

The Deity of Christ – The Prologue of John (John 1:1-18)

I. The Divine Word (1-5)

A. Jesus Christ is God (1-3)

1. The Son (word) has eternally existed (1)
 - a. *In the beginning the was Word*
 - i. John begins his gospel the same way Genesis begins
 - ii. Any reader steeped in the Old Testament would recognize this
 - iii. “was” in this verse is an imperfect
 - an imperfect expresses a continuous action in the past
 - this means however far back you want to push “the beginning” the Word already was.
2. The Son has been in eternal relationship with the Father
 - a. *“the word was with God”*
 - i. God has always been a Trinity
 - ii. God has always been Father, Son, Holy Spirit
 - b. This means that Father, Son, and Spirit have always existed in relationship with each other.
 - c. God is Love – which means God has always had an object of His love. – The Father has always loved the Son and vice versa
3. The Son has eternally been God
 - a. *“the word was God”*
 - i. The word “Jesus” has always been God
 - ii. This may all be confusing – see the lesson on the Trinity
 - b. Although the word is God, the word has always been with God (i.e. The Son has always been with the Father)
 - c. There never was a time when God was not Father, Son, and Spirit.
 - d. Many people (like Jehovah’s Witnesses) claim that this verse says “the word was a God.” Needless to say this is an abuse of the Greek grammar – it is a violation of Colwell’s rule:
“Definite predicate nouns which precede the verb usually lack the article ... a predicate nominative which precedes the verb cannot be translated as an indefinite or a ‘qualitative’ noun solely because of the absence of the article; if the context suggests that the predicate is definite, it should be translated as a definite noun ...”
 - e. He was with God in the beginning but He also was God
4. The Son Created All Things (3)
 - a. Through Christ all things were created
 - i. Notice what John is saying – He is saying Jesus was in the beginning and Jesus was the agent by which the creation came about.

- You may say – “but the Son isn’t mentioned in Genesis 1” – you can see the Spirit hovering over the waters and the Father speaking.

- This is where John is coming from – “How did the Father create? – by the WORD. God spoke, let there be light and by His word light was created.

- b. Nothing came into being that was not created by the Word
 - i. *“without him was not any thing made that was made”*

B. Jesus Christ is the Source of All (4-5)

1. Jesus Brought Life and Light (4)

a. *In Him was life*

i. Jesus is the Life-Giver

- John wants us to know that Jesus is the one who gave life from the

ii. Only God has life in and of Himself everything else is created and endowed with life

b. *His life was the light of men*

i. The light of men seems to have a dual meaning here and throughout the gospel of John

- Light refers to the spark of creation by which life is imparted to man and all creation

- Light also refers to the spiritual and moral light in mankind which brings righteousness into the darkness of the world

2. The World Does Not Understand the Light (5)

a. The light shines in the darkness

i. The darkness of sin and the curse has been broken into by the light of Christ

b. The darkness does not comprehend the light

i. No amount of darkness can dispel the smallest light

- Even in the largest dark room, a tiny flicker of light breaks through and can be seen.

- Christ brought righteousness into the dark room of the world

II. Man’s Response to the Word (6-13)

A. The Testimony to the Word is Given (6-9)

1. John the Baptist (not the author of the gospel) came to testify to the light (6-7) (salvation through Jesus)

2. John the Baptist came testifying so men would believe

3. John was not the light himself (8)

4. John came to testify about the light (8)

5. The light was revealed to every man (9)

a. He came to bring the testimony of light (i.e. salvation) to all

b. He did not keep the light (salvation) hidden

B. The Response to the Testimony (10-13)

1. Those who Reject Christ (10-11)

- a. The world He made Rejected Him (10)
 - i. Jesus came into the world He created
 - ii. The world He made did not know Him
 - iii. Instead of being received with joy he was rejected
- b. His own people Rejected Him (11)
 - i. The Jews were looking for their Messiah for thousands of years
 - ii. When He finally arrived, the people waiting for Him rejected Him
- 2. Those who Receive Christ (12-13)
 - a. Those receiving Him are God's Children (12)
 - i. All who receive Him
 - Those who believe on Him
 - Those who accept Him for who He is
 - ii. Those who receive Him are given authority
 - They are given authority to become God's children
 - iii. These are those who believe in His name
 - His name is mighty God, Yahweh, Lord
 - b. Those receiving Him are Born From God (13)
 - i. Those believing are supernaturally born again
 - Not born of blood (i.e. natural descendant)
 - Not born of the will of the flesh (i.e. the desire to produce a child by parents)
 - Not born by the will of man (i.e. by human decision – man can't decide to be saved unless drawn by the Holy Spirit)

III. The Fulfilling Word (14-18)

A. Jesus Fulfills God's Promise to Dwell With His People (14)

- 1. The word became flesh and dwelt among us
 - a. The word "dwelt" is the same word used for "tabernacle"
 - i. John says the word "tabernacled" among us
 - ii. The tabernacle was where God dwelt with His people as they wandered in the wilderness.
 - the tabernacle was where men met God
 - It was where God's presence was and where sacrifice was offered
 - It was always located in the center of the camp
 - So it is with Jesus – He is our center, where we meet God, and where sacrifice for sin takes place
 - b. Jesus fulfills the promise of the Messiah – Emanuel – God with us
- 2. The word has displayed the Father's glory
 - a. John shows Jesus as the fulfillment of the display of Glory

- i. In Exodus 33:18 – Moses pleaded to see God’s glory – God replied, “you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live (Ex. 33:20)
 - ii. Yet, John says we DID see His glory – unlike Moses we beheld the very face of God.
 - iii. Paul likewise said, “God...has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Co. 4:6)
 - b. John shows Jesus as the display of God’s grace and truth
 - i. All that God offers and everything He has said is embodied in Jesus Christ
 - ii. All grace comes from Him – All truth comes from Him
- B. Jesus Fulfills the Call of God to Man (15)
- 1. John (the Baptist) testified to who Jesus is
 - a. Jesus is above all – He is “before” John
 - i. this means he is of higher rank
 - ii. He is worthy of worship and respect
 - iii. He is worthy to be honored and praised
 - b. Jesus is eternal
 - i. Before His birth in Bethlehem, Jesus existed as the Son
 - ii. The Son has always existed with the Father (John 8:58)
- C. Jesus Fulfills the Grace Given From God (16-17)
- 1. Jesus brought the fullness of Grace (16)
 - a. Through His perfection (fullness) we have received grace upon grace
 - i. This means we have exchanged one grace for another
 - ii. Jesus fulfilled the grace of the law and gave the grace of forgiveness
 - iii. The law was given as a grace – to show Israel how to live in obedience to God – it was not required. God could have just let them go on living without knowing his law.
 - b. Moses gave the law but Jesus Brought grace and truth (17)
 - i. Moses gave one form of grace – the law
 - ii. Jesus brought true grace – complete forgiveness of sin
- D. Jesus Fulfills the Explanation of the Father (18)
- 1. No one has ever seen God (the Father)
 - a. Even in the Old Testament, God was seen through pillars of fire, burning bushes, smoke, and fire. Everytime man saw God in the Old Testament, it was the Son who was speaking.
 - 2. The Son has explained the Father
 - a. We know what the Father is like by looking at the Son
 - b. The attributes of Jesus represent the attributes of the Father.
 - c. You cannot know the Father without the Son