



**Series: The Gospel of John: For God So Loved...**

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**Text: John 1:1-5**

**Title: Why Jesus Came to Earth**

Good morning, Mercy Church! If this is your first time with us, welcome. My name is Scott and I'm one of the pastors here. You're joining us at a perfect time as we're starting the book of John. It usually takes a while to see if a church is for you or not, so I invite you to join us for this series as we work through this book. The book of John! Wow, I'm so excited. Dr. Kruger set us up really well. His introduction was super helpful. One of the points Dr. Kruger mentioned was that the book of John was the most plain gospel. By plain, he didn't mean simple. He didn't mean that the book isn't rich with theological

depths, no! Quite the opposite. What he meant was that the purpose of the book of John is made plain to us. The purpose of the book of John, the reason John penned this book was so that we would believe upon Christ. We'd believe in the person of Jesus: who he was. And in the life of Jesus: his work on earth. John wants us to believe on Christ!

And if you aren't a follower of Jesus this morning, right out of the gate, I want you to know that we want you to believe in Jesus too. So, if you're feeling like, "I think these people want me to believe in Jesus." Yes! We do. We really and truly believe, like John who wrote this book, that Jesus was and is everything he said he was. We don't believe in Jesus because our parents did. You can't inherit faith! We don't believe in Jesus because he is our favorite way among many ways to get to heaven. No! Jesus said he was the only way, and that truth is only found in him. We believe that out of Jesus' great love for us, he came to save us! Seriously, if you don't know Jesus and you're sitting here, this may be the most important moment of your life. I'm serious. You need to know who Jesus said he is, and you need to make a decision to follow him or not, based on who Jesus said he is. If you're going to reject Jesus, make sure you're rejecting him



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based upon what Jesus said about himself, not what your friend, professor, or favorite podcaster said about him. That's silly. Quick aside, I am a little afraid for you. My fear is that you will take the easy way out and not do the work yourself. I beg you. Please stick around! We can even help you as you have questions. By a raise of hands, who would be willing to help someone figure out this Jesus thing? Great! See? Everyone.

And if you're already a follower of Jesus, my prayer is that your view of Christ deepens. I pray you're blown away by the beauty, majesty, and intimacy of Jesus again. For those who do claim to know Christ, my prayer is that your soul is set ablaze again for the things of Jesus. We're so quick to forget aren't we. That's my great fear for the Christians in this room. My fear is that you've forgotten. That you will forget. Church we can't forget. We have to fight to remember! We need to be reminded of the gospel and the work of Jesus. I have a friend name Trey Williford at the northeast campus that said something to me when he was a college student five years ago and I've never forgotten it. He said that the gospel is the first thing we learn when we become a Christian. And it's also the first thing we forget when we're a Christian. So, followers of Jesus, let us collectively remember again! For

God so loved the world. That he gave his only son. Who whoever believes in him will not perish but will have eternal life. That's why we've titled this series, "For God so loved\_\_\_\_\_." Because we want you to see your name in there. And we want you to see other names that could be on that blank too.

Let me pray as we get started.

Alright John 1:1-5. This is a mountain of a text! There is a sermon in every verse it seems like. I will start with verses 1-3 and mine the gold of those three verses, and then in verses 4-5 because it shows the implications of the first three verses for our lives. I kind of want you to think about verses 1-3 as theology in the air and versed 4-5 the theology on the ground. Going from abstract to intimate. We're going to look at this big God, and then look at what it means for us.

Y'all ready?!

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> All things were created through him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been



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created.

### 1. Jesus is God (vs. 1-3).

Alright, so if we're doing just some general observations of this text, one of the good things to do is to see if there are any repeated words. What repeated words do you see here? Word, right? In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. This reads kind of weird, doesn't it? It's kind of a strange way to start. Quick context moment: The first 16 verses of chapter 1 is the prologue, meaning that its introducing in part, what the whole of the book will contain. And off the bat John starts with this weirdly phrased statement. Well, it might sound foreign to us because most of us are Gentiles and not from a Jewish heritage. To the original audience who was hearing and reading this, the start of this book was very familiar to them, but with a twist. This would have reminded John's Jewish audience, and you, if you've read the book of Genesis, it should sound somewhat familiar. The very first verse in the Bible says this: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Okay, we have these two accounts that seem to be talking about the beginning of time. In Genesis, "in the beginning... God" and in John, "In the beginning was the

word, and the word was with God and was God." Which begs the question... If the Word was there in the beginning and the word was God... WHO IS THE WORD?! The word is Jesus. We know that because at the end of this prologue we see that it says in verse 14 **The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.** Jesus is the Word! Jesus is God.

