

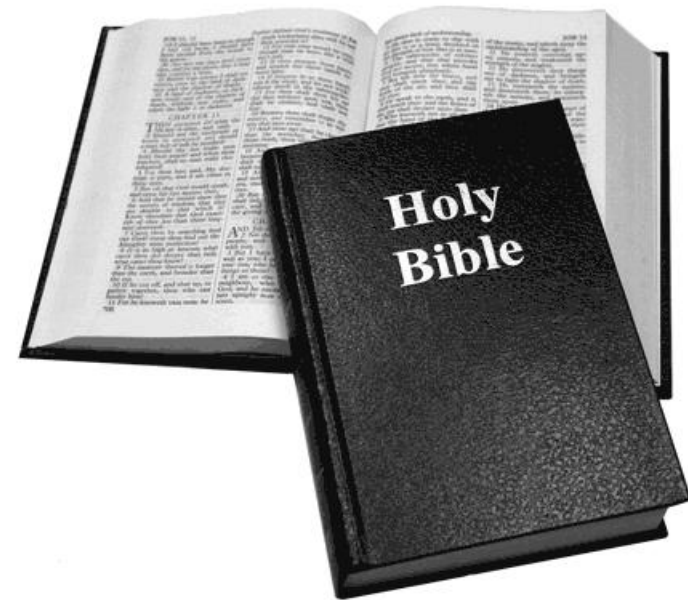
STUDY 1

“This passage in terms of vocabulary is one of the simplest anywhere in the Bible and yet it embodies probably, well undoubtedly, what is absolutely the most profound truth in the universe”
(MacArthur)

- 1) Having read the above quote we might immediately ask why John refers to ‘the Word’ when the remainder of the chapter shows he is very clearly referring to Jesus. *How can we answer this question?*
- 2) John’s opening statement in verse 1 reminds us of the words of Genesis 1:1. *What great foundational truth about Jesus does this verse set before the reader?*
- 3) We could see the phrase “and the Word was with God” as being just a restatement of His eternal nature. *But what does it tell us about the relationship between the Father and Son?*
- 4) The third phrase “and the Word was God” brings verse 1 to its ultimate conclusion and will set the scene for the rest of this book. *Why is it so important?*
- 5) Verse 2 appears to be a repeat of verse 1. *Why would you say that John sees the need to include it?*
- 6) As if the opening 2 verses were not going to give the readers much to contemplate, verse 3 makes a claim which goes to the very root of who Jesus is. *What light is shed on this verse by what John has already stated and why would all of this be a problem to the orthodox Jew?*

Studies in John – (Intro & Study 1) *“In the beginning”*

Reading: John 1:1-3



“These things are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ...”

Home Fellowship Group Bible Study notes
Tuesday 1st / Wednesday 2nd September

Introduction

This gospel account was written by John; one of the twelve apostles, around 90AD. It is generally accepted as being the last of the four to be written and a considerable amount of time after the others.

Why after all this time was did John feel it necessary to write another account of the life and teaching of Jesus?

The primary reason is given by the author himself in **20:31**. In fact the word 'believe' (or derivatives of it) appears in this one book some 98 times. John writes to bring his readers to faith in Jesus Christ.

It is not difficult to see that John's gospel is written in a different style to the other three. Matthew, Mark and Luke focus more on what Jesus taught and did. John focuses more on who Jesus is; the nature of His person and the meaning of faith in Him.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke are known as the three synoptic gospels. Synoptic means "see-together" and the first three gospels present Jesus' life in pretty much the same format. Having said that, each has its own distinctiveness.

In Matthew, Jesus Christ is presented as the promised king and Messiah of Israel. Mark, on the other hand, presents Him as a servant. Luke presents Christ as the perfect man walking among the people of the world. So what about John?

John MacArthur summarises it well when he concludes:

*“So Matthew wants us to **behold the king**, Mark wants us to **behold the servant**, Luke wants us to **behold the man**; that is the humanity of Christ. And now as we come to the gospel of John we see a completely new dimension. We see when we begin the gospel of John that heaven opens up and the first thing that happens is the eternal Son of God descends. God and man, in one blessed and glorious person, the eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ. And so John's message is **behold your God**.”* (Bold type added).

In this series of studies we will look at the opening six chapters of this great book and 'behold our God'.

If we ever needed any motivation to get us started, we need look no further than the words of William Hendricksen in the opening paragraph of his commentary:

“The gospel according to John is the most amazing book that was ever written. ‘Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.’ This may well be the attitude of anyone who steps upon the threshold of the study of this book; for if its testimony is true, the faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God has received glorious confirmation.”