

An In-Depth Book-by-Book Study of the Bible

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

JOHN'S GOSPEL (JOHN 1-11):

ONE WORD,
ONE LIFE,
ONE WAY

PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE
FOR THE DEAF • FALL 2013

LifeWay | Adults

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CONTENTS

John's Gospel: One Word, One Life, One Way John 1:1-11:57



Introduction 6

Unit 1 – The Word from Eternity (John 1:1-3:36) 8

- | | | |
|----------|--------------------------------------|----|
| Sept. 1 | God Revealed (John 1:1-18) | 10 |
| Sept. 8 | Jesus Identified (John 1:19-51) | 17 |
| Sept. 15 | Authority Acknowledged (John 2:1-25) | 24 |
| Sept. 22 | Salvation Offered (John 3:1-36) | 31 |

Unit 2 – The Word with Power (John 4:1-6:71) 38

- | | | |
|----------|---------------------------------------|----|
| Sept. 29 | The Power to Give Life (John 4:1-38) | 40 |
| Oct. 6 | The Power to Save (John 4:39-54)* | 47 |
| Oct. 13 | The Power to Heal (John 5:1-47) | 54 |
| Oct. 20 | The Power to Meet Needs (John 6:1-71) | 61 |

Unit 3 – The Word for Challenging Situations (John 7:1-11:57) 68

- | | | |
|---------|---|----|
| Oct. 27 | Asking Questions About Jesus? (John 7:1-52) | 70 |
| Nov. 3 | Wondering About Judgment? (John 7:53-8:59) | 77 |
| Nov. 10 | Doubting Jesus' Power? (John 9:1-41) | 84 |
| Nov. 17 | Feeling Insecure? (John 10:1-42) | 91 |
| Nov. 24 | Dealing with Death? (John 11:1-57) | 98 |

FEATURES

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Accepting Christ? | 4 |
| How to Use the Lessons? | 5 |
| Answers to Study Questions | 105 |
| Vocabulary Guide | 108 |
| Daily Bible Readings | 111 |
| Leader Guide | 114 |

* Evangelistic Lesson



UNIT



THE WORD FROM ETERNITY

Week of September 1, 2013



Background Study Verses:

John 1:1-18

Lesson Material:

John 1:1-5,9-14,16-18

Bible Truth

Jesus Christ is the Word of God. He is God. And He is the One who reveals God.

The title of this lesson is “God Revealed.” **Reveal** means to show or make something become visible if it was hidden or unknown to other people. For example, one Deaf school recently hired a new superintendent. Everyone wanted to know who the new superintendent was. The school finally announced, or revealed, the new superintendent’s name. Everyone had many questions about the new superintendent. Everyone wanted to meet this person. The new superintendent was from another state. One retired teacher, Jim, knew this new superintendent and answered many questions. He revealed the information to the people and they were happy Jim knew the answers.

Jesus did the same for us. Jesus came to earth to tell us about God. Jesus wanted us to know God. He shared many things about God. He showed what God is like.

What These Verses Tell Us

1. **Recognize the Word (John 1:1-5)** – Jesus Christ is the Word. The Word is God. Jesus created everything. The Word gives life and light.
2. **Welcome the Light (1:9-14)** – Jesus became a man and came to earth. Some people did not believe Jesus. Other people did believe Jesus and became God's children.
3. **Experience the Revelation (1:16-18)** – Jesus was full of **grace** and truth. Jesus showed us what God is like.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Who was the Word?
2. Jesus was full of grace and _____.
3. Who was Jesus compared to?
4. Which is true about Jesus?
5. What did Jesus do in **the beginning**?

