

# The Prologue of John's Gospel John 1:1-18

by R.A. Torrey

*Jesus Christ is the eternal and divine expression of God, who became flesh and dwelt among us, making it possible for us to know God personally through faith.*

**Scripture:** John 1:1

**Topics:** "The Nature of Christ", "The New Birth"

## Description

R.A. Torrey explores the profound truths of John's Gospel, emphasizing Jesus as the eternal Word of God who was both with God and was God. He highlights the significance of Jesus as the source of life and light for humanity, contrasting the darkness of the world that failed to recognize Him. Torrey discusses the role of John the Baptist as a witness to the Light and the necessity of believing in Jesus to become children of God. The sermon culminates in the revelation of the Word made flesh, showcasing the grace and truth that Jesus embodies, and the transformative power of His incarnation for believers.

## Transcript

### DISCOVERY OF FACTS

1. Jesus the Word of God, vv. 1-3 How far back does this lesson carry us? What do we find back in eternity? What is the noticeable difference between verse 1 and Genesis 1:1? Why is our Lord called "the WORD"? What three facts about the WORD does verse 1 teach us? Is this doctrine found elsewhere? (Col. 1:17; Rev. 22:13). Is Jesus Christ called "God" elsewhere? (Is. 9:6; Ro. 9:5; Titus 2:13, R. V.; 2 Peter 1:1, R. V.; Heb. 1:8, 6). What is the first work of the WORD that is mentioned?

What is meant by the word "by" in verse 3? (See margin R. V.; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2; 11:3; Ps. 33:6). What new idea does the last clause of verse 3 bring in? (Col. 1:17). What comfort is there in the thought that He made us? 2. Jesus the Life and Light of Men, vv. 4, 5 Where is life to be found? (1 John 5:11; John 5:21, 26; 1 Cor. 15:45; 1 John 1:2; John 14:6; 11:25). How then is life to be obtained? (1 John 5:12). What is meant by "and the life was the Light of men"? (1 John 1:2; John 8:12; 9:5; 12:35, 46).

Where did this Light send forth its rays? Where ought we to let our light shine? What was this darkness? To what period of religious history does this refer? How did the darkness receive the light? (R. V.) Why did it not apprehend it? (1 Cor. 2:14; John 3:19, 20). 3. A Man Sent from God to Bear Witness of the Light, vv. 6-13 What means did God use to bring men to appreciate and lay hold of the Light? What is God's usual method in bringing men to appreciate and lay hold of the Light?

Was John the only witness God sent? (John 15:26, 27; 5:36). Upon whom does God bestow that honor to-day? How did John show his appreciation of the honor? (vv. 15, 19, 26, 27, 29, 32-34, 36; 3:34-36). How do you show that you appreciate it? What was God's purpose in sending John? Why does God want all men to believe? (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9). Was John himself the Light? Were there any who were in danger of thinking that he was? Are there any to-day who are in danger of thinking the preacher himself is the light?

What sort of a light was it to which John was to bear witness? How far does that light shed forth its rays? How was the WORD, the Life, the Light treated by men? (vv. 10-13). Where was our Lord prior to His incarnation? Did the world recognize Him? To whom did He come? Who were meant by "His own"? What did they do? Did this hurt Him? Whom did it hurt? Did all reject Him? What did He do for those who received Him? (R. V.) To whom does He give this right to-day? What is it to receive Him?

What is God's definition of "believing on His name"? Who are these men who receive Him? Where will we find the truth about regeneration more fully brought out? (John 3:1-15; James 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23). How many of those who believe are born of God? (See Gal. 3:26). 4. The Word Become Flesh, vv. 14-18 As the WORD was not received in His spiritual presence in the world, what further did He do? What does "become flesh" mean? (Phil. 2:6, 7; 1 John 1:1, 2). What is the literal meaning of the word translated "dwelt" in v. 14? (R.

V. margin). Of what promises was this the realization? What became possible for us through His incarnation? What was the character of His glory? What was John's testimony regarding Him? What was there in Him (v. 16)? What may we do with this fullness? What is meant by "grace for grace"? What was the difference between the mission of Moses and the mission of Jesus? In what sense have men seen God? (Ex. 24:10; Is. 6:1). How did the apostles themselves see God? (John 14:9). If no man has seen God, how may we fully know God? (v. 18, compare John 14:9). CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

## 1. Jesus Christ

### (1). What He is:

Eternal, 1, 15; eternally with God, 1, 12; in the bosom of the Father, 18; superior to Moses: Moses gave law, Jesus Christ incarnates grace and truth, 17; glorious as God, 14; the Life, 4; the true Light, 4, 9; the WORD, 1, 14; the only begotten, 18; God, 1.

### (2). His Work:

Made the world, 10; made all things 3; came into the world, 10; shineth in darkness, 5; lighteth every man coming into the world, 9; came to His own, 11; became incarnate, tabernacled among men, alone brings grace and truth, 14, 17; alone reveals God as Father, 18; alone imparts life, 4; gives to every one who receives Him power to become a child of God, 12; imparts His fullness to believers, grace upon grace, 16.

### (3). How He was received:

The darkness apprehended Him not, 5; the world knew Him not, 10; His own received Him not, 11; received by those born of God, 12, 13; testified to by John, 15; beheld in His glory by believers, 14.

## 2. The Father

Eternal, 2; invisible, 18; begat the Son, 14; revealed by the Son, 18; sent John to witness to the Son, 6; wishes all men to believe, 7.

### 3. The New Birth

#### (1). Its necessity:

Natural man in darkness, apprehends not, 5; knows not, 10; receives not, 11.

#### (2). Its nature:

Not the work of blood or flesh, not of man's will, God's work, 13.

#### (3). Result:

Received Christ, right to be God's children, 12.

### 4. John

#### (1). Inferiority to Jesus:

A man, not God, 1, 6; not the Light, but a witness to the Light, 8; not the Son, but His messenger, 18, 6; not eternal, subordinate to the Son, 15.

#### (2). What he did:

What he was sent to do: bore witness, 7; humbled self, exalted Christ, 15.

#### (3). How he did it:

Earnestly "cried," 15.

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