

Gospel of John (Study 3 of 24, Chap 1 Cont)

by G.W. North

The sermon explores the profound implications of the Word as God, its role in creation, and the authority granted to believers as children of God.

Duration: 52:56

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 1:1, John 16:13, John 16:24, John 16:27, John 16:30-31, John 17:1

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that the light of God for a human being is Jesus Christ. The preacher explains that the purpose of a human being is to become a God being, where God lives within them. John the Baptist is highlighted as a burning and shining light who bore witness to the light of Jesus Christ. The preacher encourages the audience to understand their relationship with God and to seek understanding of God's word through the Holy Spirit. The sermon also references the opening verses of the Gospel of John, emphasizing the divinity of Jesus as the Word of God.

Transcript

How we are going to take thy precious book, and thou didst go to such pains to give us. Teach us to understand thy heart, and thy word, which thou didst always speak from thy heart, and grant us thy blessed spirit, which alone can give us God's understanding of it all. And bless everyone.

Amen. Well, you know where we are. Shall we continue? Or where we were, perhaps I ought to say.

We have a diminished class this morning. Not of the real students, but these casuals. And I realise that if I did as I did yesterday, we get about halfway through the book by the time to finish the lectures completely in a month.

But here we go. Let's go, shall we? I'm one of these people that everybody almost lets me do as I like, so that's good. I can carry on.

In the first chapter of John, then, beloved, let's just take it from the beginning again. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. I don't know what you think about conversation in the Godhead.

We referred to it not directly under that heading yesterday. I suppose they communicate by word, and that they speak. Well, you say, yes, of course, he spoke this, and he spoke that, and he spoke the other.

But I mean, in God's very essential self. I don't know, that's a scientific subject, perhaps, as we may think. But here's the great thing.

God is speech. You do understand that, don't you, in himself? God is every blessed, precious thing, sinless, and holy, and wonderful. And that's great for us to see, because, beloved, that's what we have to be, sinless, righteous, blameless, holy.

That's what God has set for us. That's the standard. Don't aim at churchianity, or theological amity, if you want.

Don't aim at that. I will always make God your standard. Accept nothing, love, of yourself, or anyone else.

Don't say, well, we're only human. You should only think like that in the standards of holiness. We have, we're human, we're holy.

We've never been holy for eternity. It's a job for our minds to conceive this, but conceive it you must, unless you will accept the lowest standard, set often by churches, allowable things that are allowable, even perhaps promoted, but God would never promote or allow. And calling it Christian, of course, men do that kind of thing.

But in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him, that is apart from Him, was not anything made that was made.

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men, and the light shineth in darkness. The darkness has not made hold of it, or not comprehend it. That's the great truth where we were yesterday.

Let's move on from there then, shall we? There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light that was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own. When you read that word, own, there, put things after it, because that's the Greek.

He came unto His own things, including the earth, and heavens, and everything, and all the things that are in you, such as sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell, all the things that make you to be a proper human being. He came unto His own things. For instance, let me say this.

He made hearing, and He was the word. He came unto the own, His own thing. But the next time the word own is used in that verse, it is His own people, a different word, received Him not.

Which I might want to suggest to you, brings out this, that John must have written from a perspective. When he wrote this gospel, and whether, as some people suggest, this part of his gospel was really written last, this has not come from me, I picked this up from an academic, and it is a sort of an introductory section down, say, to the end of verse 14. You didn't be bothered about that.

Academics have different opinions about all these things, but it's nice to know. You see, He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. Speaking in the past tense, all the time.

The writer thinking in the past tense, under the power of the Spirit. He didn't say, He is in the world, it's not something written whilst Christ was on earth. He was.

It's about Him when He was on earth, and praise God, in this opening section, it's about Him before the world was, in the beginning, was the word. But John, writing, he writes it in this past, He was in the world, He is here now, in that sense, bodily. It's a great thing.

But always remember, when you're reading John's gospel, you're reading the words of the Sephardic, no, the only mystic amongst them, the apostles. He had a variety of people. For instance, you know, he had a disciple named Philip.

The word Philip means lover of horses. He had a great variety of fishermen, etc. We're not told he had another carpenter in the group.

But these are the pointers to the original truth. He was in the world. Want you to know that this is what was happening.

It crosses over the aeons, I was going to say, between in the beginning was the word and He was in the world, just like that, in a few words. But the original world was created by Christ Jesus. And you will know, I hope you will know, that the word world means cosmos.