Today's Lesson

The first four books of the New Testament are called the **Gospels**. Four men wrote the good news about Jesus. That is what the word Gospel means – the good news about Jesus. Each of the four Gospel writers wrote many stories about Jesus, but not the same stories. Matthew, Mark, and Luke have many of the same stories. These three Gospels are called the **synoptic** Gospels. The word synoptic is a Greek word that means the same. These three Gospels were written about the same time; about ten to fifteen years after the resurrection. The Gospel of John has many stories not told by Matthew, Mark, and Luke. John wrote his Gospel more than twenty years later than the other gospel writers. All the apostles except John had died. John wrote his Gospel to show Jesus is God. Jesus came to earth to show who God is. John wanted to prove Jesus is God. John wanted people to believe in Jesus as God. This first chapter will help you understand some truths about Jesus.

1. Recognize the Word (John 1:1-5)

- 1 In the beginning there was the Word. The Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2 He was with God in the beginning.
- 3 All things were made by him, and nothing was made without him.
- 4 In him there was life, and that life was the light of all people.
- 5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overpowered it.

Verse 1. The Word here is Jesus. John called Jesus The Word. Why did John give Jesus that name? John wanted to show Jesus came as the message from God. Jesus Himself is the message (or Word). Hearing people communicate using spoken words. Deaf people communicate using signs. We could call Jesus the “Sign.” Jesus brought a message from God. John started at the “beginning.” Where else in the Bible does it say, “In the beginning?” The first verse in Genesis opens with “In the beginning God.” In his Gospel, John said, “In the beginning there was the Word.” John used the same words on purpose. John wanted to show how Jesus was involved in the beginning with God. “The beginning” meant even before time began, before the creation of the world. John wanted his readers to understand Jesus is God. Jesus was back in the beginning, before time began. Only God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – was there at the beginning, before the Creation. No one else was there at the beginning.

**ONLY GOD – THE FATHER,
THE SON, AND THE HOLY
SPIRIT – WAS THERE AT THE
BEGINNING, BEFORE THE
CREATION.**

Jesus alive before He was born? Jesus was God (the Son) and was with God (the Father and the Holy Spirit) in the beginning.

Verse 3. Jesus made everything in the world. Jesus gave life to everything. All Creation, including humans, plants, and animals, have life through Jesus. Did anything start breathing by itself? No. Jesus gave life to people, trees, flowers, dogs, horses, and bugs. Everyone owes his life to Jesus. Jesus has all power. He used that power to make the world and everything in it.

Verse 4. Jesus is the life of the world. The world cannot live without Jesus. Jesus is also the light of the world. The world would be in darkness without Jesus. Jesus came to give both life and light. He wanted people to live and to have light. Life and light are connected. How? Think of the sun. The sun gives light. That light helps plants to grow. If the sun stopped shining, everything on earth would die. Jesus is the same as the sun. Jesus is the light. Jesus is the creator and gave everyone physical life. Now Jesus came to give spiritual life. He wants everyone to live spiritually.

Verse 5. Jesus is the light shining in the darkness. Jesus came to earth as the light. Jesus’ coming was the same as turning on a light in a dark room. When you turn on a light switch, the light always shines. It never stays dark (unless the bulb is broken or the electricity has gone out). Darkness

Verse 2. Jesus was with God in the beginning. Jesus is God. John wanted to make this very clear. John emphasized this. Why? John did not want people to be confused. Jesus was born in Bethlehem. John wanted people to understand Jesus was alive before He was born in Bethlehem. That would confuse many people. How was

never beats the light. Light always wins over darkness. Jesus is Light. He is stronger than the darkness in the world. Jesus changes the darkness in our lives to light. If we believe in Jesus, He brings light into our dark hearts. As we walk in Jesus' light, we will grow spiritually. We will have spiritual life. People's eyes show if they walk in light or in darkness. If people are full of sin, their eyes will show darkness. If people are full of Jesus, their eyes will show light.

