

Slide Gospel According to John

Sermon #2

The Word

Slide A survey of Discipleship Journal readers ranked areas of greatest spiritual challenge:

1. Materialism
2. Pride
3. Self-centeredness
4. Laziness
5. (Tie) Anger/Bitterness - 5. (Tie) Sexual lust
6. Envy
7. Gluttony
8. Lying

Slide Survey respondents noted temptations were more difficult to deal with when...

- they had neglected their time with God (81 percent)
- when they were physically tired (57 percent) **Blank**

The Apostle Paul, the Beloved, is going to deal with these common problems and temptations and much more. However, it is your responsibility to do the things that puts on your spiritual armor to daily deal with the world.

Slide The same survey showed resisting temptation was better when one -

- Prayed (84 percent)
- Avoided compromising situations (76 percent)
- Studied the Bible (66 percent)
- Is accountable to someone (52 percent).

Keep these simple truths in mind as we work through our study this morning.

Slide My beloved brothers and sisters follow me in your bibles as I read the opening of the Gospel according to John. Please open you Bibles to John chapter one verse one. Before I begin reading I am looking at my Bible and I am looking out and seeing many bibles. It strikes my mind and my heart and I am deeply moved. We hold the very Word of God almighty in our hands; the words of life, words that changed the lives of the writers and everyone who has taken time to study what God wants

mankind to know about Him and what God wants us to know that He expects from us. Isn't it truly amazing - cherish what the most holy God has given each one of us. The Bible you hold is precious.

Let me pray for our study of His Word this morning.

It is always good and proper to begin at the beginning. John chapter 1, verse 1, [“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.²He was in the beginning with God.”](#) The belief in the deity of Jesus as the Christ, as the Messiah is an essential tenet of the Christian faith. Many during His ministry here on earth knew Jesus, some thought of Him as an excellent teacher or as a prophet. But knowing Jesus the person does not mean they knew Jesus as God incarnate. There is a difference between knowing Jesus and believing in Jesus as the Christ, and that difference is nothing less than damnation or salvation, and these two destinations are as eternal as Jesus is. There are some major differences between John's gospel and the other three. Matthew writes showing Jesus as the long awaited Jewish Messiah. Mark's theme was to show Jesus as the servant sent by God for mankind's salvation. Luke deals with Jesus' humanity. John's goal is to reveal Jesus as the eternal, preexisting Son of God who became man to reveal God the Father. About 90% of John's gospel cannot be found in the other 3 synoptic gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. The Gospel according to John is the only gospel to clearly state the reason or purpose that the author is writing it. John tells us his purpose in chapter 20 beginning in verse 30, [Slide](#) [“Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book;³¹but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.”](#) [Blank](#) What John states in the first two verses that we are studying this morning he will follow-up for the next

21 chapters to prove beyond a shadow of doubt the truth found in verses 1 and 2. A. W. Pink, a great student of the scriptures said, **Slide** “In this book we are shown that the one who was heralded by angels to the Bethlehem shepherds, who walked this earth for thirty-three years, who was crucified at Calvary, who rose in triumph from the grave, and who forty days later departed from the scenes, was none other the Lord of Glory. **Slide** The evidence for this is overwhelming, the proofs almost without number, and the effect of contemplating them must be to bow our hearts in worship before ‘the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ’ ^(Titus 2:13).” **Blank** My dear beloved if there are any here who think of Jesus as just a good man; then as we spend the next year or more in our study the Gospel according to John, you will find it was especially written to show you Jesus is God, the only holy God. For the young people here who are working to make heads or tails of this life and are seeking to understand what life is about, this Gospel is for you. For those whose faith has cooled, this Gospel will reignite your heart’s passion for Jesus as Lord and Savior. I ask each of us to look deep into our heart, mind and soul, and ask ourself - who do we believe Jesus was and is?