In the Greek mind, beauty and real beauty was orderly. They loved the orderliness of things. They loved it.

Beauty and order. Not quite Epicurean, but certainly not Stoic. Here's the big thing to see.

The light that lighted everywhere was coming into the world. Tremendous, how this great transition took place. You will know that it involves promises and activities of God down through measurable time.

I'm taking the scriptures as standard here, not the dreams of men who at some time have to admit that they over-calculated the age of the world by 50%. A scientist, to be a true scientist, never apologises. Do you know that? Scientists never apologise.

They make a statement and they say, oh we've discovered, they never say no, we're very sorry we had you educated under a wrong theme. Probably the education of every one of us in this room, based upon man's guesses. You must understand that.

You did know, don't you, that they have professed to have found something which proves that the universe is only half as old as they've been saying. Fancy deceiving whole generations. That's what scientists do.

And they never say sorry. Here's the thing. He came into the world and he came to his own sins.

He made the world. He made everything. The world was made by him.

He came to his own people, well that's the emphasis in the Greek, came to his own people and they received him. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God. Even to them that believe on his name.

The authority actually, the word power, now that's what God is all about. He gave, and do you realise you have to receive this, the authority to become the sons of God. Authority.

It's the permission and endowment and endowment of lordship and kingship. You either have authority or you don't. It isn't guesswork, there's nothing here about being given faith either.

It doesn't say those who believed in him noticed very clearly. The progression of belief in John's gospel should be something you should be searching after. That is the revelation of belief.

And know this, though I shall treat of this much more thoroughly when we get there. I was discussing this in the car this morning with one of our students. Here, do you realise this, that it's not until you get to the end of the 16th chapter, presaging the glorious 17th chapter, which is the real lord's prayer, you'll find the apostles saying this.

Oh, by this we believe you came out from God. By this we really believe. But they hadn't believed until chapter 16.

Do you realise that? That was in the upper room. This partial penny-sniffing belief that we get. And it's so, if I may put it this way, in the construction of the letter anyway, so influenced Jesus that he turned to his father immediately in prayer.

And this is one of the things he said. Now they believe. Three years with him.

And they believed so much. Believed enough to leave all and follow him. But they didn't really believe who he was.

And when they said things they said, they were accepted things to say. Alright, not that they were mere talkers. You should read those few last verses of John's 16th chapter and don't stop, which is our common fault at the end of the chapter.

You will find it. If you were said as a mere human being, you said, well the lord was astounded. He'd lost, he'd got a confession of faith.

Not like us, we have partial faith. And these great, I was going to say pulpit mongers of faith, never really get you, have faith to get healed. Have faith for that.

This thing that in the end transports you from being a mere earth being into being a son of God is the rarest thing on earth. It isn't the conversion of human faith into heavenly faith. It isn't the conversion of human believing into heavenly believing that makes you a Christian.

Did you understand that? I mean you all had what we might call faith. You believed I would come this morning and lecture to you. You believed it, didn't you? Well of course you made it for an old man and traffic hold up and all that, but you believed it, you see.

But that's not the kind of believing that you've got to think about. You've got about something that comes to you by this word of God. It's an eye-opener.

It's an inletting of light into your mind. It is something wonderful in the hands of the Spirit. It's the beginning of becoming a child of God.

You can go through many crises in faith. And woe to those who teach that you've got it all at once. I want to tell you that my faith has been progressive.

All right. I'm not discussing the word. That's my trouble.

I can get on to neopedantism. But you've got to know these things. You've got to have authority to become a child of God.

God's authority to become his child. That's what that verse is saying. Now here is the terror, really we ought to regard it as a terror, of wrong theological training.

If you'd come through a Roman Catholic church, for instance, you went to a Roman Catholic school, or what it was, you would get everything slanted to their ambitions to turn you into a Catholic, an utterly profound Catholic, and go out and get all the world Catholic. But in the family of God there are certain standards. He demeaned himself, if you like, lowered himself.

Love never considers itself demeaned. But I'm looking at it from a human aspect. To become a man.

To become, I'm a woman, no man. That's right. God? Yeah.

You've got to have authority to become a child of God. You can't decide you're going to be, but you must have the desire to be, and it must be an intensity of desire and believing. Must be that.

You don't slip in by having the first whiff of believing. Such as was quoted this morning in the company I was in, I wish I had your faith, says somebody. And it's not an increase of that wishful faith that does it.

It's faith, like everything else, is a gift from God. We have the smatterings of faith. The shell of the peas that I was talking about yesterday morning.