2. Welcome the Light (1:9-14)

- 9 The true Light that gives light to all was coming into the world!
- 10 The Word was in the world, and the world was made by him, but the world did not know him.
- 11 He came to the world that was his own, but his own people did not accept him.
- 12 But to all who did accept him and believe in him he gave the right to become children of God.
- 13 They did not become his children in any human way - by any human parents or human desire. They were born of God.
- 14 The Word became a human and lived among us. We saw his glory - the glory that belongs to the only Son of the Father - and he was full of grace and truth

Verse 9. Jesus, as Light, came into the world. John was excited to announce Jesus came to earth. Jesus brought light to the world. People will not need to live in darkness anymore.

Light and darkness here do not refer to day and night. Light and darkness mean spiritual light and spiritual darkness. Spiritual light means people can see spiritually. They are Christians. They are no longer blind. Spiritual darkness means people cannot see and understand spiritual things. People who cannot see spiritually are dead spiritually.

Verse 10. "The Word was in the world." The Word is Jesus. The world is the people in the world. Jesus came from heaven to live among people. Jesus created the world, but people did not know Jesus as the Creator. People thought Jesus was a normal person. They did not understand Jesus was God and came to live with people.

Verse 11. Jesus came to earth to live, but the people on earth did not accept Jesus. God reached down to us people. He wanted to have a relationship with us. He made the first move toward us, but we turned

SPIRITUAL LIGHT
MEANS PEOPLE CAN SEE
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away from Him. People sinned against God. Sin made us enemies with God, but God wants peace. Jesus came to make peace with people, but people did not want Jesus. If people made peace with Jesus, they would have to give up their sins. They chose their sins instead of Jesus.

Verse 12. Some people did accept, or believe in Jesus. He made them children of God. Who became children of God? The people who believed in Jesus. These people were happy because Jesus came. These people welcomed Jesus and were happy. They became God's children.

Verse 13. How did these people become God's children? Was it because they were born into Jewish families? Was it because of their parents' decision to have children? No. People became God's children through a spiritual birth. God made them His children.

Verse 14. This verse has three powerful truths in it. These truths are important to Christians. The first important truth is this: the Word, God, became human. The Word, Jesus, became one of us. The eternal God put on a human body and became fully human. The second important truth is this: Jesus lived among us. The Greek word used in this verse for live means to pitch a tent. Jesus came to live among us for a short time. Heaven was His home. Jesus came to earth for about 33 years. He came. Why? So we would see and know God. The third important truth is this - Jesus was full of grace and truth. Jesus showed the glory of God. Jesus was fully God and fully human. Jesus showed us how God was full of grace. What does grace mean? God's grace means God is loving and kind. We often have a wrong concept of God. Some people may think God is mean, strict, and quick to punish sin. Jesus came to show how God is full of love. God is kind and loving toward us. Jesus was also full of truth. Jesus' message from God was true. Don and Debbie are a Deaf couple who like to go camping. Every fall they pack up their tent and camping supplies. They go camping with their son and a group of their Deaf friends. Is the campground their home? No. The campground is a **temporary** place where they stay. Jesus did the same. He came to earth to "camp out" for a short while. He wanted to be with us, just like Don and Debbie wanted to camp with their Deaf friends. Wow! The Creator of the universe wanted to come down from heaven and camp out with us! This is what Jesus did.

3. Experience the Revelation (1:16-18)

- 16 Because he was full of grace and truth, from him we all received one gift after another.
- 17 The law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
- 18 No one has ever seen God. But God the only Son is very close to the Father, and he has shown us what God is like.

The revelation is God shown, or **revealed**, to people. What does it mean to “experience the revelation?” It means what we learn about God becomes real to us. We believe in Jesus and become God’s children.

Verse 16. Jesus is full of grace and truth. Grace is God’s goodness to us. God is good. Jesus shows God’s goodness and love to all people. Jesus blessed everyone. Jesus blessed us and He gave many gifts to us. What did Jesus give us? Jesus gave us salvation. Jesus gave us homes, clothes, food, family, friends, and health. There are many more blessings Jesus has given to us. What is truth? Truth is Jesus’ message from God. Jesus’ message was true. What was this message? Jesus showed people how God is holy. God hates sin. God wants to be friends with people. God sent Jesus to die for our sins. Now, people can be friends with God. Jesus came to tell people this truth.

