

*He Loved Me...*  
*He Loves Me Lots*  
*The Gospel of John*

Text  
John 1:1-5

Topic  
"The Word" Who was there "In the beginning"  
came to Earth to show us what God is like

Title  
**"God's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Jesus"**

---

**"Call me Ishmael"**

You at once recognize the first sentence of *Moby Dick*. How about these famous literary first sentences:

- "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times..." (*A Tale of Two Cities*).
- "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife." (*Pride & Prejudice*).

**I submit to you that the most significant opening words ever written in the history of mankind are "In the beginning, God..."**

You instantly recognize the opening words of the Book of Genesis. It should therefore come as a shock that the apostle John opened his Gospel using these sacred words.

Shockingly, John *added* to the words. He said, "In the beginning **was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**"

- He explains that God was not alone when the world was created. Someone else was there with God, a Person called "the Word."
- He claims this Person is equal with God.
- John will go on to explain in verse fourteen that this Person Who was with God and is equal to God came from Heaven to Earth as a man. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

**If the first line is a hook, John has us hook, line, and sinker.**

I'll organize my comments around two points derived from the text: **#1 The Word Gives You Life**, and **#2 The Word Gives You Light**.

### **#1 - The Word Gives You Life (v1-4)**

**Ninety-three percent of what John records does not occur in any of the other gospels.**

- Ten chapters are devoted to describing one week of Jesus' ministry.
- One-third of the verses in the book cover a single twenty-four-hour period in the life of Jesus.

D.A. Carson writes, "[Unique to the Gospel of John is] all of the material in chapters two, three, and four, including His miraculous transformation of water into wine, His dialogue with Nicodemus, and His ministry in Samaria. Further, the resurrection of Lazarus, Jesus' frequent visits to Jerusalem, and His extended dialogues or discourses in the Temple and in various synagogues, not to mention much of His private instruction to His disciples, are all exclusive to the Fourth Gospel."

John informs us why the Holy Spirit inspired him to put quill to parchment. It is "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (20:31).

### **Do you have "life in His Name?"**

- "Yes," you say? The Gospel of John will give you a greater appreciation for eternal life, both now and forever.
- "No," you say? The inspired account of Jesus will draw you to Him so that you may believe and be saved.

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

If I said, "The force be with you," odds are you'd know I was referring to the well-known metaphysical power certain individuals channel in the *Star Wars* universe.

"Word" was a well-known religious concept to both Gentiles and Jews. Learned men used it to try to describe creative spiritual power.

- Gentiles referred to "the Word" as the impersonal power that created and controlled the universe.
- Jews thought of "the Word" as the creative power of YHWH. Psalm 33:9, for example, says that at the Creation, "For He spoke, and it was *done*; He commanded, and it stood fast."

### **John explains that the Word is not a power of God but another Person Who is God.**

We hold to the Doctrine of the Trinity. We are Trinitarians. One definition of our Trinitarian beliefs goes like this:

*The Bible teaches that there is one eternal God who is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. He is the only God that exists. However, within the nature of this one God are three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These*

*three Persons are co-equal and co-eternal. They are also distinguishable or distinct from one another. These three distinct Persons are the one God. Everything that is true about God is true about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.*

All attempts to explain the Trinity with some analogy miserably fail.

Apologist Don Stewart writes, "It is best to admit that the Trinity has no analogy with which we can compare it."

The Bible beyond doubt teaches that God is Triune. It is, however, a lot to wrap our finite minds around. There may, therefore, be times when you hear me misspeak about the Trinity or seem to struggle to be sure I don't misspeak. No worries. I assure you that we *are* orthodox.

**The fact that God, Who is One, is more than One is discoverable in the word Moses chose for God.**

The word for God in the first verse of the Bible is *Elohim*. Scholars agree that *Elohim* is a plural term being used to describe an individual. God is One but more than One.