Then something wonderful happens, and we found ourselves, we're pleading Lord, we're believing. You don't know the operation of the Holy Spirit that brings you to that place. It seems so natural, or supernatural, I hope.

And you suddenly come to a place where you're believing. That is a gift from God. You weren't born with it.

You were born with the almost extinct likeness of it in your heart. Not only brought about by the fall, the complete fall of the human being in the garden, but through teaching, reading, hearing. We don't know the processes through which we go.

We can state a thing and it be completely wrong. You and I have to be in the hands of God. We're going to come on the chapter that talks about new birth.

It won't be tomorrow morning. I hope I get to it before this week's out. But that's the whole truth.

The very thing we're talking about now, for instance. In the beginning, there's John Baptist. He was light in this world, but he was only a light.

That's all. The light, the real light of a human being. It says of this world, but it really means of a human being.

At least that's where we need to limit our thinking this morning. We're not a scientific class. The light of God for a human being is Jesus Christ.

And that's all he's interested in. You understand this? For the human being. Moving to the point where they become a God being, in this sense that God is living in you.

That's what it's about. I know you've already been forewarned, but I shan't answer questions. But if I get too heavy for you, you can say I don't understand it.

But long through getting inside your heart, the Lord will add fire to the fodder I've provided, I hope. You will come there. Here is the big thing.

He was not that light. He was only sent, look in at verse 8, follow it with me, to bear witness of that light. But if we come to the Greek of the verse, it says this.

John Baptist was not that light, but was to bear witness of that light. He only had existence in the world for this reason. That he should bear witness to light.

And that's why I'm in this world. And so are you. He was only ever born, thought of, conceived, and brought into the world.

He only had life for this one reason. Not just to eat locusts and wild animals and make up great sermons around these things. You are here for this one great reason.

He only had life. When you take it in, you say I'm 20, 30, perhaps 40, 50, I have to confess for being older than that. But I see now I'm only in this world, as far as God's concerned, to bear witness to that light.

That's all. Let that sink into you, son and daughter, and you'll go a long way with God. The point of your being.

You say, well it's to be a child of God, it's to be in the church, it's your year, and that's what the church is here for. Why are they likened in John's other writings, later writings? Why are they likened to candlesticks bearing light? What's it about? Bear witness to the lightning city. If you're not careful, I'll take it away, but that's another subject.

What a marvellous thing it is. I have one hope, there may be others subsidiary hopes, that you will be a light in this world. Lovely sunlight out there.

That sun was only made for one purpose. To be light. A burning and shining light, that was John Baptist.

God has copied it out in the universe, he's copied it out in man. See your relationship and what's it all about? You won't be hanging on the tidbits of sermons. See what it's about.

Who am I? Ask yourself. What am I? Why am I here? Right here, now, in this room this morning. Or in the world.

Well, Christ Jesus, first head, he was in the world. And the world was made by him. And the world didn't know him.

He came unto his own people, and his own received him not. He came into the world, but if you take it as the cosmos, it's the exact Greek word, there's the world of stars, there's the world of animals, there's the world of fish, there's the world of flowers, we use this word world in so many ways. The beauty and order of God's original creation was marvellous.

He came into that, but he also came into the world of thinking human beings. Unfortunately, sinning human beings, because you sin in thought and word, perhaps before you sin in deed, though probably they are almost concomitant terms. You have to see what it's about.

And once we get there, he came, and they didn't receive him, they just didn't receive him. He was the light. That's always been spoken of us at the time.

He was the word, he was the light. We touched on it yesterday. Let there be light was the first recorded statement of God in Genesis.

And if you don't receive him as light for your life, you'll get nowhere, except go on in darkness. God begins in the light, so far as our record goes. There must have been something before that I leave to God, whether there was or whether there wasn't.

I'm going to, you remember yesterday morning, I pointed out to you that the spirit was moving over the face of the waters, the actual word is hovering like a mother bird over her young. Alright, that brings the mother thought into the mind, and the Holy Ghost is connected with the woman in many ways in Scripture. But let's go on.

Okay, and God spoke into that. There would have been nothing created except the Spirit was in it, as well as God the Father and God the Son. They could never be divided.

They may be separated for thought, but in being they cannot be separated. And what a wonderful thing it is then, for us to see this. He came here, light you all.

It's almost as if now we'll begin to work. Not going to do anything in the dark, I would suggest these thoughts to. Alright.

