

The Gospel of John- Chapter 1

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

A. In the beginning was the Word,

1. **beginning-** Gr. **arche-** *that by which anything begins to be, the origin, the active cause*
 - a. This is the beginning spoken of in [Gen. 1:1](#).
 - b. The Word was already present when the original creation began. He was the creator.
2. **Word-** Gr. **logos-** *something said (including the thought); a topic (subject of discourse), also reasoning (the mental faculty) or motive; a computation; Divine Expression*
 - a. Jesus is the Word of God. He is the completely expressed thought of God. He is the reason for God. He is the Divine Expression.
 - b. Jesus is the visible or expressed member of the Godhead.
 - c. *There is only one God comprised of three persons. "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is **one Lord**," [Deu 6:4](#) declares. But the word "one" is **echad**, which refers to a compound unity, like one people, or one cluster of grapes. Thus, God is a compound unity, a "tri-unity." One plus one plus one does not equal one. But one times one times one equals one. And that is the mystery of the Trinity. -Courson Commentary*

B. and the Word was with God,

1. **Word-** Gr. **logos**

- a. A "word" is that by which we communicate our will, convey our thoughts or issue commands through the medium of communication with others.
- b. The Son of God may be called "the Word," because He is the medium by which God promulgates His will and issues His commandments. See Heb 1:1-3
- c. *This term was in use before the time of John.*
- Barnes Commentary

- (a) It was used in the Aramaic translation of the Old Testament, as, I have made the earth, and created man upon it." e. g., Isa_45:12; "I have made the earth, and created man upon it." In the Aramaic it is, "I, 'by my word,' have made," etc. Isa_48:13; "mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth." In the Aramaic, "'By my word' I have founded the earth." And so, in many other places.
- (b) This term was used by the Jews as applicable to The Messiah. In their writings, he was commonly known by the term "Mimra" - that is, "Word;" and no small part of the interpositions of God in defense of the Jewish nation was declared to be by "the Word of God." Thus, in their Targum on [Deu 26:17-18](#), it is said, "Ye have appointed the word of God a king over you this day, that he may be your God."
- (c) The term was used by the Jews who were scattered among the Gentiles, and especially those who were conversant with Greek philosophy.
- (d) The term was used by the followers of Plato among the Greeks to denote the Second Person of the Trinity. The Greek term νοῦς nous or "mind," was commonly given to this second person, but it was said that this nous was "the word" or "reason" of the First Person of the Trinity. The term was therefore extensively in use among the Jews and Gentiles before John wrote his Gospel, and it was certain that it would be applied to the Second Person of the Trinity by Christians, whether converted from Judaism or Paganism. It was important, therefore, that the meaning of the term be settled by an inspired man, and accordingly John, at the beginning of his Gospel, and goes to great lengths to clearly state the true doctrine respecting the

λόγος Logos, or Word. It is possible, also, that the doctrines of the Gnostics had begun to spread in the time of John. They were an Oriental sect, and held that the λόγος Logos or “Word” was one of the “Aeones” that had been created, and that this one had been united to the man Jesus. If that doctrine had begun then to prevail, it was of the more importance for John to settle the truth in regard to the rank of the Logos or Word. This he has done in such a way that there need be no doubt about its meaning.

2. with- Gr. pros- towards and near

- a. This word denotes a close and intimate relationship between Christ [The Word] and the Father. This same close relationship is enjoyed by the third member of the Trinity- The Holy Spirit.

C. and the Word was God

1. Word- logos

2. was- Gr. en

- a. Christ is God. He is co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit.
- b. He has the same divine nature as the Father and the Holy Spirit.
- c. The Trinity are all equally God, but have different functions.
- d. Ex. An egg has three parts [shell, white, yoke] which all are equally egg, but they have different functions.

2. He was in the beginning with God.

A. was- Gr. en

B. beginning- Gr. arche

1. This is repeated from verse 1. John did not stutter! Jesus Christ had existence before anything was created. He was not the first creation of God, but God who created all things.

3. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

A. all things were made through Him-

1. **all things**- Gr. **pas**- *all or every*

- a. A deep word study on this word "all" will reveal it means all!
- b. All things physical have a beginning. There is no such thing as eternal matter. All matter have a beginning or a cause. The cause was the creator- Jesus Christ.
- c. Common sense will dictate that you either believe that all physical matter has eternally existed with no beginning or that an eternal designer and creator made matter. There are no other options! Since all we see has an incredible design to it, I go with the latter!
- d. Some scientists today acknowledge design in the universe but refuse to believe in a designer. That is like coming upon a Rolex watch on the beach and refusing to believe in a watchmaker.
- e. Those who declare there is no God are fools! [Ps. 14:1](#)
- f. A famous preacher came to his pulpit and saw a piece of paper that said, "Fool!" The preacher was silent for a moment and then said, "I have received many critical letters written to me from people who were too cowardly to sign their name. This is the first time I had one sign their name but they forgot to write the letter!"

