

The Gospel of John

John 1:1-5

I The Eternal Word in the Beginning

- A. What is the difference between the beginning in Genesis and in John? The beginning in Genesis is the beginning of time. Time began at the creation of the universe and continues until the final judgment at the great white throne (**Rev.20:11-15**). The emphasis in Genesis is the action of creation. God started at the beginning to create. Time is for the accomplishing of God's eternal purpose, which God made in eternity past (**Eph.3:11**) for eternity future. The beginning in John 1:1, on the other hand, is in eternity past and the emphasis is on the pre-existing Word of God. What is the difference in the verbs of Genesis and John? In Genesis 1 we have an action verb (created) and that action has a start at the beginning. In John we have the other verb (was), a state of being, demonstrating that already at the beginning the eternal Word was there.
- B. The Word From Eternity Past to Eternity Future. As the introduction to this Gospel, this chapter begins in eternity past with God, who had divinity but not humanity (**v.1**); it then passes through His creation of all things (**v.3**), His incarnation (**v.14**), His becoming the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world (**v.29**), and His being the Spirit who causes the believers to be transformed into living stones for His building (**vv.32, 42**), and continues all the way to eternity future, in which the son of Man, who has both divinity and humanity, is the center for the communication between heaven and earth and for the union of God and man in eternity. (**v.51**)

II The Word Defines, Explains and Expresses God

- A. The Word here means logos, i.e., the expressed, definitive word. The Word being God means that the Word is the definition, explanation, and expression of God; hence, it is God defined, explained, and expressed. God is mysterious. He needs the Word to express Him. If you want to appear mysterious, the best way is to be silent, for the more silent you are, the more mysterious you become. However, the more you talk, the more you expose yourself. All that is deep within you is revealed by your words. This is the meaning of the Word. Although God is a mystery, Christ as the Word of God defines, explains, and expresses Him. Thus, this Word is the definition, explanation and expression of God
- B. The Word is with God and is God. The Word is not separate from God. It is not that the Word is the Word and God is God, and that they are thus separate from one another. Rather, the two are one; hence, the next clause says that the Word was God. In the beginning, that is, from eternity past, the Word was with God. (**vv.1-2**) Contrary to what is supposed by some, it is not that Christ was not with God and was not God from eternity past, and that at a certain time Christ became God and was with God. Christ's deity is eternal and absolute. From eternity past to eternity future, He is with God and He is God.

III The Word in Creation

- A. Creation As revealed in the Old Testament
1. God spoke the creation into existence. (**Gen.1:3a, 6a & 7a, 9a, 11a, 14a & 16a, 20a & 21a, 24a & 25a, 26a & 27a**) God spoke and His speaking was the Word and His Word created and this Word was God Himself.
 2. This Word was God's Wisdom which was with God in the beginning of His way, from eternity before His works of old and before the earth was and before the heavens were established. (**Prov.8:22-29**) This word, God's wisdom, was by God, as a master workman, an artificer or artist, who carries out God's plan and design.
 - a) This word, the wisdom of God and the workman was the nursling of God's love. (**Prov.8:30, John 8:18**) He carries out God's plan by being a nursling to God, being God's delight and, at the same time, delighting in God. As a nursling, he depends on God's life supply and gives God delight by being totally dependent on God and by carrying out God's plan
 - b) Not only is He the nursling-workman, living totally by and creating for God, He, the wisdom of God, rejoices before God's presence, disporting before Him. He rejoices in God and in God's goal, the habitable earth. (**Prov.8:31**)
- B. Creation As revealed in the New Testament
- According to **Col.1:16-17** says, "...in Him all things were created...all things have been created through Him and unto Him...all things cohere in Him." In John 1:3, we are told that all things came into being through the Word and not one thing came into being which exists apart from Him, as seen in Genesis 1. Here John is teaching us that Christ, the Word of God, is not just a man, but the very creator. John is mending the net of the truth of God's economy.

IV Eternal Life and Light Comes Through the Word

- A. Since v.3 refers to the creation in Genesis 1, life here should refer to the life signified by the tree of life in Gen. 2. This is confirmed by the fact that in Rev.22 John mentions the tree of life. Since life is in Him, He is life (**John 11:25; 14:6**); and He came that man might have life (**John 10:10b**)
- B. This life, the eternal life of God, is in the Word (**John 1:4**) and when it reaches man it shines as the light of men, shining in the darkness, which can not overcome it.