
- Grk: Καὶ ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἐλάβομεν, καὶ **χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος**· (literally *grace for grace*)

Background: Moses and the Law of God

- One of the two most important people in Judaism
- The Torah
 - Translated in Septuagint as νόμος (< νέμω I distribute) = custom; law, ordinance.
 - Existed before creation
 - One of three things by which the world is sustained

John 1.17: *God gave the law through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*

- Put yourself in the minds of the Jewish readers of the Gospel
- Problem: The law is good, but powerless

Jhn 1.17: *God gave the law through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*

- Mat 5.17-18 Do not think that I have come to do away with the Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets. I have not come to do away with them, but to make their teachings come true. Remember that as long as heaven and earth last, not the least point nor the smallest detail of the Law will be done away with—not until the end of all things. So then, whoever disobeys even the least important of the commandments and teaches others to do the same, will be least in the Kingdom of heaven. On the other hand, whoever obeys the Law and teaches others to do the same, will be great in the Kingdom of heaven. I tell you, then, that you will be able to enter the Kingdom of heaven only if you are more faithful than the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees in doing what God requires.

Jhn 1.17: *God gave the law through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*

- Rom. 7:22-25 My inner being delights in the law of God. But I see a different law at work in my body—a law that fights against the law which my mind approves of. It makes me a prisoner to the law of sin which is at work in my body. What an unhappy man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is taking me to death? Thanks be to God, who does this through our Lord Jesus Christ!

Jhn 1.17: *God gave the law through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*

- Rom. 8:2-3 For the law of the Spirit, which brings us life in union with Christ Jesus, has set me free from the law of sin and death. What the Law could not do, because human nature was weak, God did. He condemned sin in human nature by sending his own Son, who came with a nature like our sinful nature, to do away with sin.

Jhn 1.18: *No one has ever seen God. **The only Son**, who is the same as God and is **at the Father's side**, he has made him known.*

- RSV: **the only Son**, who is **in the bosom of the Father**
- Grk: **ὁ μονογενὴς υἱὸς** ὁ ὢν **εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς**

Jhn 1.18: *No one has ever seen God. The only Son, who is the same as God and is at the Father's side, **he has made him known.***

- **Col. 2.9:** “For in him [Christ] the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily”
- **Jhn 14.9:** “He who has seen me has seen the Father”

Jhn 1.18: *No one has ever seen God. The only Son, who is the same as God and is at the Father's side, **he has made him known.***

1 John 3:2-3: Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every one who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

- **Purification (Praxis):** ...purifies himself
- **Illumination (Theoria):** ...we shall see him as he is
- **Deification (Theosis):** ...we shall be like him

Objectives of the Class

- To behold in our hearts the glory of Christ
- To participate more deeply in life in the Spirit
- To become more conformed to His image

Re-Read
John 1:1-18

Watch and Apply

John 1:1-18

Achieving the Objectives of the Class

- To behold in our hearts the glory of Christ
 - What did you observe that revealed to you the glory of Christ?
- To participate more deeply in life in the Spirit
 - What did you learn that can help you to participate more deeply in the life of the Spirit?
- To become more conformed to His likeness
 - What did you observe in Christ that you need to conform to?