

Session 1 – The Word Made Flesh

John 1:1-18



How to Use This Study

This series is designed to be experienced in two stages.

- **Personal Study During the Week**

Each participant reads the Scripture and works through the Study Guide before the group meeting.

- **Group Discussion Together**

When the group gathers, the Facilitator and Student Guides help guide conversation, reflection, and prayer based on the material everyone has already explored.

- This format allows the group to move beyond surface discussion and engage the Bible more deeply together.



The Question of the Gospel of John

Each of the four Gospels tells the story of Jesus.

But the Gospel of John focuses on one central question:

Who is Jesus really?

John explains his purpose near the end of the book:

“These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”

John 20:31

The entire Gospel is written so people may recognize who Jesus truly is.



A Different Kind of Beginning

The other Gospels begin in familiar ways.

- Matthew begins with Jesus' family history.
- Mark begins with John the Baptist announcing His ministry.
- Luke begins with the birth of Jesus.

But John begins somewhere very different.

He begins before the world existed.



John 1:1–3

*¹In the beginning the Word already existed.
The Word was with God,
and the Word was God.*

²He existed in the beginning with God.

*³God created everything through him,
and nothing was created except through him.*



The Meaning of “The Word”

John calls Jesus “**the Word.**”

This word carried meaning for both Jewish and Greek audiences.

- For Jewish readers, God’s Word represented His creative power.
- For Greek readers, the “Logos” represented the divine reason that ordered the universe.

John brings these ideas together and declares:

The Word is not an idea.

The Word is a person.



Jesus Is Eternal

John reveals three foundational truths:

- Jesus existed **before creation**
- Jesus existed **with God**
- Jesus **is God**

Jesus is not merely a teacher sent by God.

He is God revealed to humanity.

*“Christ is the visible image of the invisible God.
He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation.”*

Colossians 1:15



The Source of Life

⁴ The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone.

John 1:4

Jesus does not simply teach about life.

He is the source of life itself.

Everything that exists ultimately finds its origin in Him.

*“For through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth.
He made the things we can see and the things we can’t see...
...Everything was created through him and for him.”*

Colossians 1:16



Light in the Darkness

⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.

John 1:5

Throughout Scripture, darkness often represents:

- sin
- confusion
- brokenness
- separation from God

Into this darkness, Jesus comes as light.

Light reveals what darkness hides.



The Witness of John the Baptist

⁶ God sent a man, John the Baptist,⁷ to tell about the light so that everyone might believe because of his testimony. ⁸ John himself was not the light; he was simply a witness to tell about the light.

John 1:6-8

John the Baptist was sent to prepare people for Jesus.

He was not the light himself.

He came **to point people to the light.**

His role reminds us that God's work often includes witnesses who help others recognize the truth.



The Tragedy of Rejection

¹⁰ He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. ¹¹ He came to his own people, and even they rejected him

John 1:10-11

The Creator entered His creation.

Yet many people failed to recognize Him.

This reveals how easily human hearts can overlook God's presence.

How true that is of us still today...

He is present, but not seen...

Overlooked



The Invitation of Faith

¹² ***But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.***

John 1:12

Up to this point John has been describing **who Jesus is**. Now he begins to describe **how people respond to Him**.

Two responses appear throughout the Gospel of John:

- some **reject** Jesus
- others **receive** Him

Receiving Christ means more than simply knowing about Him.

It means trusting who He is and placing our faith in Him.



The Invitation of Faith

¹² But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.

John 1:12

This is one of the most extraordinary promises in Scripture.

Those who receive Christ are not merely forgiven.

- They are given a **new identity**.
- They are welcomed into God's family.

This invitation is not limited to a certain group of people. John emphasizes something remarkable:

**All who receive Him All who believe in His name
are given the right to be called children of God.**

The door into God's family is open to **everyone** who chooses to come to Christ in faith.



A New Identity

Children of God are born:

¹³ They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.

John 1:13

This means our relationship with God does not come from:

- family background
- religious tradition
- personal effort

It comes from **new life given by God.**

Faith begins a spiritual transformation.



The Word Became Flesh

¹⁴ So the Word became flesh and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

John 1:14

This is the heart of the Christian message.

The eternal Word did not remain distant.
God stepped into human history.

Jesus experienced:

- human life
- human suffering
- human weakness
- human struggle

God chose to come near. He knows what it's like to be one of us!



God Dwelling Among Us

*¹⁴ So the Word became flesh and **made his home among us**. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.*

John 1:14

The phrase “made his home among us” carries deep meaning.

The Greek word John uses literally means **“to pitch a tent” or “to tabernacle.”**

- This echoes the Old Testament tabernacle where God's presence lived among His people.
- In Jesus, God's presence is no longer located in a building.

*God's presence is now **a person**.*

Jesus becomes the place where humanity encounters God.



Full of Unfailing Love and Faithfulness

¹⁴ So the Word became flesh and made his home among us. **He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness.** And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

John 1:14

Unfailing Love means God's mercy, compassion, and undeserved grace.

Faithfulness means God's holiness, righteousness, and truth.

Human beings often struggle to hold these two things together. But Jesus embodies both perfectly.

He brings:

- grace to the broken
- truth to the lost
- mercy without abandoning righteousness

In Jesus we see the full character of God.



Seeing the Father

¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God, is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us.

John 1:18

John concludes this opening passage with a profound statement.

For centuries people wondered what God was truly like.

Jesus answers that question.

If we want to understand God's heart, we look at Jesus.

In Jesus we see:

- God's compassion
- God's justice
- God's holiness
- God's love

Jesus reveals the Father.



Reflection Questions

1. What stands out to you most about John's description of Jesus in this passage?
2. Why do you think some people recognized Jesus while others rejected Him?
3. What does it mean for you personally to receive Christ?
4. How does understanding Jesus as the Word made flesh change the way you think about God?



Key Takeaway

John begins his Gospel by revealing something essential.

Jesus is not merely a teacher, prophet, or spiritual leader.

He is:

- the eternal Word
- the source of life
- the light of the world
- God made visible

To know Jesus is to know God.

And this revelation becomes the foundation for everything that follows in the Gospel of John.