Back to our passage of study, in verse 1 John says, “In the beginning.” The Greek word **Slide** ἀρχή “*archē*” (**ar-khay**) or “beginning” can mean source or origin as it is used in Colossians chapter 1. It can mean rule, authority or ruler as found in Luke chapter 12. But, here it means the “beginning” as depicted in Genesis 1:1, **Slide** “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Jesus the Christ, God the Son, the second Person of the Triune Godhead was already in existence when the heavens and the earth were created. **Blank** God who has revealed Himself to man in 3 personalities; God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit is NOT a created being, but has existed from eternity past and will continue for all eternity in the

future. We as mankind are bound by time and space, but God is not. Since time began when the physical universe was created, whatever existed before this creation is eternal without time and the only One that existed before creation was God, God the Creator has no beginning and no end.

Sometimes small words have great impact on meaning. Verse 1 begins with “In the beginning was the Word...” The imperfect tense of the verb **Slide** εἶμι “*eimi*” (i-mee) translated as “was” is describing continuous action in the past and by its use, it then reinforces the eternal nature of the Word. He, the Word or Jesus was in existence before the beginning. This brings us to the final word of John’s opening, 6 words with great impact and meaning, “In the beginning was the Word...” Word in the Greek is **Slide** “*logos*” λόγος (**log’-os**) this word had a depth of meaning to both Jews and Greeks. To Greek philosophers *logos* represented the abstract principle of *reason* and *order* in the universe. To the Greeks *logos* was the impersonal creative source of wisdom. The word *logos* then represented to the Greeks a prime principle or source of the universe. John uses this word, *logos* and its concept to relate to the Greeks the person of Jesus as the **personal** source of creation of the universe and man. John ties the impersonal Greek thought of the universe and wisdom with the new concept of Jesus as the personal source or creator of the universe who possesses all wisdom. James Boyce Montgomery said it this way, **Slide** “This means that everything that can be said about God the Father can be said about God the Son.” Creation did not happen without the different personalities of God and yet, God is One. The word *logos* was not just a Greek concept, but it had great meaning for Jews as well. **Blank**

The Word or *logos* of the Lord also had a significant Old Testament meaning to the Jews. The “Word” of the Lord meant to Jews the very expression of God’s divine power and wisdom. It was by God’s “Word” that He gave the Abrahamic covenant,

Slide “After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, ‘Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great.’” (Genesis 15:1) It was by the “Word” of God that the nation of Israel received the Ten Commandments,

Slide “Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice and said, ‘**All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do!**’” (Exodus 24:3) The examples in the Old Testament of; revelation, law, commandments and instruction coming in the form of the “**Word of the LORD**” are numerous. **Blank** John’s use of the word “logos” had great meaning for both Greeks and Jews. To say that the Word is the source of the universe and not just the stars and heaven, but all, all that is created originated by the very Word of God. John a little later in his gospel reveals that the Word, who is God, is also Jesus. To say Jesus is God is to say we can know eternal truth, we can know God because of Jesus. It also means without Jesus we cannot truly know God. Then as the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ is both God revealed and God’s final revelation to mankind. Paul says in Hebrews, **Slide** “¹God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, ²in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.” God the Father is revealed to mankind through God the Son, Jesus the Christ. Even the disciples did not always understand God the Father and Jesus are One. One example of this is found later in the Gospel according to John. Since you have your bibles open to this wonderful gospel written by John, please turn to chapter 14. Follow along as I read beginning in verse 1 where Jesus is comforting His disciples about His going away, **Slide** ¹“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. ²In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may