Then he did get to work. And you know what he did? He separated the waters from the waters. Waters above the firmament, waters underneath the firmament, made into seas, and so on.

Okay. And it was up from under the waters, I said this yesterday morning, that the earth came. Now if there is, I know I hinted a little bit, almost hooted it, the prehistoric monster position.

Right. Now remember this. Was there a form of creation? I don't know.

Neither does anybody. But if so, I want to say this. They belong to that, that God drowned out.

And they never find a living one of those creatures, only the bones. Thank God. They didn't belong to this earth as we know it.

The world stood in the waters and out of the waters. Yeah. Isn't that wonderful? Because if you've had any monsters in your life, like the monster of sex, or the monster of drugs, or the monster of all these things, when they come to the surface, they're dead.

Okay. When God starts to bring in his light. They're dead.

So you want to dig their bones up and show everybody that they're dead. All right. Well, don't bother to dig up their bones.

But you know. Here is the thing for us to see. You weren't expecting a dissertation on that, were you? But still, never mind.

I'm a born preacher rather than a teacher. I think so, anyway. I was born again on that, merely, I suppose.

He came unto his own. His own received him not. But as many as received him.

Him. To them, he gave the authority to become a son of God. To them that believe on his name, of course, which were born, are not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Wonderful, isn't it? Wonderful. He just doesn't give you permission. He gives you authority.

He doesn't hold out a wand and say, approach the throne, or something like that, giving you permission. He gives you authority. Because you are not a child of God unless you have authority communicated in the word of authority by which he makes you a child of God.

To be authoritative is not to be boastful. The last thing Jesus Christ was, that he was boastful. He never was.

What a glorious thing that you should be in this, and that we should be in this together. Hallelujah. It's his 11 months to stop, am I? Good.

All right. Shall we apply ourselves to verse 14 then, beloved? I expect most of you know it and could quote it without looking, but I want you to look at the verse, beloved, with me. Here it is.

The Word, the Logos, was made 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. I want to suggest that you make an alteration in reading this verse, but let me make a statement first. None of the verses, the versification of scripture was inspired, but the New Testament, I suppose you've been told this, I don't know, I want to repeat it to you then, was written in Greek unctuals, without stops, without full stops, half stops, demisemiquavers or what.

There was nothing of that in it. Menden did that. The dividing of scriptures up into verses and into chapters is man-made entirely, for our enlightenment, perhaps for our help in reading the scriptures.

You may be sure that the intentions were good, but if you look at your verse now, this is why I wanted you to read it, if you have a Bible like mine, you will find that there is a parenthesis in this verse, beginning at, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace. So you, a parenthesis inserted, not because it is endemic to the truth, but it is parallel running alongside the truth. Para means by the side of, in Greek.

So your word parenthesis comes from the Greek. It is an insertion by people who know that the truth is running from one spot directly to the other, at the end of the parenthesis. The spot where it leaves the important thought is the commencement of it.

Then when that is important only that it is parallel to the truth, they put the rest. Now I want to suggest to you that they have not done us the best service, whoever did that. Let me read it, you in your mind read it with me and cut the parenthesis out.

Alright. The word was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. So that has made Jesus Christ full of grace and truth.

But take the parenthesis away, and the word was made 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. The suggestion is that the Father is not full of grace and truth, or that is not the important thing to look at. Look at Jesus Christ, full of grace and truth.

And I want to tell you this, that the Holy Ghost is full of grace and truth too. Remember that. I know people who are anxious to put Christ in focus and perspective, and they have done us that service, that I think they might have done us better service had they not put it in.

Remember the age in which they were living, these translators, when Roman Catholicism was dominating and all that. So they wanted to bring it out, specifying Christ. But you know Christ only came to this earth for one thing.

You say, yeah he came for a dozen things, a thousand things, a million things if you like. No, yeah. All of them were for one reason, and one reason only, that God the Father wanted children.

Now you keep that. He was the one Son, and God wanted millions. Everything was from his Father, and for his Father, before it was for us, everything.

You can put a time thing to it. Was it there all at once? God all seeing, God all knowing, God all feeling. He felt everything, except the terrible thing of being the generator of sin, and nothing of sin in himself.

How wonderful this thing is then. That's why Christ died, because I love the Father. He states it in the upper room, in what I've called the secret rendezvous.

He stated it there. Didn't he love me? He loved his Father before ever you were thought of in the world. It's the sharing of the love, not the originating of it.

