
John 1:1-5 *Jesus Christ is The Word!*

Into Thy Word Ministries Bible Study www.intothyword.org

General Idea: Jesus Christ is the Word, the eternal, always-existing, One and only true God who created everything and gave us life. He is the life source and reason for the universe Who will defeat darkness. He is not a god, but The God!

The Poetry of the Passage: In the beginning, before all things were created or made, God expressed Himself. He is the Personal, always-existing, eternally-loving, most Holy God. He is the Word, Who has forever and will always exist. He is eternal One Who forever was, forever is, and forever will be. He was with God, is with God, and will always, consistently be with God because He is the God everlasting. He is and was and will be. He was the beginning, He is the now, and will be the future, all with God, all as God. He is the only one God who created everything—all that there was, all that is, and all that will be; He created it all. There has never been anything in the multi-universe, the entirety of all creation that He did not make or anything now or ever will be that He did not create. Life itself is with Him, as life itself was created by Him and it is He Who gives light and life to everyone. His light is life and it shines through everything—through darkness, through us, through all that ever was and ever will be. He is the Light to the World and there is nothing that can ever extinguish that light or Him.

Contexts and Background:

All of the Gospels begin with placing Jesus in a historical setting such as the genealogy with Matthew or John the Baptist's ministry in Mark, connecting Jesus to humanity and history. Since John was familiar with the others and the context of His earthy ministry, John places Christ by His nature being God, connecting Jesus with His eternal Being and history of the universe. John's use of "Word" to identify Jesus also grabs philosophic-minded Romans and pious Jews. This passage is a prologue to this Gospel of John, about our Creator, Lord, and Savior who is the eternally existing, ever present, ever powerful, sole creator—God. It is about our transcendent, all-knowing, ever-existing, most Holy, most powerful, eternal God who has always existed and will always continue to exist—and He is Jesus Christ! The statements in the passage are designed to remove all doubt of who and what Jesus Christ is. This passage also introduces many themes such as *Word*, *life*, and *darkness* that will be unfolded later in this Gospel.

Commentary—Word and Phrase Meanings:

- *Beginning.* This statement parallels the opening of the Jewish Torah—our Old Testament portion of the Bible. The theme is that God is solely unique; He is the omnipotent, eternal Creator who brought all things into existence while He always exists with no beginning or end. This also means God, being pre-existing in nature and over creation, also has eternal wisdom and purpose that was before the creation of matter and life. (Gen. 1:1).
- *Word.* The Greek *logos* means "reason," a term that Plato used for the divine force and structure of the universe that brought together matter, logic, harmony, and order. Aristotle also used this term for *insight* and *thought*. This harmony for the universe is what scientists now seek for the explanation that bridges chemistry, physics, and quantum mechanics in one theorem—the "Unified Theory." This has eluded the most brilliant and diligent scientists because it is only God who creates and sustains; the Greeks understood that. John uses this word picture, also from Philo and Jewish philosophy, to refer to the "ultimate reason." John uses this as all of the above that depicts Jesus Christ as the eternal, active, True God Who holds the structure of the universe and brings us creation and its harmony, and that true reason that is personified in Christ (Gen. 1:1-3; Ex. 3:12; 19:17; Deut. 32: 46-47; Psalm 19:8; 33:6; 107:20; 119: 105, 130; Prov. 8:27; Hos. 1:1; John 1:7-9, 13).

