



Sunday, September 21, 2025

John 1:1-5

This morning we are starting a brand new series as we walk through the Gospel of John. For those of you that have been with us for some time, you may remember that the last time we walked through a Gospel was, I think, in 2017 when we walked through the Gospel of Mark.

And I love walking through the Gospels because they're essentially one story told from four different perspectives. It's the story of Jesus' birth, ministry, death and resurrection and everything in between. And it's the four different perspectives that really help give us a more complete picture of the life of Jesus.

Matthew was a tax collector before following Jesus, and he writes with a Jewish audience in mind - showing us Jesus as the promised King and Messiah.

Mark is fast-paced, almost urgent, showing us more of what Jesus did than what He said.

Luke, a physician, gives us a detail-oriented, historically grounded account that highlights Jesus' compassion for the marginalized.

And then there's John...

John writes from the perspective of Jesus' closest friend - someone who walked intimately with Him - every step of the way. But instead of simply recounting events, as we will see, John gives us a deeply theological, almost poetic portrait of Jesus. He wants us to see not just what Jesus did, but who He truly was and is.

And so, when it comes to the opening lines of the Gospels, this is why none is more bold or theologically loaded than the Gospel of John. John doesn't open with historical context. He doesn't build suspense. He's not drawing the audience in with a story.... Nor is he giving us shepherds in fields or wise men from the east. Nope, none of that. Instead, John opens up his Gospel with a bold - almost cosmic - declaration:

If you have your Bibles with you this morning please turn with me to the gospel of John where we will be reading the first 5 verses of chapter 1. If you are able to, please stand for the reading of God's Word:

John 1:1-5

'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 nothing was made that was made. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.'

I mean, there's no getting around it, in these first 5 verses, John makes it absolutely clear who Jesus is.

And he starts it all off with three little words:

'In the Beginning...'

Isn't it interesting that John opens his book with the exact same phrase as Genesis? The gospel of John is obviously not the beginning of creation, Genesis 1:1 is. However, by using the exact same language, John is drawing the reader back to the very beginning of creation because his immediate intent is to point us directly to Jesus. And whether we realize it or not, Jesus doesn't just show up in the gospels as a baby born to Mary and Joseph, but He has always been here, even from before the very beginning of time.

Genesis 1:1

'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light....

Now, when you read the Genesis account of creation, scholars, agree that the Trinity is involved right from the beginning. God the Father is clearly identified all throughout the creation narrative. The Holy Spirit is right there in verse 2 - hovering over the waters.

But what about Jesus?

He's not as obvious... until you read about the Word in John 1.

Because if you notice, in Genesis, every time God created something, it began with a spoken word:

God spoke - and there was Light

God spoke - and the seas came into being.

God spoke - and the land took shape.

The very act of God speaking released unimaginable creative power into the universe.

But here's where John takes it further.

According to John, that unimaginable creative power - the Word - wasn't just divine speech or booming sound waves. It was God Himself. John says that in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, but then he takes it to a whole other level by now saying that the Word was in fact, God.'

And that would've been an incredibly bold claim - especially to a Jewish audience. Because in Hebrew tradition, the word of God was sacred. It was how God created. It was how He revealed Himself to prophets. And it was how His will was carried out on the earth.

And John isn't disputing that.

He's just making it even more clear that the Word is not a force, but a Person - which he makes clear in verse 14 by saying that:

John 1:14

'...the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.'

This is simple Christology 101. John is simply making it clear that Jesus is the Word of God.

And He didn't just show up in Bethlehem - born to Mary and Joseph. He was with God in the beginning. He is God. And now He has come again - this time not just to create, but to redeem. To bring life and light. And to overcome the darkness once and for all.

Now, keep in mind that as we move forward in John's Gospel, it's important to remember that John is also the same one who wrote the book of Revelation, so there will be some overlap from time to

time. And this is one of those unique moments.

John has just laid out the foundation that Jesus is the Word that created in Genesis, and the Word that was born into our midst in order to save creation from sin and death, but the connection between Jesus and the Word doesn't stop there.

If you fast-forward to the end of the story, in Revelation 19, we get this incredible picture of Jesus - the Word - returning in victory with a sword coming out of His mouth.

That sword is not a literal sword but symbolic of His nature as the Word. And that - as Hebrews teaches us - the Word of God is sharper than a double-edged sword. So what John is revealing here is that Jesus conquers not necessarily by force, but by speaking. The words coming out of the Word are just as powerful as He, Himself is.

And this theme is not just a theme represented in Genesis, John and Revelation. It runs all throughout Scripture:

In the gospels, when Jesus spoke, demons would flee, the sick were healed, the storms were calmed and the dead were raised.

The Word doesn't just describe power - it is power.

Paul picks up on this in Ephesians 6 when he describes the armour of God, and says:

Ephesians 6:17

'Take up the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.'

Paul isn't just telling us to memorize Bible verses here. He's reminding us that the Word of God is our weapon - just as Hebrews teaches. It cuts, it convicts, it corrects, and it protects.

So when Paul tells us to take up the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, (which John also says was in the beginning and was with God and was God) he's not just giving us a book to quote from in difficult times - he's handing us the living authority of Jesus Christ Himself.

So when the enemy comes at us with his strategies and tactics, it's the power of the Word of God that gives us the ammunition to fight back.

When the enemy says, 'You're not enough,' Jesus, the Word, says in 1 Peter 2:9 that, 'You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession.'

When the enemy says, 'You've failed too many times,' Jesus, the Word, says in Romans 8:1 that, 'there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.' Your past may accuse you, but the Word declares that you are forgiven.

