

## John 1. 1-14

### (1:1,2)-

A) *Jesus is God*: “There are deep mysteries in these two verses which man has no mind to comprehend and no language to express.” John’s words are simple but deep in meaning. This verse is similar to **Genesis 1:1** (Elohim in the Hebrew which is a compound plural word). John 1:1, 2 takes us back earlier than Genesis 1:1 before recorded time to the pre-existence of Jesus, hence “in the beginning.”

B) *Pre-existence and the nature of the Word*: The Word is Logos in the Greek. John uses Logos “the Word” to appeal to both Jews and Greeks about the preeminence of Jesus. “In the beginning was the Word,” Jesus was in the beginning as the uncreated eternal God without beginning, unrestricted by time. **Revelation 1:8**: “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

1) The word “was” means that He always existed, was existing.

C) *The Triune God*: God is One (**Deuteronomy 6:4**) and within the God-head there exists 3 Persons, this is also known as the Trinity which includes the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Tri-unity of God is beyond human comprehension. We can understand the principle but we cannot understand the perfect unity and relationship. **“Happy is he that can receive the great mystery as a child, without attempting to explain it.”** *Jesus the Word* is co-eternal, co-equal, co-powerful and fully God. **There is plurality in unity, three in the Trinity and yet One God in essence.**

1) *Jesus= the Word*: “The Word” is distinct from the Father and yet One with Him. In other words, the Son of God is distinct in His personhood but not in nature. There remains diversity in the Godhead; Jesus is distinct in person yet eternally united with the Father (Hughes). Jesus is the God-Man, completely God and completely Man. “The Word did not become flesh by changing one nature and taking up another. **Do not divide His persons, two distinct and perfect natures** (J.C. Ryle).” The **Athanasian Creed** states it well: “Christ is God and Man; God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the world, and man of the substance of His mother, born in the world; perfect God and perfect man... who, although He be God and man, yet He is not two but one Christ; one not by conversion of the godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God.”

- “I am what I was, that is God: I was not what I am, that is man: I am now called both, that is both God and man. (Gomarus)”

- “It is rashness to search too far into it. It is piety to believe it. It is life eternal to know it. And we can never have a full comprehension of it, till we come to enjoy it” (Bernard).

D) *John 1:1 and the cults*: A definition of a cult is a group that denies or adds to the Bible as being “once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3).” Cults surround themselves around an individual who holds a non-biblical interpretation of scripture or a so-called “new revelation from God.”

2) *John 1:1 under attack by the cults*: In His very essence, Jesus is God and the cults deny this—every single group. Cult groups find their roots in Gnosticism. It is believed that the Gnostic philosophy began to rise up during the time of John’s writing. They denied the deity of Jesus just as the cults do today: the Mormons say that Jesus is not equal with God only eternal beside God, or essentially God, but not God; the Jehovah Witnesses declare Jesus is a God, not God himself; the Way International group has decided for themselves that Jesus is the Son of God, He is not equal to God; Islam denies that Jesus is God and reduces Him to only a prophet of Allah.

3) *How to recognize a cult*: The cultist will say, “I have new revelation for you. Jesus really isn’t God He is the Son of God but not God. He’s a prophet from God who just speaks for God as a messenger.” We should know the absolute truth: **“if it’s new, it’s not true. And if it’s**

true, it's not new." There are three distinctions of a cult: Deity, Exclusivity, and Authority. If you deny that Jesus is God you are a heretic (1 John 4:2-3).

- Basil said "Those two terms, 'beginning' and 'was' are like two anchors, which the ship of a man's soul may safely ride at, whatever storms of heresy may come. (Basil)"

**(1:3)**

A) *Jesus the creator and sustainer*: Jesus is the Source of all creation. We read of the conversation within the Trinity in **Genesis 1:26**, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to our likeness..." Jesus worked as a carpenter under his father Joseph, but this was not the first time that He was a carpenter. Jesus framed the worlds, hung the stars, designed the

universe and set the rotations of the planets; He brought man into existence; He is the creative source of everything that is.

1) *All things created by Him*: **Colossians 1:15-17; 2:9. Hebrews 1:1-4.**

- "So though there are many gods that are worshipped by different people, there is only one true and living God who is the Creator of all things. That is the God that we worship. There are many people who, the Bible speaks about, worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator. And that is irrational (Chuck Smith)."

**(1:4, 5)**

A) *Jesus our life and light*: Because Jesus is creator God, *all life* comes from Him and *all light* comes from Him. He is the very source and fountain of salvation and life. He is shining as a great light into this dark world upon the hearts of sinful men. He continues to shine and His brightness never fades. No man can be made to see spiritually without the light of Jesus Christ illuminating him "for in Him we live and move and have our being... (**Acts 17:28**)." "And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life (**1 John 5:11-12**)." (John wrote 1, 2, 3 John also along with Revelation).

