



## John 1:1-5: What's the WORD?

John's Gospel starts very different than the others. Rather than wading into the story by introducing the family tree of Jesus or telling his birth story, John throws us in the deep end, pointing to his eternal identity - *the Word*.

According to Dr. Dan Wallace (specializing in NT Greek manuscripts), "The Gospel According to John" IS found in the 2 earliest manuscripts we have of the gospel (p<sup>66</sup> & p<sup>75</sup>).<sup>1</sup> Regardless of whether the writer attached his own name or others did later, we still wouldn't necessarily know WHICH John this is referring to...EXCEPT THAT...

We looked at the **INTERNAL EVIDENCE & EXTERNAL EVIDENCE** to demonstrate having **GOOD REASON** to believe that **"John" is actually the apostle of Jesus**, a man who was one of His dearest friends.

John's Gospel is not the place to send people to read the Christmas story. It contains no mention of the birth narrative with Mary & Joseph, manger, angels, shepherds, or a baby. But what we are going to discover today should make you appreciate Christmas at a whole notha' level!!!

**John 1:1-5** (CSB) <sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> All things were created through him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and that life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> That light shines in the darkness, and yet the darkness did not overcome it.

This is a very 'wordy' passage. Most who read this puzzling part of John develop an "I don't get it" look on their faces. (Tip: That's when you can skip ahead a few verses to help them see who **the Word** is speaking of in v. 12.)

**Significance of the Septuagint (LXX)** from Latin meaning 'seventy' often recognized Roman numerals LXX By the time of John's writing, a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures - the **Septuagint**, had been around for over 200 years. Many of the New Testament writers quote from the **Septuagint** (LXX).



1. The Septuagint was a trusted translation for Jewish & Greek speaking folks.
2. John borrows terms from the *Septuagint*, starting with the very first phrase.

**John 1:1a** (CSB) **In the beginning** was the Word,,

Have you ever heard that phrase - "in the beginning" before? Genesis 1:1 states...

**Genesis 1:1** (CSB) **In the beginning** God created the heavens and the earth.

John's phrase 'In the beginning' matches the LXX version of [Gen. 1:1](#). (Greek: Ἐν ἀρχῇ)

John WANTS his audience to understand that **in the beginning** of all creation existed...**the Word** already existed. **The Word is TIMELESS.**

**What's "the Word"?** Greek "*logos*" (λόγος) = *message, word*

In the Old Testament, God regularly acts by means of his 'word'. He reveals His will & ways to His prophets (e.g. Moses, Isaiah) and people "by the word of Yahweh". Further, the Scriptures say that the universe was created "by the word of Yahweh".

**Psalms 33:6** (LEB) **By the word** [LXX = *logos*] **of Yahweh** *the* heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host.

**D. A. Carson** "God's 'Word' in the Old Testament is his powerful self-expression in creation, revelation and salvation..."<sup>2</sup>

🕒 God creates life, reveals Himself, & SAVES through His *logos*/WORD.

<sup>1</sup> Daniel B. Wallace 4. The Gospel of John: Introduction, Argument, Outline. [https://bible.org/seriespage/4-gospel-john-introduction-argument-outline#\\_ftn2](https://bible.org/seriespage/4-gospel-john-introduction-argument-outline#_ftn2)

<sup>2</sup> D. A. Carson, The Gospel according to John, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991), 116.

## CODE BREAK "THE WORD"

**John 1:14** (CSB) <sup>14</sup> **The Word** [Greek *logos*] became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed his glory, the glory as the one and **only Son from the Father**, full of grace and truth.

What's "the Word"? \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)

🕒 Different from the **synoptics** (i.e. seeing together - Matthew, Mark, Luke), John doesn't start off by showing us Jesus through humans' perspective, but **from heaven's perspective**.

Jesus is **TIMELESS**. [in the beginning]

**John 1:1-2** (CSB) <sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word [Jesus], and **the Word was with God**, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning.

Next we see that **the Word was with God**. This is a relational phrase and is literally rendered "toward God" or *face to face*. Before the creation of the universe, Jesus was "with God". John gives even more clarity in another letter. Notice the similar terms used in this letter.

**1 John 1:1-2** (CSB) <sup>1</sup> What was from the **beginning**, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have observed and have touched with our hands, concerning **the word of life**—<sup>2</sup> that life was revealed, and we have seen it and we testify and declare to you **the eternal life that was with the Father** and was revealed to us—

Who is John referring to when he says, "the word of life/eternal life that was with the Father" and was revealed to him and others? Jesus.

**John 1:1-2** (CSB) <sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word [Jesus], and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning.

So Jesus [**the Word**] was **in the beginning** and **with God** [the Father], and **the Word** [Jesus] **was God**.  
Jesus IS God the Son, but Jesus IS NOT God the Father.