Verse 17. The Law and Moses means the Old Testament time. Grace and truth and Jesus Christ mean a new start, a new time in history. The Old Testament is finished. Now God is working in a new time in history through His Son, Jesus. Before our present calendar was developed, time was measured by each nation, usually by the year a king began his reign. In A.D. 525 a man named Dionysius suggested a calendar starting with the birth of Jesus and counting forward or backward from that. This is how we have B.C. (before Christ) and A.D.

(Latin words anno domini, meaning in the year of our Lord). That calendar has been revised several times. The calendar was developed to show this most important event in the history of the world. Jesus came and changed our world.

PEOPLE NOW KNOW
WHAT GOD IS LIKE. JESUS
SHOWED PEOPLE WHAT
GOD IS LIKE.

Verse 18. Nobody has seen God. Jesus came to earth to show God to people. People now know what God is like. Jesus showed people what God is like. Tom is a Deaf father. His son, Bobby, is in elementary school. Bobby’s teacher asked the students if they wanted to bring their parents to school for “show and tell.” Bobby wanted his classmates to meet his Deaf father. Bobby wanted to show his class how his father was Deaf and a welder. Bobby was excited when his father went to school with him. Tom taught the class some basic signs. He showed pictures of things he welded. Bobby was happy when his friends met his dad. Jesus came to earth and showed God to us. Jesus is God. When Jesus did things, people saw how God would do things. Jesus was happy to help us understand God better.

What About You?

What is your response to Jesus when you feel He is calling you to follow Him?

Have you accepted Jesus as the Creator of everything and your Savior?

Is Jesus the Lord (ruler) of your life?

Do you study your Bible to learn more about Jesus?

Do you know God like you know your best friend?

How can you show Jesus and God to the people around you?

What are some ways people can see Jesus in you?

Can your family, friends, and co-workers see Jesus in you?

Applying the Lesson

Make a list of what Jesus showed us about God. Think about what you remember from reading the four Gospels. Examples include: God loves people. God heals people. God calms the storm.

Share your list with your Bible study class.

You can use this list as a witnessing tool with your friends. You can ask them, "Hey, did you know _____ about Jesus?" For example, "Did you know Jesus created the world?" "Did you know Jesus has blessed us in many ways?"

A verse to remember: "He (Jesus) has shown us what God is like" (John 1:18).

EXPLORE
THE BIBLE

BIBLE STUDIES FOR THE DEAF
LEADER

FALL 2013 *John*



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CONTENTS

Introduction	116
--------------------	-----

UNIT 1 - The Word from Eternity (John 1:1-3:36).....	118
---	-----

WEEK OF

Sept. 1 God Revealed (John 1:1-18)	119
Sept. 8 Jesus Identified (John 1:19-51)	121
Sept. 15 Authority Acknowledged (John 2:1-25)	123
Sept. 22 Salvation Offered (John 3:1-36).....	125

UNIT 2 -The Word with Power (John 4:1-6:71).....	127
---	-----

WEEK OF

Sept. 29 The Power to Give Life (John 4:1-38)	128
Oct. 6 The Power to Save (John 4:39-54)*.....	130
Oct. 13 The Power to Heal (John 5:1-47)	132
Oct. 20 The Power to Meet Needs (John 6:1-71).....	134

UNIT 3 -The Word for Challenging Situations (John 7:1-11:57) .	136
---	-----

WEEK OF

Oct. 27 Asking Questions About Jesus? (John 7:1-52)	137
Nov. 3 Wondering About Judgment? (John 7:53-8:59)	139
Nov. 10 Doubting Jesus' Power? (John 9:1-41).....	141
Nov. 17 Feeling Insecure? (John 10:1-42).....	143
Nov. 24 Dealing with Death? (John 11:1-57).....	145

* Easter Evangelistic Lesson

Introduction

John

One Word, One Life, One Way

In this quarter we will look at chapters 1-11 of the Gospel of John. Next quarter we will complete the gospel and study chapters 12-17.