B) *The exceeding sinfulness of mankind*: Darkness has no relationship with light. **Ephesians 5:8**: "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord." The darkness includes all of those of the world that do not comprehend God because they have exalted their will against Him. If God came as a man to deal with man's problem of sin, how great is the problem of sin? Sin must be far more terrible than what we sometimes think. As it has been said by J.C. Ryle, "If no less than the Eternal God, the Creator and Preserver of all things, could take away the sin of the world, sin must be a far more abominable thing in the sight of God than most men suppose," and, "If Christ is so great, than sin indeed must be sinful" and we have an amazing Savior! There was no other solution for sin other than God personally intervening and purchasing us with "His own blood" (**Acts 20:28**). While man is utterly and completely separated from God since the fall in the Garden of Eden, man is redeemed and brought near only by his Creator saving him.

1) *Light, darkness*: The difference of the tenses of these two verbs in this text is interesting. "Light" is in the present tense "It shineth now as it has **always** shone; it is **still** shining." About the "darkness," the past tense is used: "It has not comprehended the light [no understanding]; it **never** has comprehended it from the first, and does not comprehend it at the present day [never will understand]. (J.C. Ryle)"

**(1:6-8)**

A) *Some clarification*: This John mentioned is not John the author of this book, it is John the Baptist. Whenever you see the name John it means John the Baptist. John the disciple/author and does not mention himself by name but is the unnamed person found in 13:23, 19:26, 20:2, 21:7, 21:24. See *John 21:24*.

B) *The witness*: John was a witness or a testifier of the Lord who had come to give light to men. John the Baptist pointed people to Jesus that all might believe. The gift is offered to all without exception but not all will take it. A minister of the Lord will bring people to God and not to himself! In another sense, John begins to introduce us to key witnesses just as an attorney of law brings before the judge witnesses to testify in favor of his case, “that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established (**Matthew 18:16**).”

C) *John the Baptist- a true minister*: Ministers are not to serve themselves! A true minister is not a mediator between God and man (as the Catholics hold). A faithful minister witnesses or testifies of Jesus! If a minister is not testifying for Jesus ‘the Lamb of God’ than that ministry is not faithful to God! John was a channel that men might have faith in Jesus.

**(1:9)**

A) *To all*: The true light, Jesus Christ, does not show partiality nor is He a respecter of persons. He is true because He is who He says He is unlike false teachers. Jesus to our spiritual man is like the sun to the earth. **Psalm 36:9** “For with You is the fountain of life; In your light we see light.”

**(1:10)**

A) *The world did not know its Creator*: He created the world but the world did not recognize Him. Some have the opinion that this refers to Jesus being in the world invisibly and in other ways before His virgin birth (see Romans 1:20-21).

**(1:11)**

A) *His own did not know Him*: With all of the history (i.e. deliverance from Egypt), types, pictures and symbols of Christ in the Old Testament, His own special people (the Jewish nation) did not want to know Him. The Jews had become comfortable with their religion, which were really human traditions added on to the word of God, so that they did not want to give up their tradition for reality.

**(1:12, 13)**

A) *How great an adoption we have*: John could not get over this fact of adoption, he said in **1 John 3:1**-

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.” By believing on the name of Jesus we are saved. Believing means to trust and put oneself into the hands of Jesus. It’s by grace that we are saved (Ephesians 2:8-9).

B) *Disobedient children*: God receives us as adopted sons and daughters by what Christ has done. Those without the new birth are sons and daughters who “by nature are children of wrath,” and “sons of disobedience (**Ephesians 2:3, 2:2**).” Men and women living in the world apart from Christ are not His children; they must be adopted by faith into the family of God to be apart of the family of God.

B) *Three ways that a man is not born again*: not of blood, nor of the flesh, nor of the will, “but of God.” God alone is the author and finisher of our faith. All are born by blood as they entered the world through their natural mother. Sons and daughters of God are not born of the “will of the flesh,” but of the will of God. God has no grandchildren, only sons and daughter’s who repent, believe and receive and become His children; Grace is not passed from parent to child. No deeds of the flesh, no outward ordinances can make you born again. It’s not of the “will of man” no minister or any other person is able to save you. Only God can give a new heart and a new nature (**Ezekiel 11:19, 20**).

**(1:14)**

A) *He pitched His tent on the earth He created*: The eternal Word dwelt with His people. It would be more literally stated that the Word 'tabernacled' or 'pitched His tent' among us. He put on flesh to live the perfect life and to give the perfect sacrifice. The glory that we see in Jesus is the glory of the Father, to know God you look to Jesus who is fully God who put on flesh to live among His creation.

B) "Beheld His glory" John could be writing here about Jesus' transfiguration which he witnessed with James and John.