be also. ⁴And you know the way where I am going.’ ⁵Thomas said to Him, ‘Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?’ ⁶Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. ⁷If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.’” Jesus ends this paragraph with telling the disciples that He and the Father are One and “no one comes to the Father but through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.” There are numerous verses where Jesus and God are shown to be one God. Now, as we continue to read picking up in verse 8, “Philip said to Him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.’ ⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *can* you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.’” I can almost hear the hurt in Jesus’ voice as He says to Philip you have been with Me for years and you still do not understand that I and the Father are One – together we are God, God the Father is Spirit and I am the same God - God incarnate that you may know the Father and have salvation. Philip is not alone in struggling with the concept of the Trinity. **Blank** Philip had to mature in his understanding of Jesus as God; he was slow in maturing, considering he was a disciple of Jesus. We saw last week that when John was first called by Jesus to follow Him; John was ambitious, hot tempered and spiritually immature. Being a disciple of Jesus matured John; the indwelling of the Holy Spirit grew John in spiritual wisdom. How long did this process take in John? We do not know. What we do know is after almost 3 years - Philip still did not get it. Instead of being discouraging; I find this slow maturing process of Philip and some of the other disciples encouraging, because I know that God the Holy Spirit that has indwelled me and lives in me is not

through with me – I will continue to grow spiritually. I tend to get impatient with my spiritual progress at times. Do you ever feel that way or am I the only one?

Understanding the deity of Jesus is so important to John, he now puts forth this point again in another way. John says, ¹ “**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**” The English translation does not do justice to the Greek phrase “*pros ton theon*” which means far more than the Word or Jesus existed along with God the Father. This phrase gives us a word picture of two personal beings facing each other and communicating in intelligent conversation. It is almost as if we can image God having a split personality, and having a deep conversation with Himself. From all eternity Jesus the Word, Jesus – God the Son has been with God the Father as the second person of the Triune Godhead. So the Word or Jesus is not an attribute of God, but Jesus is the same essence as the Father for they together with the Holy Spirit are God. No matter how hard we try to push our minds to conceive the beginning we cannot get there – for God has always been. Unlike **Slide Arius** who lived from about 256 to 336 AD. He was a Christian bishop in Alexandria, Egypt at the church of Baucalis. His teachings about the nature of the Godhead; which emphasized that God the Father was over God the Son and his opposition to what John teaches here about the Triune Godhead created much confusion. His insistence that the Son came after the Father was one of the primary topics at the First Council of Nicea in 325 AD. The debate resulted in the acceptance of the Trinity as true Christian orthodoxy. **Blank** The concept of the Trinity is simple at its core and yet, is difficult to wrap our human minds around. Aren’t you glad that we have a God that goes beyond our ability to fully understand and define – He is amazing – He is beyond description! What kind of God would He be if we could put him in a box, label him and categorize everything about him?

John continues to drive home the divinity of Jesus in verse 2 saying, “He was in the beginning with God.” F. F. Bruce wrote, **Slide** “‘In the beginning’, then, when the universe was brought into existence, the divine Word by which it was brought into existence was already there.” As in verse one the word translated from “*eimi*” (**i-mee**) is “was” and it is in the imperfect tense indicating the continuous existence of the Word or now as we see in verse 2 the Word is said to be “He”. The Word or He was before the beginning. John may well be referring to the passages in the Old Testament speaking of divine wisdom that is personified and described as being present and active at the creation of the world. In Proverbs chapter 8 wisdom claims to have been God the Creator’s master workman. You may wish to turn in your bibles to Proverbs chapter 8, verse 22 **Slide**. Here wisdom is spoken of as attribute of God – however, strictly speaking - wisdom **is** God because God cannot be separated from His attributes. Men are always trying to compartmentalize everything in order to label it and manage it. Let me begin reading in verse 22, “The LORD possessed me (wisdom) at the beginning of His way, before His works of old. ²³From everlasting I was established, from the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth. ²⁴When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. ²⁵“Before the mountains were settled, before the hills I was brought forth; ²⁶while He had not yet made the earth and the fields, nor the first dust of the world. ²⁷When He established the heavens, I was there, when He inscribed a circle on the face of the deep, ²⁸when He made firm the skies above, when the springs of the deep became fixed, ²⁹when He set for the sea its boundary so that the water would not transgress His command, when He marked out the foundations of the earth; ³⁰then I was beside Him, *as* a master workman; and I was daily *His* delight, rejoicing always before Him, ³¹rejoicing in the world, His earth, and *having* my delight in the sons of men.” John is declaring that the Word of both the Old and New Testaments