Most Bible scholars agree that John the apostle was the author of this Gospel. He was a son of the fisherman named Zebedee and the brother of James (Mark 1:19-20). The author never uses his name, but often refers to himself as “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23, 19:26, 20:2, 21:7, and 21:20).

The author said he was an eyewitness of the ministry of Jesus (John 19:35 and 21:24-25). He told what he learned after spending three years with Jesus. He said the same thing in 1 John 1:1, “We write you now about what has always existed, which we have heard, we have seen with our own eyes, we have looked at, and we have touched with our hands.”

John wrote his Gospel at some time between A.D. 85 and 100, or about sixty years after the resurrection. This was several years after Matthew, Mark, and Luke wrote their Gospels. John was a very old man by that time. During the sixty years after the resurrection, John preached and taught in Ephesus, except for about two years when the Roman emperor banished him to the Isle of Patmos.

And yet, John admits he has not told everything about who Jesus was and what He did. He said if everything was written, there would not be enough room in all the world to hold the books!

During this same period of time, during his last ten to fifteen years of his life, John also wrote the three brief letters and the Book of Revelation, possibly in that order.

The Gospel of John varies from the other three Gospels in many ways, including how he presents the style and content of Jesus’ teaching. More than 90% of the writing in John’s Gospel is not found in either of the other three Gospels. John often gave the chronological order of events, such as “the next day,” (John 1:29, 35, 43). He also gave more attention to places and cities than the other Gospel writers, such as “Bethany on the other side of the river” (John 1:28) or “Cana in Galilee” (John 2:1). He gave specific numbers of things, such as “six stone water jars” (John 2:6), “100 yards” (John 21:8), and “153 fish” (John 21:11).

By the style of their writings, scholars believe Matthew wrote primarily for Jewish readers, while Mark and Luke wrote for Gentile readers. John seems to have written for both Jews and Gentiles. He gave detailed explanations of Jewish custom for Gentile readers, but presented Jesus as the Jewish Messiah, the Son of God.

Unit 1

The Word From Eternity

John 1:1-3:36

- » As you start this new unit, help the class get an overview of the quarter. Use the material in the introduction to the quarter, above, and from the pupil's material. Write on the board the theme for the quarter: "John's Gospel: One Word, One Life, One Way." You may want to make a poster with a large "1" and the words "WORD," "LIFE" and "WAY."
- » Point out the three units for this quarter. Then focus on the title for this first unit, "The Word from Eternity." This was John's purpose in the early part of his Gospel, to show how Jesus was the eternal Son of God.
- » As you prepare to teach, read the Scripture text several times. Look for special verses that can be applied to your Bible class. Look for opportunities to make assignments for class members to prepare and present to the class. Make use of online resources listed in Helps for the Teacher at the beginning of this Leader Guide. Consider what method will help you teach this lesson best. See the discussion of methods in Helps for the Teacher.
- » At the beginning of each lesson, give a brief summary of the lesson to be studied that week. Encourage your class to read all the Background Study Verses and not just the verses listed in the lesson material. From time to time it may be helpful to present the Scripture using the The Bible: ASL Version – The New Testament, available from Let's Sign (www.letssignllc.com)
- » The four lessons lead up to September 22, ending with John 3:16. This is the evangelistic lesson for this quarter. Be prepared to have some class members give their testimony of their salvation experience. Offer to talk privately with any unsaved person in the class, or go with them to talk with the pastor. Ask your most mature Christians to join you in prayer during these four weeks, that the lost persons will be ready to trust Jesus.