It originates in us, poor sinners. It's an incorporating into God that it's all about. The Father's full of grace and truth.

I heard a funny story this morning. It's good to travel down to Birmingham. It has to be down from where I was living, not suggesting you're down, you know, like that.

And the story was this. There was a certain young man who was a bit of a leader, took a group of young people out and got home very late at night, and there was a ferrari about it. So the father of this young person took him up into the bedroom and got a tennis racket.

And what-ho, they could hear the screams and the bangs downstairs. So mum thought it was a bit thick just to get the young people out, tore up the stairs to see if the son was being half-murdered, and they found that the father had laid her, told the son to lay on the bed, but beside him he'd laid the pillow. And it was that.

And he said to her, every time I whack this pillow you scream. And he whacked the pillow and they thought he was half-murdering the son. Never touched him.

But the son never did it again. Just think, he whacked the pillow. Excuse me Lord, I don't mean you're a pillow.

But he whacked his son. For the other. For the other.

Hallelujah. I thought it was rather good psychology, but when it's psychological son, I don't know. But here's the thing.

You're not born of the will of the flesh. You know, I will, I can't go back and say I will, but you weren't born of that. You weren't born by the will of man.

Alright then, let's take it out of the flesh. I'm a man, or a woman of course. And I will.

There are times when you do have to say, I mean, unless you're going to be a jellyfish, you've got to set your will to do some things. But you're born of the will of God. Take it back in all creation.

Let us make man in our own image. Yes, we're father, son, and Holy Spirit. So what's the next step? That's the conception of the idea, we will make man in our own image.

That's the next step. Let us make man, and the next step is, we will make man. So you are born of the will of God.

As well as the ability of God. As well as being in God's likeness. See? But you weren't born again of your own will, though you had to bring your will into alignment with it.

Is that right? It is, isn't it? In all human affairs it's the same, in a much scaled down way. You've got to see that, I don't know whether you all have had the pleasure of being married, or whatever way you want to speak about it. But you couldn't go and say, I will get married, you see.

Listen, you have to have the permission of the other partner, too. She, he has to say, I will as well as you. There's none of this desert sheik idea, whipping up someone and carrying them away into the desert or something.

You think you're a sheik, you need shaking. Here is God, I just happened to look up and see Derek open his eyes, and I thought it must be 11 o'clock. I'm not suggesting he was asleep or not, but I bet he was going to telegraph something to me.

Eyes are very expressive. And to see this, beloved, this isn't a matter of coming into sonship, you understand that? You're born into subjects. You've got to see the difference between the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God.

Now I hope I've thrown you into a posture of mind that will say, what does he mean by that? In kingdom of heaven teaching, come unto me all ye that labour and I'll give you rest. In kingdom of God teaching, which is the only teaching that John gives, he doesn't give any kingdom of heaven teaching. You thought you had to combine them and they both mean the same.

Relatively, yes. Only relatively. There are some people in this world now, no, not true.

They've all changed their names. I had three daughters. They're relatives of mine.

They were Norths when they were born. They've all changed. Women like to do that.

But the thing is, you see, there is relative truth. But if you say, for instance, my daughter Carol, people commonly call her Carol North, it's not her name. You see, you've got to be born, you understand, not come to it.

When Jesus said, come to me all ye that labour and the heavy laden, that Matthew's great on kingdom of heaven teaching, that was when Christ had come to set up the kingdom of heaven on earth. But they rejected him. Here then is the thing, the whole teaching.

You've got to be born with the will of God. Born of God. Needn't talk about will.

These are only the things we've decided by trying to cut ourselves up into segments. That's our will. That's our emotions.

That's the other. That's the other. Very clever.

But I'm a whole person. Don't tell me I'm speaking by my will. This morning I wasn't conscious of it till I introduced the word.

I'm speaking from my being. I know it includes brains, I hope it does. Mouth, tongue, being taught.

I know it includes a thousand things. But I'm talking from new birth into the wholeness of God where I'm not extracting my will as a wrinkle on a pin and examining it. I'm a whole person.

I suggest you start to think of yourself like that. Not as scientists have turned you out to be. Of course they have grounds for it.

Think of yourself as a whole person. Now did I come with my will? Did I come with my faith? Christ was born into a manger. All of Him.

One of God's intentions is that you should become a whole person. Start to think that way. Was it my this? Was it my that? Why this and why the other? And it's eleven o'clock so have a break.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/29/SID29157.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/gw-north/gospel-of-john-study-3-of-24-chap-1-cont/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net