**We observed his glory, the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.** Jesus is the Word! Jesus is God! And he's been God from the beginning.

I'm going to walk through these verses again and as I do, I'm going to highlight Three things that John says about Jesus being God: Jesus is eternal. Jesus is personal. Jesus is the creator. The text breaks the nature Jesus in three ways:

**1 In the beginning was the Word.** The first thing we see is that Jesus is eternal.

A. **Jesus is eternal.**



Meaning that he is without a beginning or end. You might have noticed that at the beginning of this gospel, John didn't start with Jesus' birth. Matthew and Luke's gospel's start with the birth of Jesus. Not John. John starts by saying that Jesus is God and that he's eternal. In the other gospels, they are highlighting the humanity of Christ first. He was a man, born of God. Right? Jesus was born from a virgin. They did that to show us that in order for our sins to be forgiven, there needed to be a perfect sacrifice. Jesus needed to be a man and he needed to be sinless in order to die on the cross as a sacrifice for our sin.

John, on the other hand starts differently. He starts with the fact that Jesus is God. And he's been God from the beginning. In order to show that Jesus was God, John had to go all the way back to eternity past. He's always existed. He was never created. He has always been God and always will be God. If a time machine were ever created, and we were to hit a rewind button to go back to the very beginning of the universe, Jesus was there. Not only that, if you were to rewind this time machine even further to the beginning of time, you would never reach it. You'd stay in limbo I'd assume because God has always existed. In fact, Jesus even said this about himself in John

17:5: "Now, Father, glorify me in your presence with that glory I had with you before the world existed."

Why is this important? If he's eternal, we can trust that he is all powerful and infinitely wise. Many of us struggle to trust God and his purposes for us. Or some of us struggle with God's timing. He's not doing what I want when I want it. Well, if God is eternal, ultimately wise. God sees the past, present, and future all at the same time and all of human existence is under his providential rule. And some of you may respond with, ok, I get and understand that. But just because Jesus is eternal doesn't mean that I can trust him or that he's even good. Okay, let's look at the second thing John wants to show us. We also see in verse 1 say this: **and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning.** So, we see that Jesus is eternal. And now we see that Jesus is personal.

#### **B) Jesus is personal.**

Here is what I mean by personal. Jesus is a person. God has eternally existed as one God, in three persons: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; each of whom share fully in the divine nature and are equal to each other in majesty



and glory, yet distinct in personhood. Jesus is a person in the Trinity (as theologians would call it). In this text, we only see two persons. We see the Word, being Jesus. And we see God the father. The Holy Spirit was there in the beginning as well, but he's just not mentioned right here. How do we know the Holy Spirit was there? Well, the best way to interpret scripture is by looking at other scriptures that talk about the same subject matter. Back in Genesis 1 God had finished creating the universe and everything in it, and out of the overflow of his love he decided to create a man and a woman. Look at what it says in Genesis 1:26: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness (emphasis mine)." It said let us, plural, make man in our, plural, image.

This triune God has been there from the beginning, and we also get a peek into his character. Our God is a relational God, he is. The three persons of the Trinity have been in relationship with one another for all of eternity and out of the overflow of God's love he created humans in his image. We bear God's image so that we can glorify him on earth, yes. But, maybe more importantly to be in a personal relationship with a loving God. God wants to be in a relationship with his creation. God has been love for all of eternity. This is incredible!

And it has massive implications for our lives. We have a heavenly father, who has eternally loved his Son, in the bond of the Holy Spirit. And this God created us for him to lavish is great love on us!

Okay, so we have seen that Jesus is eternal, that he's personal, and now let's see how Jesus is described in verse 3 All things were created through him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created.

C) Jesus is the creator of everything.