B. and without Him nothing was made that was made-

1. **made**- Gr. **ginomai**- *commenced or came to be*

C. through- Gr. **dia**

1. The Father created all things through His Word- Christ. [Heb. 1:2-3](#)

D. made- Gr. **ginomai**

1. [Col. 1:16](#)

4. **In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.**

A. life- Gr. **zoe**- *of the absolute fulness of life, both essential and ethical, which belongs to God; blessed life, life that satisfies*

1. This life is eternal life - God's life. This is not just a duration of life but a quality of life based upon a satisfying relationship with God. [John 17:3](#)

B. light- Gr. **phos**- *light, the light of God's presence, met. the light of Divine truth, spiritual illumination, pure radiance, perfect brightness*

C. men- Gr. anthropos

1. This is the general word for mankind - male and female. The word for a male specifically is **aner**.
2. First man needs to receive the life of God through the new birth through faith in Christ which opens them up to receive light or spiritual truth. There is no true spiritual life or truth without first receiving God's life in the new birth by faith in Christ.
[John 8:12](#), [John 12:46](#)
3. Those who reject Jesus Christ do not have life and consequently they do not have light. They walk in darkness.

5. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

A. And the light shines in the darkness,

1. **light-** Gr. **phos**
2. **shines-** Gr. **phaino**
 - a. This is a present tense verb. God's light and truth are always emanating from Him and is forever shining.
3. **darkness-** Gr. **skotia-** *darkness, privacy, met. moral or spiritual darkness*

B. and the darkness did not comprehend it

1. **darkness-** Gr. **skotia**
2. **comprehend-** Gr. **katalambano-** *to lay hold of, seize, grasp; laying hold of so as to make one's own; hence, to take possession of*
 - a. This is an aorist tense verb which means a completed action in the past.
 - b. *This word means "admitted" it not, or "received" it not. The word "comprehend," with us, means to "understand." This is not the meaning of the original. The darkness did not "receive" or "admit" the rays of light; the shades were so thick that the light could not penetrate them; or, to drop the figure, men were so ignorant, so guilty, so debased, that they did not appreciate the value of his instructions; they despised and rejected him. And so it is still. The great mass of men, sunk in sin, will not receive his teachings, and be enlightened and saved by him. Sin always blinds the mind to the beauty and excellency of the character of the Lord Jesus. It indisposes the mind to receive his instructions, just as*

“darkness” has no affinity for “light;” and if the one exists, the other must be displaced. -Barnes Commentary

- c. In the natural, darkness has no power to resist the light unless there is a barrier to it coming through. Ex. Shades pulled down over a window or a person being blind.
- d. Spiritually speaking, a person can reject spiritual light by putting up obstacles that block it. This can be free will to stubbornly reject the light or there willful blindness of the heart.
- e. God will not violate a person's free will. Free will is man's first and most inalienable right given by God, even if it is used to one's own destruction.

6. There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John.

A. There was a man sent from God,

1. man- Gr. **anthropos**

- a. John stresses that he was just a man.
- b. The general word for man is used instead of a specific male because it is being stressed that John was a human and nothing more.

2. sent- Gr. **apostello**- *to send as a delegated one with authority*

- a. This does not mean he came from heaven. This means that God commissioned him with a heavenly calling and sent him as a prophet to Israel, much like the Old Testament prophets had been.
- b. Jesus was sent from God as well, but He actually came from heaven to earth.
- c. We should be **sent ones** from God, not just **went ones** from our own volition!

3. by God- Gr. **para theos**- *beside or near God*

- a. Those sent from God must first be close to God. This allows a clear hearing of God's plan, intention, message, and timing.
- b. John the Baptist spent years alone with God in the desert, being near God and hearing and learning from Him.

B. whose name was John

1. name- Gr. **onoma**

2. **John**- means *gift of God*

a. This was John the Baptist.

b. This was the God given name to Zacharias and Elizabeth.

[Luke 1:13](#)

7. **This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.**

A. **This man came for a witness,**

1. **man**- Gr. **houtos**- **this one**

2. **came**- Gr. **erchomai**

a. Notice in the last verse that it says John was **sent** from God. Here we see that he **came**. God does not force us to follow His plan and direction. God **sent** John, but he obeyed and **came**. God will **send** us, but we must obey and **go**.

