

In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.

John 1:1 (ESV)

## JOHN 1:1-34

*The first three (synoptic, or “see-together”) Gospels focus more on what Jesus taught and did; John focused more on who Jesus is, and his Gospel was written for a specific purpose: That we might believe (John 20:31).*

**1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was with God in the beginning. **3** Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. **4** In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. **5** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

**6** There was a man sent from God whose name was John. **7** He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. **8** He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

**9** The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. **10** He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. **11** He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. **12** Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his

God— **13** children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

**14** The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

**15** (John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, “This is the one I spoke about when I said, ‘He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’”)

**16** Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. **17** For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. **18** No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

**19** Now this was John’s testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. **20** He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, “I am not the Messiah.”

**21** They asked him, “Then who are you? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” He answered, “No.”

**22** Finally they said, “Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?”

**23** John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, “I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way for the Lord.’”

**24** Now the Pharisees who had been sent **25** questioned him, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?”

**26** “I baptize with water,” John replied, “but among you stands one you do not know. **27** He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.”

**28** This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

**29** The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! **30** This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’ **31** I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.”

**32** Then John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. **33** And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’ **34** I have seen and I testify that this is God’s Chosen One.”

### STUDY NOTES EnduringWord.com Commentary

This remarkable, profound prologue is not merely a preface or an introduction. It is a summation of the entire book. The remainder of John’s Gospel deals with the themes introduced here: the identity of the Word, life, light, regeneration, grace, truth, and the revelation of God the Father in Jesus the Son.

**In the beginning was the Word:** Word translates the ancient Greek word Logos. The idea of the logos had deep and rich roots in both Jewish and Greek thinking. Therefore in this opening John said to both Jews and Greeks: "For centuries you've been talking, thinking, and writing about the Word (the logos). Now I will tell you who He is." John met both Jews and Greeks where they were at, and explained Jesus in terms they already understood.

**All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made:** The Word created all things that were created. Therefore He Himself is an uncreated Being, as the Apostle Paul wrote in Colossians 1:16. **In Him was life:** The Word is the source of all life - not only biological life, but the very *principle* of life. The ancient Greek word translated **life** is *zoe*, which means "the life principle," not *bios*, which is mere biological life.

**The life was the light of men:** This life is the light of men, speaking of spiritual light as well as natural light. It isn't that the Word "contains" life and light; He *is* life and light. Therefore, without Jesus, we are *dead* and in *darkness*. We are lost. Significantly, man has an inborn fear towards both death and darkness.

**And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it:** "In the first creation, 'darkness was upon the face of the deep' (Genesis 1:2) until God called light into being, so the new creation involves the banishing of spiritual darkness by the light which shines in the Word." (Bruce)

**There was a man sent from God:** John the Baptist bore witness of the light, **that all through him might believe.** The work of John the Baptist was deliberately focused on bringing people to faith in Jesus the Messiah.

**The world did not know Him:** God came to the same world He created, to the creatures made in His image, and yet **the world did not know Him.** This shows how deeply fallen human nature rejects God, and that many reject (**did not receive**) God's word and **Light.**

"Faith is described as 'receiving' Jesus. It is the **empty cup placed under the flowing stream; the penniless hand held out for heavenly alms.**" - Spurgeon

**He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him:** "We might translate the opening words, 'he came home'. It is the exact expression used of the beloved disciple when, in response to Jesus' word from the cross, he took Mary 'unto his own home' (John 19:27; cf. 16:32). When the Word came to this world He did not come as an alien. He came home." (Morris)

"It is said of 'His own' that they did not 'know' Him, but that they did not receive Him. And in the parable of the Wicked Husbandman our Lord represents them as killing the heir not in ignorance but because they knew him." (Dods)

**As many as received Him:** The idea of "receiving Jesus" is Biblically valid. We need to embrace and receive Him unto ourselves. **As many as received Him** is just another to say **those who believe in His name.** "Faith is described as 'receiving' Jesus. It is the empty cup placed under the flowing stream; the penniless hand held out for heavenly alms." (Spurgeon)

**And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us:** This is John's most startling statement so far. The idea behind this phrase is more literally, dwelt as in a tent among us. John connected the coming of Jesus to humanity with God's coming to and living with Israel in the tent of the tabernacle. "If God has come to dwell among men by the Word made flesh let us pitch our tents around: this central tabernacle; do not let us live as if God were a long way off." (Spurgeon)

**Full of grace and truth:** The glory of Jesus wasn't primarily an adrenaline rush and certainly not a sideshow. It was full of grace and truth. "These two ideas should hold our minds and direct our lives. God is grace, and truth. Not one without the other. Not the other apart from the one. In His government there can be no lowering of the simple and severe standard of Truth; and there is no departure from the purpose and passion of Grace." (Morgan)

**BE STRONG & COURAGEOUS.**  
**BIBLESANDBARBELLS.COM**



# THE LIGHT OF ALL MANKIND

JOHN 1:1-34

#28

**THE LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS, AND THE DARKNESS HAS NOT OVERCOME IT.**

JOHN 1:5



**Bibles & Barbells** is a weekly men's group that meets for weightlifting and Bible study. Find or start a group at [BiblesAndBarbells.com](http://BiblesAndBarbells.com).