

Brief Notes on the First Chapter of John

by John Nelson Darby

The sermon explores the Person of Christ, the revelation of God in Christ, and the nature of man, emphasizing the significance of Christ's unique relationship with God and His character as the only begotten Son of God.

Scripture: John 1:1

Topics: "The Nature of Christ", "Grace and Truth"

Description

John Nelson Darby explores the profound nature of Christ as the Logos, emphasizing that He is the mind of God expressed and the true light that shines upon humanity. He discusses the essential relationship between Christ and man, highlighting that Christ's incarnation as the 'Only Begotten' Son reveals God's grace and truth. Darby contrasts the understanding of God through theology with the necessity of faith to truly know Him, asserting that Christ's coming was not a gradual development of light but the definitive revelation of God. He reflects on the significance of Christ's dual nature as both divine and human, and the implications of His grace and truth for mankind. The sermon concludes with the assertion that seeing God is essential for true comfort and understanding of our relationship with Him.

Transcript

{Words of Help, Vol. 22, 1933, pages 228-9.}

In the beginning was the Word, in Greek, Logos. Logos is the intelligence, and the intelligible-reason, the thing thought. Logos is the mind of God expressed, the expression of what God is. This Christ was on earth, the Logos.

Chapter 1 shows us the Person of Christ and its bearing on man, as revealed, and what was required of man to be received, that is, God is Christ-revealed. We also have what that was which that revelation required from man.

This gospel goes back before Genesis. "Was." Whenever you put it the beginning "was." He "became" flesh. "With God" distinct from God. "All things were made by Him" (egeneto), and John adds, "Without Him was not anything made." Egeneto makes it absolute. "Only Begotten," always so. Similarly we read, "The light shines."

Theology is man's mind working on the truth of God. Nothing but faith puts God in the right place. If I pretend to know anything of the Godhead, in so doing I deny it. You must know the thing before you know

the object. "Why do you not understand My speech; even because you cannot hear My word (8:43). "We have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16) is mind with the intelligence. God sends a messenger, John, who comes and says, "Look at the light," at the sun, but the blind people don't see it. "A light to lighten the Gentiles" is quite different, that is, to manifest them. Chapter 10:1, "If anyone walk in the day, he stumbleth not," that is, if you have got the mind of Christ you will not fall. "Walk in the light" - we are in it.

The current idea is that the light has gradually developed until Christ come. It is not so at all - "the true light now shines."

The full development of man is Antichrist. "The light of everyone" - shining on everyone.

Christ was the Son begotten, not adopted like us. There are two senses in which Christ is Son of God. "He hath raised up Jesus again, as it is written also in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee," Acts 13:33 - "Raised up" is not resurrection. Acts 2:24, "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death" - this is resurrection.

"First Begotten" is in reference to other children; "Only Begotten" is sole, absolute relationship with the Father.

There are three facts in verse 14: "made flesh"; "dwelt among us"; "full of grace and truth." The first part of chap. 1 to verse 18 is what He is essentially, and what man is essentially. "Grace and truth came," not were communicated but came. There was no revelation of God in the law. "What is man" occurs three times in the Old Testament. Ps. 8, "What is man and the Son of man?" - Christ glorified, Job 7, "What is man that Thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment?" - man in discipline; Ps. 144:3, "Lord, what is man, that Thou takest knowledge of him, or the son of man that Thou makest account of him?" - His vengeance looked for.

Ps. 2, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee," is Son of God as born into this world. The meaning of "grace and truth" is, all that God was for man, and all His truth about man. There was all divine grace and truth in the Person of Christ. Verse 18, "No man hath seen God at any time." It would be poor comfort to be in my Father's house, and not see my Father.

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