- *The Word was with God.* The Word of God is also used as a title for God in Exodus 3:12 and 10:7, and is the most compelling language possible to affirm the Deity of Christ. This means that Jesus was not created, but eternally exists along with the concept that there is only One God and that Jesus Christ is God, a Person of the Trinity. It also shows us that He is eternal and forever deeply connected to and in loving communal relationship with God the Father. Jesus then becomes “incarnate,” and enters humanity as a man who is born, lives, and dies. But He is still fully God and demonstrates this by His resurrection which enables Him to conduct our salvation (Isa. 43:10-11; John 1:18; Rom. 16:27; 1 Thess. 3:4; 1 John 1:2).
- *The Word was God.* Here, it basically means that Jesus Christ is God. There is only One God (monotheism), and He is the eternal God Who holds all things and Who holds us. Jesus is the embodiment of God, the Law, and the revelation of the Scriptures. This is the only human word that has ever been fathomed that comes closest to our understanding Who God is, yet even this word *logos* fails because no human word can contain or confine God to a definition; we can only catch a glimpse of His shadow. For the Jew, wisdom and God were not separated ideas. For us, it means Christ is the eternal God and that when we trust Him, as well as being a Jew we honor the Law. We can identify ourselves in and with Him, so we can trust in and hope in Him. Some cult groups use this passage to prove that Christ was a god and a created being. However, in the Greek the emphasis of *Theos* without a definite article (“the”) points out that there is only One God, not three gods or some other form of “tri-theism” or “polytheism.” There is a distinction of God to Christ, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three Persons, but with one essence; three manifestations and Personalities and roles, but One Godhead (Gen. 1:3; Ex. 34:12-22; Deut. 32:46-47; Psalm 19:8; 33:6; 119: 105, 130; Isa. 6:1-13; 44:6; Hos. 1:1; John 1:1-13, 17; 12:41; 17:5; Rom. 9:5; 1 Cor. 8:4; Phil. 2:6-8; Col. 2:9; Rev. 19:13).
- *Was.* This is the Greek verb “to be,” meaning continual existence, not just in the past, but always eternally present.
- *With.* This, in the Greek, emphasizes the quality of the subject, indicating a close proximity or being in the company of; here it means eternally close, “face to face” fellowship.
- *He was with God in the beginning.* The Trinity is One God, each having a face-to-face intimate, personal, yet distinct relationship. Christ is the ultimate purpose and meaning of life in all things we are to do!
- *Through Him.* Christ is the source and agent of Creation and, in context, in relation to God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. Also, the creation reveals God (Psalm 19:1-6; Rom. 1:19-20; Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2).
- *All things were made.* Meaning all things in the created order came into being because of Christ and by His making. God is the sole Creator and also creates by His wisdom and reason. This is another statement to clearly and unequivocally state that Jesus Christ is God. It also refers to His power, Lordship, and as Judge, as found in Isa. 11:4; John 1:1; 12:48; and Heb. 4:12-13. (Psalm 33:6; 148:5; Prov. 8:30; Col. 1:16-17; Rev. 19:13).
- *Life.* Meaning that our physical and spiritual life, the world in which we live, and the substances we need all come from Christ. It refers to us as living, **corporeal** beings who are sentient, as in the ability to live, breathe, and function physically while at the same time able to think, reason, and be competent to act either morally or immorally. How we live and the choices we make will determine our longevity according to the Old Testament and Promised Land of the Israelites. The application also means that it is our duty to obey God and His call and decrees, in which we respond with our gratitude for His creation as well as His promise of reward. One of our chief goals in the Christian faith is to commit to faith and practice our obedience with joy and passion! This statement is also

an affirmation to the Deity of Jesus Christ (Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16; 8:1; 11:9; Psalm 123; John 5:26; 6:57; 8:12; 9:5; 10:10, 28; 11:25; 14:6; 17:3; 20:31).

- *Light of men.* *Light* in Scripture is usually symbolic for God and righteousness, whereas darkness is symbolic for sin, death, ignorance, and separation from God. For Jewish thinkers at this time, this meant righteousness and the duty to trust and obey God that forms one's worthiness to be God's child, as Abraham demonstrated. For us, it is the practice of *Thy Word* from Psalm 119, which refers to God's Holy Law and Scriptures that point to Christ who now fulfills it. The Law is now fulfilled, but we are still called to trust and obey God and His written Word so we can be agents who ignite a dimly lit world, and who dispel sin by dispensing righteousness as a display in order for others to see God (Psalm 119:105; Isa. 9:2; Matt. 14:6; John 8:12).
- *Darkness.* This is a contrast to the goodness of God and evil, faith and doubt, sin and righteousness; Christ will be triumphant! This sets the tone for Jesus' purpose and why He had to redeem a broken and sinful humanity, most of whom will not accept His gift of grace. This has several meanings: one, *God can't be destroyed or affected by anything.* Second, *God will always triumph over evil.* Third, *with the creation of good and free will, sin enters the world not by fault of God, but by the will of man.* Fourth, *the spiritual conflict that is in the world, the conquering power and spread of the Gospel, and the defeat of evil and the resulting growth of faith.* God does not make evil; He created the conditions for it so there can be free choice and real life. However, we make evil; we turn away from our loving Creator, and we bite the hand that made and sustains us. Evil and sin do not apprehend what is good and righteous. Goodness and mercy do not make sense to one who is worldly and self-focused. However, when one is with God, he/she can understand His principles as in personal trust and obedience. This darkness can then be overcome because Christ overcame it for us (Prov. 6:23; John 3:15; Rom. 13:11-14; Eph. 2:5; 1 Thess. 5:4-7; 1 John 1:5-6; 5:12-20).
- *Has not understood it/comprehend it not.* Means not being able to take a hold of something or reason or apprehend correctly. In context, spiritual warfare is also in view here and the fact that Satan can't overcome Jesus or those in Him (Isa. 11:4; John 1:1; 12:48; 19:11; Heb. 4:12-13).