Meet the Writer

George Joslin became involved in ministry with Deaf people in California in 1957. He served as a missionary to the Deaf with the Baptist Home Mission Board (now the North American Mission Board) for seventeen years in California, Texas, and Virginia. George is now retired and lives in Springfield, Missouri. After retirement, he and his wife, Lorene, served eighteen months with the International Mission Board helping to start a Deaf church in Ecuador, South America. George is currently active in the Missouri Baptist Conference of the Deaf. He has been writing for LifeWay since 2001.

God Revealed

Background Study Outline

- 1. Recognize the Word
(John 1:1-5)**
- 2. Welcome the Light
(1:6-15)**
- 3. Experience the Revelation (1:16-18)**

Lesson Material

- 1. Recognize the Word
(John 1:1-5)**
- 2. Welcome the Light
(1:9-14)**
- 3. Experience the Revelation (1:16-18)**

Bible Truth

Jesus Christ is the Word of God. He is God. And He is the One who reveals God.

The Word

John 1:1

John wrote his Gospel in the Greek language. His readers were both Jews and Gentiles. Most of the Jews understood Greek. The Gentiles understood Greek. Greek was the language used in business in New Testament times. The Greek word **logos** is translated **word** in these verses. The word **logos** has a history that reaches back 500 years before John's Gospel. Philosophers used that word to represent the Hebrew word **Yahweh**. It was not a new idea to the people reading John's Gospel. The Hebrew word was **dabar**. In the Old Testament the words, "God spoke," or "God said" refer to God in action in creation and deliverance of His people.

With the use of the word **Logos**, John revealed Christ's deity to both Jews and Greeks. John presented Jesus as the **Logos**, "**The Word**." John used the **logos** when he wrote about the person of Christ and His message. The word **the** makes it very specific, not just a word but the word.

The book of Hebrews begins with words similar to the beginning of John's Gospel. "In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets many times and in many different ways. But now in these last days God has spoken to us through His Son. God has chosen His Son to own all things, and through Him He made the world." (Heb. 1:1-2).

STEP ONE – OVERVIEW

- You have so much information to present to your class this week, you will probably want to use the lecture method. After you present each section, encourage discussion, but watch your time so you can cover all of this material. It is the foundation for all the lessons to come this quarter.
- Review the Unit Introduction above, re: introducing the lessons for the quarter. We will study the Gospel of John for the next two quarters (six months).
- The title and theme of today's lesson is "God Revealed." Discuss the meaning of revealed and appropriate signs for this concept. Note the connection with *revelation* and the *Book of Revelation* John wrote a short time later. John wanted his readers to know who Jesus was.

STEP TWO – RECOGNIZE THE WORD (JOHN 1:1-5)

- Make the lesson come alive! Ask someone ahead of time to discuss The Word from "Dig Deeper," above, and other resources from the church library. The use of that title for Jesus was very important to John.
- It is important for us to know more about Jesus, our Savior. We honor Him by learning more about Him as The Word. He is the eternal God.

STEP THREE – WELCOME THE LIGHT (1:9-14)

- Note the difference between "light to all" in verse 9, and "all who did accept Him" in verse 12. The light is available to all, but only those who accept Jesus have eternal life.
- Use the light switch in your room as an object lesson. It is available to all (verse 9), but only those who use it receive its light (verse 12).

STEP FOUR – EXPERIENCE THE REVELATION (1:16-18)

- Ask someone to sign verses 17 and 18. Note the difference between Moses and Jesus and the reference to God the Son and God the Father. John identifies Jesus as God.

STEP FIVE - CONCLUSION

- Review the lesson using "What About You?" in the pupil material. Ask each one to think seriously about each of these questions. Ask the class to sign together the "verse to remember (John 1:18)." Or, ask someone ahead of time to sign the hymn, "More About Jesus."
- So What? Ask class members what they have learned. Does this lesson have meaning for them today? Encourage discussion. Offer to talk with anyone later to help them understand these great truths from John's Gospel.