

John  
1:1-2

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.  
<sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God.*

*I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.*

- C.S. Lewis in *Mere Christianity*

John's Prologue, verses 1-18, summarizes how Jesus as the "Word" was with God in the very beginning but came into the sphere of time, space, history and tangibility.

This explains how God's Son became the Jesus of history so that God's glory and grace (holiness and mercy) might be uniquely, simultaneously disclosed and experienced.

### **First: In the beginning was the Word**

This statement does not refer to a start but to an infinite state.

#### a) The beginning

This 'beginning' is 'arche' = source or origin of everything (v 3).

There are 4 'beginnings' in the Bible:

1. - The beginning of creation

Genesis 1:1 – *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth*

2. - The beginning of the incarnation

1 John 1:1 - *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life*

### 3. – The beginning of each Gospel

- Matthew 1:1 – *The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ*
- Mark 1:1 - *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God*
- Luke 1:1-2 - *Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, <sup>2</sup> just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us,*
- John 1:1 – *In the beginning was the Word...*

### 4. - The beginning without beginning. John 1:1

John's gospel goes back further, before the beginning of everything to Jesus who is the beginning of everything

*Colossians 1:16 - For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*

Jesus is the hub that holds the wheel together. Everything that exists originates in him and radiates from him; government, family, education, medicine, economics, business, relationships – absolutely everything.

More than once, (Is 28:16; Eph 2:20; 1 Ptr 2:6-7, etc), Jesus is called the cornerstone.

There are two ways to look at this:

- a) as a stone in the corner or
- b) the center stone in an archway.

Either way, if you remove Jesus from the structure, everything else falls.

The world may opt to do this, but we, the church, cannot –

*Ephesians 2:19-22 - So then you are no longer strangers and aliens,<sup>[d]</sup> but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, <sup>21</sup> in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup> In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.*

Without Christ at the center of the church corporately or your life individually, our existence lacks meaning, value and purpose.

We cannot, individually or as a congregation, live as though Jesus doesn't exist or that he isn't who he is. To do so is devastating.

Jesus is the hub of our wheel and our 'North' on the compass.

Our church practices and our personal attitudes and behaviors are all determined by Jesus.

- *Justice, mercy and humility* are each defined by conformity to Jesus.
- *Righteousness/sanctification and sin* are each defined by conformity to Jesus.
- *Worldliness* is defined by conformity to Jesus

And, we don't have to wonder about these things because Jesus, who was from the beginning, with the Father and Spirit, has manifested himself as the Word; in other words, He has revealed himself and spoken.

*God's 'Word' in the Old Testament is his powerful self-expression in creation, revelation and salvation, and the personification of that 'Word' makes it suitable for John to apply it as the title God's ultimate self-disclosure, the person of his own Son.*

D.A. Carson in *The Gospel of John*

Everything God did in the OT is Jesus in the NT

So much so that by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century, '*arche*'/*beginning*, was a title for Jesus.

#### b) The Word

1. - Heraclitus – The Constant behind change
2. - Plato – An argument from reason
3. - Stoics – The active reason that pervades and animates the universe
4. - Philo (Greek Jew) – an intermediary divine being
5. - John – Reason & Discourse – The 'reason' behind everything that exists

Jesus is the "Word" of God who speaks after more than 400 years of silence.

Hebrews 1:1 - *Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son,*

## Second: Jesus is...

### a) Eternally God

*Was* = each time it is used in these verses, it is in the imperfect tense. Not past or future but present or ongoing / timeless.

*Was* = to, toward or with / face-to-face

The 'Word' did not have a beginning. It does not have an end. It is eternal.

John Phillips – “We must go back to a dateless past” but in fact, God has no past. He is eternally present.

“Jehovah” = YHWH / the proper name of God in the Hebrew Bible / no vowels in Hebrew. ( יהוה )  
vs יהוה )

Some versions of the Bible translate it as “Yahweh” or “Jehovah”; most translate it as “LORD” (all capital letters).

The name *Yahweh* refers to God’s self-existence. *Yahweh* is linked to how God described Himself in Exodus 3:14, as “I AM WHO I AM.”

ILL – We often talk about having ‘eternal’ life, but this is not life, like God’s. God’s life has neither beginning or end. Our ‘eternal’ lives have a beginning but no end.

### b) Equally God

*“The word was God” = theos en ho logos*

The OT provides us with glimpses of this truth.

Genesis 1:1 – *In the beginning Elohim created...*

Elohim = grammatically plural rather than singular. “im” = plural in Hebrew.

*Eloah / Eloh* = singular

Is this polytheism, many gods? No.

Deuteronomy 6:4 - *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.*

Deuteronomy 6:4 - "Sh'ma, Yisra'el! ADONAI Eloheinu, ADONAI echad = *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.*

John predicates his entire Gospel on this sentence. He intends for the whole of his Gospel to be read in the light of that verse. The deeds and words of Jesus are the deeds and words of God.

### c) Essentially God

Jesus is what God is in nature, personality and person. Jesus is all that God is. Whatever God is, says or can do, Jesus is, says and can do.

*V 2 - He was in the beginning with God.*

Vs 1-2

*Word, Word, God, Word, God, God*

And as amazing as all of that is, He is now, **with us**.

You know the story. You know it from beginning to end, from Genesis to Revelation. It has always been God's desire to live among his people and he has always found a way to "tabernacle" among us.

What God promised in the OT – *"She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel (which means, 'God is with us...') (Is 7:14)*

He has provided in the NT – *"And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn" (Lk 2:7).*

John 1:14 - *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

John 1:18 - *No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.*

John 8:58 - *Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."*

John 14:9 - *Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.*

John 10:30 - *I and the Father are one.*

Colossians 2:9 - *For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily,*

Hebrews 1:3 - *He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature,*

**Conclusion:**

Romans 8:32 - *He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?*

*How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word!  
What more can He say than to you He hath said,  
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?*

**Application:**

How does knowing that Jesus is God, and that he has come to earth, experienced my life and overcome sin's curse by his resurrection, help me with

- a) Sorrow -
- b) Hope -
- c) Waiting –

What Scriptures could you find to support each of these claims?