Devotional Thoughts and Applications:

What Christ speaks into the universe is done in the universe! The question becomes *is He speaking in you? If so and He is, do you hear His Word? Does His Word move and mold you? Or is darkness your comfort?* When one becomes a Christian, he/she is in right relationship; a deep, unbreakable bond is formed with our living Lord, Jesus Christ. We also have His insight and reason to help us know Him through His Holy Spirit and the Bible. The Bible is the platform that contains His Message, Word, and Plan. By this, we are enabled to live unto God, to know and trust Him, to have His spiritual light so darkness does not surround or influence us. We do not have a relationship to the Bible, but the Bible is our guide to our path that is what Psalm 119: 105 states and is also personified in Christ and why we chose this as our ministry name and theme over 30 years ago.

In the Hebrew, the "word" (Heb. *dabar*) here refers to the Scriptures and Law of God. His "written word," God's principles and commands, is our "sustaining source," our illumination guide that we need to cling to Him and His Word for direction on the path of our lives. Thus, *Thy Word* in the Old Testament refers to God's Holy Scriptures that point to Christ who embodies and fulfills it...but we are still called to trust and Obey Him and His written Word. This is so we have His information and insights for righteousness and can avoid the darkness of sin and bad choices so that we do not stumble. This Word is also personal and effectual and refers to the Bible and then to Christ Himself, which is now fulfilled. The point is that if we have life by Him, then we accept Him. We should then love Him, demonstrated in how we follow His precepts.

The Essential Inductive Questions (for more Inductive questions see Inductive Bible Study):

1. What does this passage say?
2. What does this passage mean?
3. What is God telling me?
4. How am I encouraged and strengthened?
5. Is there sin in my life for which confession and repentance is needed?
6. How can I be changed, so I can learn and grow?
7. What is in the way of these precepts affecting me? What is in the way of my listening to God?
8. How does this apply to me? What will I do about it?
9. What can I model and teach?
10. What does God want me to share with someone?

Additional Questions:

1. How did your parents come up with your name? Why is your name important to you?
2. In the science of philosophy, there has to first be something in order to create something as something can't come from nothing. So, how can a natural scientist claim something can come from nothing?
3. How does this passage attest that Jesus is fully God? What does one need to do to make sure Christ's light shines into his/her heart and puts out the darkness?
4. How can this passage remove doubts for an atheist? Why would an atheist still believe in nothing or that something can come from nothing? Or that there is no God?
5. Do you realize Who Jesus Christ is? If so, has His transcendence transformed you?
6. How is Jesus your life source and reason? How can He help you be a light in darkness?
7. How is Jesus personal to you? What does it mean that He is the always existing, eternal loving, most Holy God?
8. Who is the *Word*, and how would you explain it? What does it mean to you that the eternal, always existing, One and only true God who created everything gave you life and purpose and salvation (if you have accepted Him as Lord)?
9. How is Christ your *Life*? How does this affect how you live and the choices you make? How can this determine your longevity and effectiveness?
10. What is your chief goal in the Christian faith? What does it need to be? How can you better commit your obedience to your faith and practice with joy and passion?
11. What do you need to do to take your life more seriously? What is the application of your duty from this passage?
12. How can knowing Who Christ is help you obey Him and His call and decrees better? How will you respond? What can you do to be better at giving back to God your gratitude for His creation as well as His promise of reward?