Here are two more quick things for your consideration:

1. In verse two of Genesis chapter one, we see the Spirit, another Person Who is God.
2. In Genesis 2:26, God refers to Himself plurally, saying out loud, "Let **us** make man in **our** image."

The first verses of the Bible might not be enough to establish the Trinity fully. They are sufficient to suggest there was more than one Person at Creation. John will identify that Second Person.

The choice of the word "was" communicates that the Word pre-existed. Since He "was" already there "in the beginning," then He was there *before* Creation. He was not created but is eternal.

“With” is another loaded word. Leon Morris said, “We should understand from the preposition [“with”] the two ideas of accompaniment and relationship. Not only did the Word exist “in the beginning,” but He existed in the closest possible connection with the Father.” The Word was equal “with” YHWH.

### **“And the Word was God.”**

Another quote I jotted down: “John is not merely saying that there is something divine about the Word. He is affirming that He is God, and doing so emphatically.”

The Jews thought the Word was a power that YHWH possessed. It was not a person to them, let alone a person who was God.

BTW: The Jehovah’s Witnesses that knock on your door have their version of the Bible. In it, the opening line of the Gospel of John reads, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was **a** God.” Not God, **a** god who God created. You don’t need to know Greek grammar or see existing manuscripts to know and show this is false. The Word cannot be both *created* and *Creator*.

Why call this Second Person “the Word?” In just a few verses, we will read, “No one has ever seen God. The only Son, who is truly God and is closest to the Father, has shown us what God is like” (1:18 CEV).

Words reveal unseen thoughts. The Word reveals the unseen God.

Joh 1:2 He was in the beginning with God.

The Word “was” there eternally, “with God,” and He created the world as an equal.

It is difficult for non-Jews to comprehend the explosive nature of John’s declarations.

Jews consider this polytheism - the worship of many gods.

Jews daily repeat the *Shema*, which was their essential confession of faith. We find it in the fifth book of the Bible:

Deu 6:4 "Hear, O Israel: **The LORD our God, the LORD** is one!

Deu 6:5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

Deu 6:6 "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.

Deu 6:7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.

Deu 6:8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.

Deu 6:9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

"The LORD our God, the LORD" is a translation of *Jehovah Elohim Jehovah*. The Scripture used to argue against plurality uses the plural, *Elohim*.

Joh 1:3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

Only God can create from nothing. The Word is not the force, not the power, YHWH possessed to create. The Word is Himself the Creator with YHWH.

John was not adding anything to the Genesis account. It had always indicated more than one Person.

The learned Jews missed something that was right there in the verse. Let's talk about that for a moment. We all need to acknowledge we can miss things in the Bible even when they are clearly stated. I'll give you an example using spiritual gifts.

- We've shown Pentecostals in the Bible where the apostle Paul clearly states, "For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no

one understands *him*; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries" (First Corinthians 14:2). They go right on interpreting their utterances as messages *from* God to men.

- Cessationists are on the other end of the spiritual gifts spectrum. They deny certain charismatic gifts can exist today; they say they have ceased. Quoting Paul again, "I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies *is* greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification" (First Corinthians 14:5).

Just because we keep hearing something, it doesn't make it true. We must always let the text speak in its context.

Back to our text...

Joh 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

In the Word "was life" means He gave life to Creation, especially to Adam and Eve, breathing into Adam and then creating Eve from Adam's side.

**The light God gave our original parents might have caused them to be radiant.**

God *is* light, and we're told He dwells in unapproachable light (First Timothy 6:16).

The psalms mention that God covers Himself in light (104:2). Psalms 50:2 says, "From Zion, perfect in beauty, God shines forth."

Someone who has God's "life" has His "light." We know that we will be raised from the dead or raptured in a glorious body in the future. If it is anything like Jesus' resurrection body, we will shine.

- On the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus shined in His glory.
- Recall also that whenever Moses met with God, he would return glowing.