and the divine wisdom we just read about in Proverbs are indeed Jesus the Christ – the Word. **Blank** John’s gospel then reinforces the concept of a Triune Godhead and the divinity of Jesus. Truth is then found in the Bible as inspired by God the Holy Spirit and breathed into the minds, hearts, souls and words of the writers of the Bible. John as well as the other writers of the Bible teach that the scriptures are God’s revelation to mankind in written Word and Jesus is the revelation in the living Word. John’s entire book is based on these two verses. John’s gospel then stands on the deity of Jesus as the Christ or Messiah. John was inspired by God the Holy Spirit to write this gospel that people may come to know Jesus is God very God.

All of man’s attempts to change the Bible to what they would like it to be - is heresy. In Romans chapter 1 **Slide** Paul explains that even those who say they are Christian, as well as those who openly oppose God and work to discredit the Bible are in truth – lost and will suffer the wrath of God either here or in eternity. ¹⁸For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, ¹⁹because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. ²⁰For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that **they are without excuse**. Now listen to the next verse and see if it reminds you of anyone. ²¹**For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.**

²²Professing to be wise, they became fools, ²³and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.” **Blank** Why do those who claim to be Christian work so hard to change the Bible as given by God the Holy Spirit? Joyce shared a good saying with me this week that explains this problem. “What is the

difference between God and man? The answer is simple. God does not think He is man.”

As in all the epistles including John’s the writers have to deal with false gospels and teachings. John deals with this problem in his Gospel as well, but he states the problem clearly in 2 John verse 10 - John hammers this point, **Slide** “If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching...” John is referring to the teaching of the Apostles as in Acts 2:42, **Slide** “They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” The Apostles teaching is what came to be the New Testament and is the testimony of the life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. John continues in 2 John 10, **Slide** “... do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting;” and his thought continues with verse 11, **Slide** “for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.” Let me make myself clear and to the point; believers are NOT to aid or participate in any way with heretical false teachers. This would include watching their TV programs, sending money, providing food and shelter or attending their churches or studies. To do so is giving the false teacher a greeting and participating in his evil deeds.” The Apostle Paul is even clearer in Galatians 1:8 & 9, **Slide** “But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! **Slide** ⁹As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!” The word Paul choose to use in both verses that is translated as “accursed” is **Slide** ἀνάθεμα “*anathema*” (an-ath’-em-ah) meaning to curse someone to be delivered up for divine wrath and condemned to eternal Hell. **Blank** It is for this reason here at Canyon Bible we are teaching through the scriptures verse by verse. We desire to live all of the Bible – no more and no less.

It is my hope to teach the Word as God gave it and by teaching and preaching verse by verse you will not only come to personally know Jesus- God the Son as your personal Lord and Savior, but you will also know God the Father through Jesus, and live a life in submission to God the Holy Spirit. This is the aim of John and it is my aim as well.

I am looking forward to being taught by this old man filled with the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, who was taught by Jesus, God the Son and taught by God the Holy Spirit. John who has not only the experience of being Jesus' disciple and the wisdom and maturity given by God the Holy Spirit, but the wisdom that comes from living to a ripe old age. May we have ears to hear and hearts that are of flesh, not stone. God gave us a heart scripture for our church, which if we live will change the course of our lives, the lives of those around us, the lives of our children and grandchildren and if we are faithful it will impact the world. Listen to the very words of the living Word, Jesus Christ, who was with God the Father from eternity past, as He answered the Jewish scribes when they asked what was the most important commandment of God. Jesus said, **Slide** "... 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.' **Slide** The second is this, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these." We are to love God- the triune God, for He is everything.

Let me pray for myself that God will guide me and give me wisdom to rightly divide His word and teach it in a way that is meaningful to each of you.