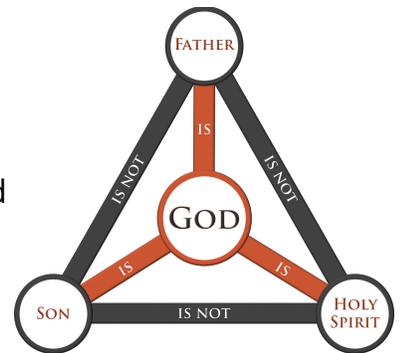
This is a DEEP MYSTERY in the Scriptures - **there is ONE GOD revealed in 3 persons** - Father, Son, Spirit (Jesus said to baptize in the name of Father, Son, & Spirit). There is only ONE GOD, yet the Father, Son, and Spirit are called God in the New Testament. This is NOT "modalism" - the false idea God changes modes/plays different roles (see the diagram →).

**TRINITY = ONE GOD, 3 PERSONS** (Co-equal & co-eternal. TRI-UNITY...Trinity).

**Trinity Defined:** *Within the one being that is God, there exists eternally three coequal and coeternal persons, namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.*<sup>3</sup> (Consider reading Dr. James White - *The Forgotten Trinity*<sup>4</sup> and 2 articles by Greg Koukl entitled "The Trinity: A Solution, Not a Problem" (2 parts).<sup>5</sup>)

Jesus is **TIMELESS**. [in the beginning]

Jesus is **SINLESS**. [with God (the father) & was God]



## YOUR NOTES

<sup>3</sup> James White, *The Forgotten Trinity* (Minneapolis: Bethany, 1998), 26.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.amazon.com/Forgotten-Trinity-James-R-White/dp/1556617259>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.str.org/publications/solid-ground-the-trinity-a-solution-not-a-problem-part-1#.XALo2aeZnQI>

## JESUS IS LIMITLESS. [created all things]

**John 1:3-5** (CSB) **All things were created through him**, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created. <sup>4</sup> **In him was life**, and that life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> That light shines in the darkness, and yet the darkness did not overcome it.

**ALL THINGS were created through Him...the Word...Jesus!!!** No wonder He could calm the storm or walk across the water! He created all of nature! No wonder Jesus could raise people from the dead... because **in him was life** - He created ALL LIFE!!! (e.g. Adam & Eve...formed by the Word - Jesus!)

- The Word, TIMELESS ONE who was **in the beginning**, stepped out of eternity into time. The one who never grows old, the one who never had a beginning...was BORN and had birthdays.
- The Word, the SINLESS ONE who was with the Father and was Himself, GOD, lived among sinful people. How must Jesus have felt as he watched His creation disobey His commands?
- The Word, the LIMITLESS ONE, chose to limit himself in skin - he got tired & hungry, walked hundreds of miles & spoke through a human voice. The LIMITLESS ONE allowed Himself to be abused, & crucified - by His own creation. And yet even after being murdered, **that light shines in the darkness, and yet the darkness did not overcome it.**

### 🌟 Kent Hughes:

*"The serious student of John will find that each time he returns to the Gospel, Christ will be a little bigger."*<sup>6</sup>

**Are you BLOWN AWAY by the BIGNESS of Jesus? How BIG of a role does Jesus really play in YOUR daily life?**

\* **Want to talk further?** Please contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Justin** (704-618-6144), or another follower of Jesus soon! Or call our **deacons & wives**: Fain & Linda Poppell, Tom & Martha Waddail, Steve & Debbie Bass, Freddy & Joyce Howard, Jere & Darlene Burnette, Alan & Christy Androski, Willy & Melissa Gamalero.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What challenged or encouraged you from today's teaching?
2. How did today's teaching help *clarify the Trinity* or *stir up some questions*?
  - The Trinity is difficult to understand, but so is the creation of the universe out of nothing. We shouldn't deny either one. Rather than discount the Trinity because it's difficult, consider searching, reading, & discussing "[\*The Trinity: A Solution, Not a Problem Part 1\*](#)" by Greg Koukl (and then check out part 2).
3. **Read John 1:1-5, 14** and **1 John 1:3-5** again. When you consider the birth of Jesus from the perspective of John's writings, how does this cause you to appreciate the birth of Jesus as BIGGER than being a just baby in a manger?
4. Which of the characteristics of "the Word" (Jesus) most intrigues you and why?
5. Here are some more passages to consider regarding Jesus being
  - **TIMELESS** (John 1:15-18; John 8:56-59; Rev. 22:12-13)
  - **SINLESS** (John 8:46; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 John 3:5)
  - **LIMITLESS** (Talk about some of the biblical miracles Jesus performed!)
6. Take time to pray for one another and others around you. Is there anything WE can do to be an answer to someone's prayer? (Find a way to serve someone this week.)

