

The Gospel of John

The Prologue 1:1-18

Revelation to the world of sinners	Revelation to individuals	Revelation to multitudes	Rejection by the Jewish leaders	Ministry to the disciples	Ministry to the world of sinners
1-2	3-5	6-8	9-12	13-17	18-21
Signs				Sermons	Sacrifice
Public ministry				Private ministry	Paschal ministry
Galilee & Judea				Jerusalem	
About 3 1/2 years				Only a few days	

1:1-18

Today's class will look at:

- The overall message of the Prologue (1:1-18).
- The central point of (1:1-18).
- Parallel contexts between John's day and our day.
- Two parallel passages.
- Points of application.

1. An overview of the Prologue of John.

John 1

The LOGOS, as the soul of God

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.

revealed himself in creation

³ All things came into being **by Him**, and apart **from Him** nothing came into being that has come into being.

and in human conscience

⁴ **In Him** was life, and the life was the light of men.

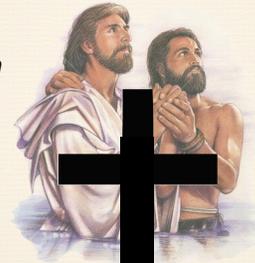
but remained in the dark

⁵ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not **comprehend** it.

until John the Baptist bore witness

⁶ There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came for a witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but came that he might **bear witness** of the light.

Before John the Baptist faith meant "waiting"



After John the Baptist faith meant "following"

John the Baptist was Jesus' cousin

John the Apostle may also have been Jesus' cousin

until John the Baptist bore witness

⁶ There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came for a witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but came that he might **bear witness** of the light.

to Jesus as the LOGOS, LIGHT

⁹ There was the true light which, coming into the world, **enlightens every man**. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. ¹¹ He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.

resulting in his reception by faith

¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave **the right to become children of God**, even to those who believe in His name, ¹³ who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

The testimony of believers ("we")

having recognized his glory

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and **we beheld** His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

and received his grace.

¹⁵ John bore witness of Him, and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'" ¹⁶ For of His fullness **we have all received**, and grace upon grace.

so as to know God.

¹⁷ For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has **explained** Him."

The Prologue is an executive summary of the Gospel of John

Prologue	Rest of John
“in the beginning”	17:5 before the world was made “I am”
“the Word was with God”	10:30 “I and the Father are one”
“In Him was life”	11:25 “I am the resurrection and the life”
“the life was the light of men”	9:5 “I am the light of the world”
“coming into the world”	17:21,25 “sent from God”
“his own received him not”	ch 12 “rejected by the Jews”

2. “Belief” in Jesus is at the heart of the Prologue to John’s Gospel.

- ➔ *The Logos reveals the soul of God to the world vv. 1-4*
- ➔ *The rejection of the Logos v.5*
- ➔ *The witness of John vv. 6-8*
- ➔ *The incarnation vv. 9-11*
- ➔ *The gift of belief vv. 12-13*
- ➔ *The incarnation v. 14*
- ➔ *The witness of John v. 15*
- ➔ *The reception of the Logos v. 16*
- ➔ *The Logos explains the soul of God to the world vv. 17-18*

John 3:16

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever **believes in Him** shall not perish, but have eternal life.”

John 5:24

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and **believed Him** who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.”

John 20:31

“but these have been written that you may **believe that Jesus is the Christ**, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.”

3. Parallels with John 1 (Genesis 1-3)

Forming the space

- Day 1 - light (day and night)*
- Day 2 - atmosphere*
- Day 3 - land with plants and seas*

Filling the space

- Day 4 - luminaries - sun, moon, & stars*
- Day 5 - fish and birds*
- Day 6 - animals and man*

The response

3:6 “When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate;”

Genesis 1-3

Days 1-3
Earth

Days 4-6
Life

Follow Creation
or Creator

Hebrews 11:3

“**By faith we understand** that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.”

1.

“Faith” is necessary in explaining origins.

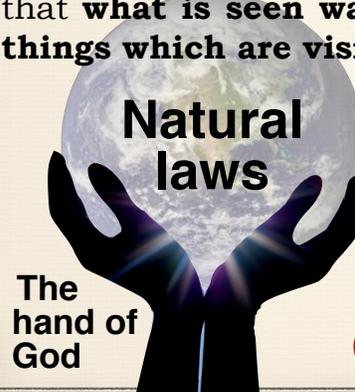
- Science is equipped to explain how things operate (secondary means) not how they originate (primary means).
- The “primary origin” question cannot be answered without “faith” presuppositions.

Hebrews 11:3

“By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that **what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.**”

2.

Secondary sources are the (material) means of a primary (spiritual) source.



Hebrews 11:3

“By faith we understand that the **worlds (AION)** were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.”

3.

The creation involves more than just matter and space but also history.

“world” (three Greek words)

COSMOS - an orderly place. OIKOUMENE - an abode for people.

AION - an age or period of time. Ephesians 2:1-2 “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course (aion) of this world (cosmos), according to the prince of the power of the air.”



History is HiStory

Jesus
is the
Author
Director
Producer and
Principal Player

3. Parallels with John 1 (Romans 1-2)

The witness of creation

1:20 “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood **through what has been made**, so that they are without excuse.”

The witness of conscience

2:15 “in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, **their conscience bearing witness**, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,”

The response

1:25 “For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator,”

Romans 1-2

The witness of Creation

The witness of Conscience

Suppression or reception of God

3. Parallels with John 1 in Scripture

Genesis 1-3	Romans 1-2	John 1
Days 1-3 Earth	The witness of Creation	The creation of all things
Days 4-6 Life	The witness of Conscience	Life that is the light of the world
Follow Creation or Creator	Suppression or reception of God	Acceptance or rejection of Jesus

We are challenged to respond with faith to the self revelation of God.

4. Three characteristics of the cultural theology of John’s day and ours:

- **Theological mystery** - We ultimately cannot know God.
- **Philosophical dualism** - The spiritual and material worlds are incompatible.
- **Religious pluralism** - God can’t be reduced to one religious system.

In the prologue of his Gospel, John challenges these characteristics with his portrait of Jesus.

5. Three challenges to the cultural theology of our day

- **Will we worship and serve the Creator rather than the creation?**
- **Will we suppress what we deeply know to be true?**
- **Will we choose to walk in light or in darkness?**

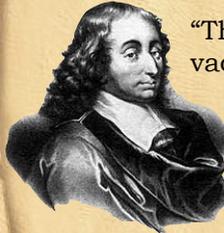
The Gospel of John will shine the light of Jesus in our face and challenge us to believe in him and follow him.



Alister McGrath

“Christianity does not simply make sense *to us*; it also makes sense *of us*.”

Surprised by Meaning



Blaise Pascal

“There is a God shaped vacuum in the heart of every man which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God, the Creator, made known through Jesus.”

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy, I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”

John 10:10



What is the deepest desire of the human heart?

Be true to yourself as one created in God's image.

Jesus enlightens us to that image.

The fulness of life is available to us in Jesus.

The challenge is to trust Him and follow Him.



What is the deepest desire of the human heart?