

## Summary notes on John 1 vs 1-18

GOAL of the 1-2-1 study

To see the magnitude of Jesus & to want to know more

### Context – how does this passage fit in?

John, the author, states plainly the overall purpose of his book about Jesus in 20v31: *'these [things] are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.'*

**The first 18 verses are his 'Prologue'**, acting like an Executive Summary, introducing the big themes and ideas of the book. From these 18 verses we see that the key themes of his gospel are:

- **An explanation of who Jesus is and what he will do.**
- **An appeal to respond to Him.**
- **A description of the benefits of belonging to Him.**

### Impact on us

Changing our view of Jesus. He is not just 'gentle Jesus, meek and mild'. He is the awesome fulfillment of God's purposes. God is made known in Jesus Christ: **are we prepared to get to know him for who He really is?**

### How John writes to make his point

Notice how John piles up big Bible ideas like Creation, the Word, Glory - these serve to make his point that the God-man Jesus Christ is the pinnacle and climax of God's plans.

#### Structure

**1vs1-4** The nature of the Word

**1vs5-13** The Father's work (vs5-11 Revelation, vs12-13 New birth)

**1vs14-18** The achievement of the Word - God made known

### John's references to the Old Testament and why they matter

- **'The Word'** - God acts by speaking. The Old Testament show us that God makes things happen by speaking - put another way, he achieves things through His word. In the OT we see that he creates, judges, reveals himself, rescues, etc, through His word. (eg Genesis 1; Deuteronomy 5v24; Psalm 107v20, Isaiah 55v10-11).
- **Life:** Ever since Adam and Eve were banished from the tree of life in the Garden of Eden, finding a solution to the problem of death has been a major concern in the OT.
- **Glory:** When Moses asks to see God's glory (Exodus 33v18), God passes in front of Moses and proclaims Himself to be compassionate and gracious, and also just and righteous (Exodus 34v4-7). In claiming to have 'seen his glory, glory of the only Son ... full of grace and truth' (1v14), John is claiming to have seen what Moses saw, and much more! The astonishing thing is that the place where John saw God's glory visibly displayed in history was in a man, Jesus of Nazareth.

### Some questions to consider...

**Opener:** What, if anything, springs to mind when you hear mention of Jesus Christ?

**Considering the text1:** What do we learn about 'the Word' in vs1-4?

**Considering the text2:** What do vs 5-13 teach us about God's work in the world? What about humanity's response?

**Considering the text3:** How do vs 14-18 help us determine how we can (and cannot) know God? How does this fit with John's explicit aim for his book in chapter 20v31?

**One to keep chewing on:** How should these verses affect the way we think about God?