A Messianic resource said, "There are traditions from both Jewish and Christian sources that teach that before the fall, the skin of Adam and Eve was luminous. In other words, they were "covered" by divine light and would 'glow' so to speak."

Another commentator wrote,

*I believe, before the fall of man, that Adam and Eve also glowed with the glory of God through their mortal flesh, just like Moses. When they sinned, the glory was removed and, "they knew they were naked." They could obviously see they were physically naked before; nothing changed there. There is the possibility that God's glory was removed and they shone no more. They could see they were naked, i.e., without the glory of God encompassing them.*

**T**he "Us" of "Let Us make man in our image did "good." It didn't last. Satan, the sin-sick-sin-serpent, tempted our parents. Their sin affected all life and light, plunging them and Creation into spiritual death and darkness.

Not to worry. *Here light comes to save the day!*

## **#2 - The Word Gives You Light (v5)**

I almost experienced utter darkness. It was right up in our Sequoia National Forrest at Boyden Cavern.

The guide takes you in and, at one point, extinguishes his light, leaving you momentarily in a palpable darkness. It's a highlight of the tour.

Unless, of course, you're on the tour with the family who thinks it's OK for their kid to be wearing light-up sneakers and keep slamming his feet down.

Joh 1:5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.



It must have been terrifying for Adam and Eve to lose the light of God and instantly be plunged into spiritual darkness. It was enough to make them hide from their gracious God.

How are we to understand darkness? Genesis can help us get a handle on it. The very next account in Genesis after the Fall is the murder of Abel by his brother, Cain.

Not too many generations later, fallen angels married and mated with human women. It produced a race of giants called Nephilim. The corruption of human DNA became so widespread that God destroyed everyone on Earth with the global flood.

Except for eight souls - Noah and his family. Noah was "perfect in his generations" (6:9). The words might be referring to his unaffected DNA. Noah, through his children, would pass on perfect DNA to restore humankind.

Not long after the flood came the Tower of Babel. Mankind started building a ziggurat (tower) from which to worship the stars and planets.

These episodes are the result of the fall in the Garden of Eden. They are indicative of spiritual darkness. Mankind has a heart of darkness, and we see the horror that ensues.

If I said, "The world is a dark place," you'd know what I mean and probably agree with me. (Unless you are Drax; then you'd argue that there are lights on everywhere).

### **Light defeats darkness.**

Of course, the ratio of light to darkness matters.

If I light a stick match in Boyden Cavern, the light will prevail only in a limited area. A flashlight beam will show me more.

There was a guy in San Bernardino who bought the surplus military spotlights to rent out for events. Those things could blind you. Get something like that into the Cavern and light would chase out the dark.

It would require a pretty awesome light to overcome the darkness in every corner of Creation. Good thing the Word is light of immeasurable magnitude.

Satan is called "the ruler of this world" (Second Corinthians 4:4). Satanic forces are called "the rulers of the darkness of this age" (Ephesians 6:12).

The Word came into the world He created to "shine in the darkness." In verses seven, eight, and nine, John will tell us that the Word "was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world."

When it says "the darkness did not comprehend it," the International Standard Version (ISV) says, "the darkness has never put it out." The Message version (MSG) says, "it couldn't put it out."

We just finished thirty-four studies in The Revelation. We saw the light prevail over darkness. So much so that in eternity there is no physical or spiritual darkness. Only day, never night; never wrong, only right.

**I** might change my mind. Earlier I said that the opening words of Genesis were the most significant opening words ever written in the history of mankind. John 1:1 is right up there.

We are calling this series, "He loved me; He loves me lots."

- The Word, Jesus, is God Who loved you before Creation.
- The Word, Jesus, is God in human flesh Who came to make you His new creature before He restores Creation.

You and I "*are* an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, *that is*, of the heart" (Second Corinthians 3:3).

**What are the opening words of your letter to the world thus far?**

Maybe it's time for editing, or a rewrite.