I don't know about you, but when I first became a Christian. I'm not sure why, but I always thought that if any person of the trinity was going to be the creator, it would have been God the Father. But that's not what this says. It says that all things were created through him (the word, Jesus), and apart from him not one thing was created. To see this, flip back with me to Genesis 1. To the creation narrative. So, we see that the Word, Jesus, created everything and we can see it here. Look at what it says in verse 3 of chapter 1. God said... let there be light and there was light. Vs. 6: God said, let there be an expanse between the waters and the heavens. Vs. 9 God



said... vs. 11, 14, 20, 26. The Word of God spoke. Jesus spoke and everything was created. This narrative doesn't explain to us the how, of creation. That's not the point of Genesis. The point of Genesis 1 isn't to explain a scientific fact, but rather a theological fact. God is the creator of the universe. And John says that this creator was Jesus. The apostle Paul also said that Jesus was the creator. Look at Colossians 1:15-17: "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For everything was created by him, in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or rulers or authorities – all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things and by him all things hold together." Yeah! Jesus is incredible. He creates the blue whale and the atoms in our body. He created the redwood trees and the flowers in our gardens. He created sunsets and sunrises. All pointing to his beauty and power and one day Jesus will be worshipped in heaven with these words from Revelation 4:11: "Our Lord and God, you are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, because you have created all things, and by your will they exist and were created."

Jesus is our creator and sustainer of all things. He didn't just create, he sustains. This means that by his word

we're close enough to the sun to stay warm, but not too far that we freeze. God was intentional in the creation of the universe, and he was intentional when he created you. He didn't just create the world and walk away. No! He's involved in everything. Which should bring us joy and comfort.

Okay, so that's the theology in the air. Jesus is an eternal, personal, and a creator God. Now, why does this matter? If Jesus wasn't God. If he wasn't eternal, if he wasn't personal, if he wasn't the creator then he's not God and verses 4-5 mean nothing. Verses 4-5 tell us why Jesus came to earth. 1-3 show us that Jesus is God. 4-5 show us why he came to earth.

Let's read verses 4-5: <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and that life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup>That light shines in the darkness, and yet the darkness did not overcome it.

## **2. Jesus came to bring life and light to the world.**

John mentions two things here... Life and light. Let's start with life. What does it mean that he brings life? This means that he came to bring life to people who are spiritually dead. Remember the first five verses of John



parallel the Genesis account. In Genesis 3, is the story of Adam and Eve's rebellion against God. God warned them with this in Genesis 2:16-17: "You are free to eat from any tree of the Garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die." Now, if you read the story. They rebelled against God and ate from it. And you'd think that they would have dropped dead on the spot, but that's not what happened. What happened something worse, they didn't die physically, they died spiritually. Their relationship with God was severed. And what happened with them is true for every one of us who does not have a relationship Christ. You are spiritually dead, and your spiritual eyes are darkened. And we are the same as Adam and Eve. Every single one of us is born from our mothers physically alive, yet spiritually dead! That's what Jesus came to save us from. Without Christ, we are spiritually dead and spiritually darkened and we can only be made alive through him. Ephesians 2:1-5 says this: "2 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup> in which you previously walked according to the ways of this world, according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit now working in the disobedient. <sup>3</sup> We

too all previously lived among them in our fleshly desires, carrying out the inclinations of our flesh and thoughts, and we were by nature children under wrath as the others were also. <sup>4</sup> But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love that he had for us, <sup>5</sup> made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace!

Or in other words...

Jesus came to give us life – to reconcile us with God, changing both our present condition and our future destination.<sup>1</sup> By changing our present condition this means that we're no longer the walking dead here on earth. He saves us and immediately starts to grow us to look more like Jesus. He starts the process of spiritual growth; sanctification. And he changes our future destination. At death we will be with him in glory forever. He came to bring us a vibrant relationship with our eternal, personal, creator God!

