

# The Gospel of John

# Lesson One

Wednesday January 7, 2009

## *The Proposition Stated*

### Introduction:

1. The proposition of the Gospel of John is clearly stated by the writer when he said, "*Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name*" (John 20:30, 31).
2. Eternal life depends upon this faith; nothing else will do.
3. Either Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God—all that He claimed to be—or He was and is an impostor. There is no middle ground.
4. This is John's proposition; it is the proposition of this book.
5. The Gospel of John was written by one who did not so much as mention his own name, but whose name has come down to us as John.
6. The writer does not directly claim inspiration for himself in the things which he writes, but claims to write as a witness of the things of which he writes (21:24).
7. However, he does make indirect claim to inspiration by the Holy Spirit when he quotes Jesus' promise to the eleven apostles (John 14:17; 26; 16:13).
8. The Book of John proposes to set forth the evidence which sustains the factuality of Jesus' being the Christ, the Son of God.
9. The evidence convinced John; it convinced others of that day; and it has been written and preserved that it may convince all who will give it fair consideration in every generation.
10. John's introduction to his gospel presents Jesus as God, an eternal being, and the creator of all things (John 1:1-18).
11. Also John introduces Jesus as the complete revelation God and of His grace, who came into the world to challenge darkness and death, and to meet them in a battle that leaves both groveling in complete defeat.

### **I. Christ's Relation to Deity: Essence**

- A. John takes us back to the beginning of all things the creation of the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1: 1), where finds the Word already was (John 1:1).
- B. Jesus Christ, the Word, is therefore without beginning, uncreated, eternal.
  - 1) He was with God – Conveys the idea of active intercourse and communion with God. He was with God before he revealed God.
  - 2) The Word was God – The Word was God in his nature and in his being, possessing the fullness of divine being, power, and attributes (Hebrews 1:1-3).
- C. In His relation to Deity, He existed before creation; therefore, He was eternal. He was with God, personal, in communion with Him.
- D. He was Deity itself, the very image of the divine essence.

## **II. Christ's Relation to the Physical World: Creator**

- A. Jesus Christ was the active agent through whom all created beings or things came into existence (John 1:3).
- B. This puts Christ before all things, both in time and in preeminence or primacy.

## **III. Christ's Relation to the Moral World: Life and Light**

- A. Life in all of its fullness and completeness was in Him (John 1:4).
- B. From Jesus proceeded the life that has given light to men, the revelation of God which appeals to the conscience and reason of man.
- C. The life gives light to a world in darkness.

## **IV. Christ's Relation to Darkness: Challenger and Victor**

- A. The life "which was the light of men" was immediately challenged by the darkness (John 1:5).
- B. The light came into the world to challenge the darkness by illuminating every man, but from the moment of its entrance into the world there was conflict between that light and the moral darkness which for so long had held the human family captive.
- C. The light does not banish the darkness: the darkness does not overpower the light.
- D. The two co-exist in the world side by side.
- E. In this statement John introduces the conflict which is seen throughout the book.
- F. Light invades the realm of darkness and there follows the conflict between light and darkness, between truth and error, between belief and unbelief, which in the end leaves darkness, error, and unbelief thoroughly defeated.

## **V. Christ's Relation to Humanity: Creator and Benefactor**

- A. Having affirmed that all things were made through Him (John 13), John proceeded to say, "He was in the world," the sum total of created being, of which He Himself was the creator; for "the world was made through him" (John 1:10) but this world did not recognize Him.
- B. He had been in it all the time, ordering, controlling, guiding, "upholding all things by the word of his power" (Heb. 1:3), as the one in whom "all things consist" (Col. 1: 17).
- C. But that world, the rational world of humanity, which should have recognized Him because of a divine kinship, "knew him not" (John 1:10).
- D. Paul's affirmation is helpful in understanding this; he says, "the world through its wisdom knew not God" (I Cor. 1:21), and "that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God," for "that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever" (Rom. 1:21, 25).
- E. In a special way He had come unto His own, the Jews, but they had received Him not. But to as many as believed on Him, He had given the power or right to become children of God, children of a spiritual family (John 1:11-13).
- F. And now, as the light that lights every man, He was coming into the world to the Jews who rejected Him and to the Gentiles who in ages past had refused to have Him in their knowledge.
- G. In this statement John is affirming that in His relation to the world He is both its Creator and its Benefactor.

## **VI. Christ's Relation to the Father: Revelation**

- A.** It was this Word, eternal Deity, Creator, and Sustainer of the universe, who in the flesh had now come into the world (John 1:14).
- B.** Here is Deity in the flesh, the manifestation of God in a visible and tangible form, the coming into this world.. He "dwelt" among them.
- C.** Wherefore John says, "we beheld," that is, observed, considered, had occasion to study His glory.
- D.** In the things which he wrote in the remainder of his book, the apostle gives us an opportunity to behold, observe, and study this glory, so that a decision might be reached as to who He is.
- E.** Also, one must determine whether or not the glory manifested in Him is worthy of that which should belong to a divine person such as He claimed to be.
- F.** In the flesh He revealed the Father: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (1:18).
- G.** Men had seen visions and angelic appearances of God; but until the advent of Jesus in the flesh, no man had seen God in person.
- H.** Now "the only begotten Son," He who was with God from the beginning and who was Deity itself, has revealed, interpreted, unfolded God.
- I.** In His relation to God the Father, He is the only begotten Son, the complete and perfect revelation of Him.
- J.** In this He fulfilled the words of the prophets who had fore-declared that He should be "Immanuel"-God with us-(Isaiah 7:14); whose name should be called "Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6, 7).

## **VII. Christ's Relation to Grace: Fullness**

- A.** In Christ men behold not only the glory as of the only begotten from the Father, but we also behold Him as one "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14; 16-17).
- B.** Christ, the Word, is the fullness of Deity, of Godhood. The word *fullness* is used by John and by Paul with the same connotation.
- C.** Paul says, "For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fullness dwell" (Col. 1: 19); and, "in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead (Godhood) bodily, and in him ye are made full (Col. 2:9-10).
- D.** Not only are all the attributes and characteristics of God summed up in Christ, but also Completeness of Godhood itself dwelt in Christ bodily.

## Questions

1. What was the Apostle John's stated purpose for his Gospel?
2. How was the Apostle John able to reveal the contents of his Gospel?
3. Describe the essence of Jesus Christ.
4. When was Jesus Christ created?
5. What is Christ's relationship to the physical world?
6. Describe Christ's relation to the moral world.
7. How is Jesus Christ the "light" of the world?
8. What is the challenge to Jesus Christ as the light of the World?
9. How can light and darkness co-exist?
10. Summarize Christ's relation to humanity.
11. Who controls our world today?
12. Describe the relationship of Jesus Christ with God the Father.
13. What is the concept of "the only begotten son?"
14. Describe the "grace" man receives through Jesus Christ.