When the enemy says, 'you're all alone,' Jesus, the Word, says, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' (Hebrews 13:5)

When the enemy says, 'your situation is hopeless,' Jesus, the Word, says, 'With God all things are possible.' (Matthew 19:26)

This is the power of the Word. And this is the power of Jesus - the Word who was with God and the Word who is God - the Word who still speaks, and the Word who still shines.

And look, we're only five verses in! Already, John has laid a solid foundation of who Jesus is, the power He carries, and the light that He brings.

Which is why this introduction is so important.

It sets the stage for everything John will say about who Jesus is and why He came. And if you look closely at this passage, you'll notice that even John's verb tenses are making a theological statement.

Let me show you what I mean:

Let's look again at John 1:1-5. I'll put it up on the screen so we can walk through it together:

John 1:1-5

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.'

Did you notice it?

Everything in those first few verses is in the past tense:

‘Was the Word’

‘Was with God’

‘Was God’

‘All things were made...’

‘In Him was life...’

‘The darkness did not comprehend it...’

But then - right in the middle of verse 5 - there’s a sudden shift:

‘The light shines in the darkness...’

That’s present tense. But why?

Why is everything past tense except that one phrase?

Is this a mistake? A slip of grammar? An oversight?

Or... is it intentional?

Not a lot of scholars point this out, but I think it’s intentional nuances like this that make John’s Gospel so powerful.

What John is doing here is simple - but brilliant. He’s telling us:

Yes, creation happened in the past. Yes, the fall happened in the past. Yes, the Word became flesh in the past.

But the light?

The light still shines.

He’s telling us that while everything else belongs to the past, the light is not gone. It has not dimmed. In the middle of the darkness - it still shines.

Now, that last phrase, ‘the darkness did not comprehend it,’ is especially important here because it too, is past tense. And in the Greek, the term ‘comprehend’ can be better translated as overcome.

So John isn't just saying that the darkness didn't understand the light - he's saying it couldn't overcome it.

This is a statement of victory.

John is declaring that no matter how deep the darkness gets - in his day or in ours - the darkness cannot win.

Because it's already been overcome by the light.

And this is where Revelation takes over again now to bring some added clarity.

Time and time again in the book of Revelation, John describes scenarios of light versus darkness. Even though we know the light has and will continue to overcome the darkness, it doesn't mean that the tension isn't there. As people who carry the light of Jesus within us, we have to understand that wherever we go, we're stepping into darkness and pushing it back with His light. However, the darkness resists. And the pressure that we feel as light bearers is something that Scripture refers to as 'thlipsis.'

Thlipsis is a Greek word used throughout the New Testament to describe tribulation, affliction, or crushing pressure. We talked at length about this when we walked through the book of 1 Peter and Revelation a few years back. It's not a soft word. It's the word for what happens when darkness pushes back - when faith costs something, when obedience requires courage, and when hope feels hard to hold onto.

Jesus Himself uses this word in John 16:33 when He says:

John 16:33b

'...In the world you will have tribulation (thlipsis); but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.'

So let's be clear:

John doesn't deny that the darkness is real. Nor does Jesus pretend that thlipsis won't come. But both John and Jesus declare that darkness does not win.

Because the light has already overcome it. (Past tense - and that light still shines - present tense - so there's no hope for the darkness).

And not only does the light still shine - it shines in us.

So yes, the pressure will come.

But thlipsis isn't a sign that you're failing - it's a sign that you're in the fight.

It's a sign that your light is shining exactly where it's needed most.

And listen, every single generation of Christianity has experienced this tension and will continue to experience this tension until the day that the Lord comes back and establishes His reign in the new heaven and the new Earth as Revelation teaches. That is our hope for eternity, but it's also our hope for today.

That no matter what the enemy throws at us, we don't fight for victory - we actually fight from victory.

A victory that's already been sealed - past tense - and is still being sealed - present tense and future tense - through His glorious light.

So, understand that....

Matthew 5:14-16 (ESV)

'You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.'

So let your light shine.

In your home.

In your school.

At your workplace.

In your community.

And even - especially - in the middle of your thlipsis.

Because the light still shines in the darkness.

And the darkness cannot overcome it.

3 Points to consider (these are great talking points for your LifeGroups this week:

Let the Word be your weapon. When the enemy speaks lies, respond with truth. When he accuses, resist with Scripture. You don't fight darkness with willpower - you fight it with the Word. Get into the Word.

Don't hide the light. The world needs it. Your family needs it. Your school, your workplace, your neighbourhood - they need the light. And if Jesus says you are the light of the world, then the plan is not to hide, but to shine.

There is power in His name. Sometimes, you don't need a perfectly crafted prayer or a full theological argument. Sometimes, all you can do is whisper His name - or cry out His name - and that's enough. Share story of Jordan: Jesus. Jesus. Jesus.

Let's take a moment right now. In quietness and stillness, in the middle of whatever pressure you're carrying - and speak His name? Just whisper it. Jesus... Jesus... Jesus... Speak it over your family. Speak it over your body. Speak it over your marriage, your kids, your finances, your future. Speak it over your fear. Because He is the light. And the light still shines.

Blessing

May the Lord Bless you and Keep you
May He cause His face to Shine upon you
May He be gracious towards you
Lift up His countenance upon you
And may He give you peace
In Jesus name, Amen.

Pastor Josh Hageman

Lead Pastor

Kingsview Community Church

Stoney Creek, ON

www.kingsviewchurch.com

<https://www.facebook.com/KingsviewCommunityChurch/>