But that's not all, Jesus brings us life and he brings us *light*. that life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> That light shines in

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<sup>1</sup> Christ centered exposition. Pg. 12.



the darkness, and yet the darkness did not overcome it. Verse 5 shows us that Jesus brought life to the spiritually dead and light to the spiritually darkened. The light metaphor may be different, but it communicates the same idea. By Jesus bringing life, we needed to be saved from our sins. By Bringing light, he saves us from the domain of darkness. When someone is in the domain of darkness this means that this person wanders through life blind. Blind to the fact that they belong not to Christ. But to another master. And they are powerless to follow know and to love the eternal, personal, creator God. Who loves them! Ephesians 2 again says: **And you were dead in your trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup> in which you previously walked according to the ways of this world, according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit now working in the disobedient. <sup>3</sup> We too all previously lived among them in our fleshly desires, carrying out the inclinations of our flesh and thoughts, and we were by nature children under wrath as the others were also.**

Without Christ we would be staggering about in spiritual darkness. Hundreds of years before Jesus' coming. Jesus' coming was predicted by the prophet Isaiah. **"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; a light has dawned on those living in the land of darkness."** (Is. 9:2).

And Jesus said, **"I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life."** (John 8:12).

**Without Christ, we are spiritually dead and spiritually darkened. With Christ, we are spiritually alive and spiritually enlightened.**

This is what Jesus was telling Nicodemus later in the book of John. He told him that he needed to be born again. And anyone who has placed their faith in Jesus can tell you that we used to be blind. We tried to fulfill our desires will all sorts of things that the world offered, but it never satisfied. Then Jesus made us alive, and we could see as clear as day that all the things of the world were never meant to satisfy us like Christ, because we were made for Jesus! Not this world!

If you're here today and don't know Jesus. This is why he came. He came to make you alive! You have to hear that there is an eternal, personal, creator God that created you. He loves you. Jesus loves you so much that he left heaven came to earth and lived a sinless life. Your sin has separated you from God. But God has done all the work to save you from your sin. Jesus came and lived the life



you should have lived, he died the death that you should die, and Jesus came back from the dead. At the end of verse 5 of this passage says: “<sup>5</sup>That light shines in the darkness, and yet the darkness did not overcome it.” This means that in Jesus’ worst moment, not even death could hold him back. See what it says it says shines (past tense), and yet the darkness did not (past tense) overcome it. This means that in Jesus’ darkest moment, he overcame sin and death so that in your darkest moment, you won’t be overcome if you’re in Christ. But that only comes through saving faith in Jesus. Jesus offers you forgiveness of sins! But not only that. He invites you to be his child! You can be adopted into his family! Please do so now. Raise your hand if you want this.

If you’re already a Christian in this room, I pray that this encourages you. But I know that some of you are struggling in your walks with Jesus. I’ve talked with many of you, and I know that even though you gave your life to Jesus you still struggle to believe that God loves you. You feel like he loves you one day and doesn’t the next. Maybe, just maybe, you have a relationship with a theology rather than a person. You made a decision years ago to trust in Christ for your salvation, but your time in the word is dry, you feel like your prayers aren’t reaching

God even though they are. And you rehearse what you’ve been told all your life. And you tell yourself “I know that Jesus loves me because of the cross...” yet you still waver on whether or not he loves you. The gospel you’re rehearsing is only half true... yes, you can be forgiven of your sins. But there is so much more. You are his child... Maybe this metaphor will help (from Michael Reeves, delighting in the trinity). Maybe your relationship with God feels more like a divine ruler who makes rules that you need to abide by and not break. Think of him like a divine traffic cop. You drive through life and inevitably you sin and are pulled over by the divine traffic cop. There are two options the divine traffic cop can give. He can punish you by giving you a ticket OR he can let you go. Let’s say he lets you go, and you drive away. Are you going to love the divine traffic cop? No! You might feel grateful, but you certainly wouldn’t love him. If all the divine policeman has to offer is letting you off and counting you as a law-abiding citizen gratitude is the most you would feel. You wouldn’t love him. Many of you are struggling to love God because you primarily view him as a ruler. He is that, but his so much more. As we saw in today’s text the eternal, personal, creator God loves you. And the gospel offers more than justification or salvation. It also offers adoption! This means that



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when you give your life to Jesus, not only does God love you, but he also likes you. When God the father looks at you, he sees you in the same way he sees Jesus. Some of you think that when God looks down on you, you need Jesus to defend you, or to protect you from the father. No! God the father looks at you the same way he looks at his son. He loves him! And he sees you as his child.

Romans 8:15 says, at salvation: "You did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. Instead, you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father!' The Spirit testifies together with our spirit

that we are God's children, and if children, also heirs – heirs of God and coheirs with Christ..."

Struggling Christian! You are a beloved child. Fall back into his loving arms today!

Let's pray!