3. **witness**- Gr. **marturia**

a. We get our word **martyr** from this word. We can be a dying martyr or a living martyr. Being a living martyr is much longer and often more difficult.

b. We see John bearing witness of Jesus **seven times** in this chapter. Seven speaks of what is complete.

B. **to bear witness of the Light,**

1. **bear witness**- Gr. **martureo**

a. Before you can bear witness to the Light, you must first see and experience it yourself. A witness only shares what they have seen and heard. Light is seen.

b. Are you bearing witness to the Light that you have seen from God in Christ Jesus?

2. **Light**- Gr. **phos**

a. This is Jesus - the Light of the world.

C. **that all through Him might believe**

1. **all through Him**

a. This is through the Light- Jesus.

b. See the combination of the words **“all”** and **“might”** in this verse. Salvation has been purchased by Jesus on the cross for all, but the word **“might”** signifies that it is not given that all will believe and receive it.

2. **might believe**- Gr. **pisteuo**- *to think to be true, to be persuaded of, to credit, place confidence in*

- a. Notice the word **might**. It is in the **subjunctive mood**, which means it may or may not happen.
- b. This is because some will believe and others will choose not to believe.

8. **He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.**

A. **He was not that Light,**

1. **was not**

- a. It is important to know not only who you are but also who you are not. Many are confused about their identity.
- b. John the Baptist knew he was not the Messiah, or, in other words, God, and neither are you! How often do we act like it, though?

2. **Light**

- a. Jesus the Messiah

B. **but was sent to bear witness of that Light**

1. **was**

- a. We need to know who we are.
- b. John found his identity in the Word of God. [Is. 40:3-5](#)
- c. We can also find our identity in the Word of God. [2 Cor. 5:21](#), [Eph. 4:24](#)

2. **sent**- not in Greek- omit

3. **bear witness**- Gr. **martureo**

- a. Again, we must have a firsthand encounter with the Light, before we can bear witness to the Light.

4. **Light**- Gr. **phos**

9. **That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.**

A. **true**- Gr. **alethinous**

1. If something can be true, then equally other things can be false. Here we see the true Light. There are also false lights. The enemy comes as an angel of light, but it is not the true Light. [2 Cor. 11:14](#)
2. There is a false type of what is called light, which is actually darkness. [Matt. 6:23](#)
3. The Word of God is and produces true Light. [Ps. 119:105](#)

4. Any illumination you receive must come in line with the Word of God for it to be true Light.

B. Light- Gr. **phos**

1. Jesus, the Word of God.

C. gives light- Gr. **photizo**

1. *Through God's sovereign power, every person has enough light to be responsible. God [Christ] has planted His knowledge in man through general revelation in creation and conscience. The result of general revelation, however, does not produce salvation but either leads to the complete light of Jesus Christ or produces condemnation in those who reject such "light" (see notes on [Rom 1:19-20](#); [Rom 2:12-16](#)). The coming of Jesus Christ was the fulfillment and embodiment of the light that God had placed inside the heart of man. -MacArthur Commentary*

D. every man- Gr. **pas anthropos**

1. This word used for man again speaks of mankind, both male and female.

2. No man who has ever existed can claim ignorance of the existence of God or of their own guilt before that God. Creation and man's conscience both testify to the truth of God. Jesus Christ, the Creator, gave both of these as a light for all men to reach out and find Him.

E. coming- Gr. **erchomai**

1. This verse should be rightly translated from the Greek- *"The true light was he who, coming into the world, enlightened every man."*

2. This is an important distinction. We did not have prior existences before we were born on earth. The teaching of our prior existence before we were born is an error taught by the Mormon church.

3. It is only said of Jesus that He came to the earth having had prior existence.

F. world- Gr. **kosmos**

1. Jesus came to bring light to all the world and then provided salvation for all the world, which is available to all and must be accepted by faith.

10. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

A. He was in the world,

1. **world-** Gr. **kosmos**

B. and the world was made through Him,

1. **made-** Gr. **ginomai-** *came to be, commenced*

a. This verse reveals the divinity of Christ. Nothing that is created can create something from nothing. Man's creations are always a product of reforming what was already here and created. Only God can create something from nothing.

2. **through Him**

a. Jesus is the Word of God. God the Father created the world through God the Son - His Word, Jesus Christ.

C. and the world did not know Him

1. **know-** Gr. **ginosko-** *to progressively know by experience or relationship*

a. There is a show on TV called "The Under Cover Boss". In this show, you have the owner or creator of a large business disguised as a regular worker who works alongside all the other workers. No one realizes that he is the owner or boss until it is revealed at the end. Well, that is what happened when Jesus came to earth. He came as the Under Cover Boss! The world as a whole did not realize that He was the creator and owner of the world.

11. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

A. He came to His own,

1. **come-** Gr. **erchomai**

2. **own-** Gr. **idios-** lit. *own things*

a. This word is **neuter** in the Greek, which means He came to His own creation.

B. and His own did not receive Him

1. **own-** Gr. **idios**

a. This word is masculine in the Greek, which means His own people- The Jews.

2. **receive-** Gr. **paralambano-** *to receive near, that is, associate with oneself*

a. Salvation is based upon what Jesus did for us at the cross and resurrection; however, this has to be received.

- b. The error of Universalism teaches that salvation and reconciliation with God are issued to us no matter if we believe or not or want them or not. God offers salvation as a gift. [Eph. 2:8-9](#) A gift is no longer a gift if you do not have a choice in receiving it.
- c. God has done His part in reconciling the world to Himself, but reconciliation takes two for it to actually be realized. A troubled marriage cannot be reconciled when only one party agrees to it.
- d. Only we can make the choice for ourselves, to be reconciled to God by faith in Christ. [2 Cor. 5:18-20](#)

12. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

A. But as many as received Him,

1. received- Gr. **lambano-** *to take*

- a. We have to receive Jesus and what He has done for us because Jesus and salvation is a gift offered to all. We can receive or reject it. There is no in-between. No one will be saved who is sitting on the fence. On Judgment Day, all those on the fence and the fence itself will be cast into the Lake of Fire.
- b. Jesus said you are either for Him or against Him. [Luke 9:50](#)

B. to them He gave the right to become children of God,

1. to them

- a. Them who? Them who have received Him- Jesus

2. gave- Gr. **didomi**

3. right- Gr. **exousia-** *authority or right*

4. become- Gr. **ginomai-** *come to be*

- a. We have to **become** the children of God. We are not automatically the children of God. Unbelievers are children of the devil and children of wrath. [John 8:44](#), [Eph. 2:3](#)
- b. This verse blows Universalism, which teaches all people are the children of God, straight out of the water and into the trash bin.

5. children- Gr. teknon

- a. This verse clearly teaches that not all people are children of God. All humans are creations of God, but not necessarily the children of God. One becomes a child of God through being born of God in the new birth. [Jn 3:3](#) This comes by **receiving** Jesus as Savior.

C. to those who believe in His name

1. believe in- Gr. pisteuo eis- believe into

- a. This shows how one receives Jesus. They believe in [lit. Greek- *into*] Him.
- b. God does not put anyone into Christ. We must believe in Christ.
- c. **If** anyone is in Christ... there would be no need for the word **if**, if all were already in Christ. [2 Cor. 5:17](#)

2. name- Gr. onoma

13. who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

A. who were born,

1. born- Gr. gennao

- a. We become children of God by the new birth, not by reason of our natural birth.

B. not of blood,

1. blood- Gr. aima- lit. bloods

- a. This is plural in the Greek- bloods.
- b. Natural bloodlines have no impact on our spiritual identity. Spiritual identity is not passed down by genetics.
- c. *Of bloods- The union of father and mother, or of a distinguished or illustrious ancestry; for the Hebrew language makes use of the plural to point out the dignity or excellence of a thing: and probably by this the evangelist intended to show his countrymen, that having Abraham and Sarah for their parents would not entitle them to the blessings of the new covenant. -Clarke Commentary*
- d. You are not one with God based on any ancestors or the parents you have. You do not become a child of God because you have Christian parents. God has no

grandchildren, just children! You make the decision to be born again, to be saved, and to be a child of God.

C. nor of the will of the flesh,

1. **will-** Gr. **thelema**

2. **flesh-** Gr. **sarx**

- a. A personal desire or wish does not make you a child of God. Most people in the world desire to be or deem themselves to be children of God, but most reject the means of being one- faith alone in the grace of God alone through Jesus Christ.

D. nor of the will of man,

1. **will-** Gr. **thelema**

2. **man-** Gr. **anthropos**

- a. These are man-made ways of coming to God- all religions. Man-made fabrications -religions- is an attempt to become a child of God. They all are worthless.

E. but of God

1. **of God**

- a. It was by God's own will were we born again through the Word of Truth. [James 1:18](#)
- b. Only God can give the new birth, and it can be only obtained through His plan of salvation- faith in Jesus Christ His Son.

14. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

A. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

1. **Word-** Gr. **logos**

2. **flesh-** Gr. **sarx**

- a. At this point most people were tracking with John until this place. Wait! Are you saying that God became a man? This is where many hop off the revelation train and run yelling NO WAY!
- b. God the Son became a man. This is called the incarnation and the hypostatic union. He was 100 percent God and 100 percent man in one person. He was not a mix of the two, which diluted each other.

- c. God had to become a man because God gave authority to man on the earth. A man, Adam, lost dominion in the earth, and a man, Jesus, had to get it back.
- d. Jesus had to be God because His shed blood would be able to cover the sins of all of mankind going back to Adam and stretching through eternity.
- e. Where in Jesus did His divinity and humanity meet? In one place- in His blood. The blood that flowed in Jesus' human physical body was the blood of God.
- f. **Act 20:28** Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd **the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.** [Heb. 9:14](#)
- e. There are many verses that teach Jesus is God. [Rom 9:5](#), [1Co 15:47](#), [Php 2:6](#), [Col 1:16-18](#), [Titus 2:13](#), [Heb 1:3](#); [Heb 1:8](#); [1Jn 1:2](#); [1Jn 5:20](#), [Rev 1:17-18](#)

3. **dwelt**- Gr. **skenoo**- *to tabernacle, to dwell in a tent*

- a. This word means to dwell in a tent or tabernacle. This spoke of Jesus' earthly body during His 33 years on earth, which was temporary. Now Jesus has a permanent glorified body. We see the difference in the Old Testament. First, there was a temporary tent called the tabernacle that was pitched in the wilderness, but afterward, a permanent temple building was erected in the Promised Land. It is the same for us today. We live in a natural body, and it is seen as a tent that will be taken down. [2 Peter 1:13-14](#). One day in heaven, we will have a permanent building that will be our glorified body that can never be taken down.

B. and we beheld His glory,

1. **beheld**- Gr. **theomai**- *to behold, look upon, view attentively, contemplate (often used of public shows)*

- a. The invisible God went public! He came onto the stage of the world to be seen by all.
- b. Jesus Christ is the visible member of the Godhead. Both the Father and the Holy Spirit are invisible to man.
- c. It was a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ when He appeared in the Old Testament.

2. **glory**- Gr. **doxa**- *magnificence, excellence, preeminence, dignity, grace*

C. the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,

1. **only begotten**- Gr. **monogenes**- *only one of a kind, unique*

a. Jesus, as God's Son, was only one of a kind and unique. We all who are born again are called sons of God. However, Jesus is the only one and is unique in that He was eternally God's Son. His sonship had no beginning or end. Our sonship had a beginning when we were born again and will have no end. We are everlasting, but not eternal. Only God is eternal, with no beginning or end.

b. We are not God, but partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life through our union with Jesus Christ.

2. **Father**- Gr. **pater**

D. full of grace and truth

1. **full**- Gr. **pleres**

2. **grace**- Gr. **charis**- *unmerited favor*

3. **truth**- Gr. **aletheia**

a. Jesus was a balance of grace and truth. He was full of both in perfect balance.

b. This is best seen in how Jesus operated.

(a) **Joh 8:11** She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "**Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.**"

(b) **Joh 5:14** Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, **you have been made well. Sin no more**, lest a worse thing come upon you."

(c) **Tit 2:11** For the **grace of God that brings salvation has appeared** to all men, **Tit 2:12** **teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,**

(d) Jesus forgave and healed them by His grace and love, but He also told them the truth by telling them not to continue in sin.

15. **John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.' "**

A. John bore witness of Him and cried out,

1. **bore witness-** Gr. **martureo**

2. **cried out-** Gr. **krazo**

- a. He was not shy about his testimony because he shouted it out clearly for all to hear. Many of us are too quiet and shy to share about our testimony of Christ.
- b. Jesus told us what we hear in secret we are to shout from the rooftops! [Luke 12:3](#)

B. saying- Gr. **lego**

C. This was He of whom I said,

1. **said-** Gr. **epo**

D. He who comes after me is preferred before me,

1. **preferred-** Gr. **ginomai-** *come to be, to commence*

- a. This is speaking of Jesus' incarnation as a man. He was born six months after John and His ministry started after John's.

E. for He was before me

1. **before-** Gr. **protos-** *first*

- a. John the Baptist was born six months before Jesus. He was the older of the two; however, here John said that Jesus was **before him**. Jesus existed before John. This verse shows that men did not have pre-existence before they were born. John did not have pre-existence before he was born.
- b. Jesus said that before Abraham was, **I AM**. [John 8:58](#) He was before Abraham and was God- **I AM**. **I AM** is the name of God. [Ex. 3:14](#)

16. And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.

A. And of His fullness we have all received,

1. **fullness-** Gr. **pleroma**

- a. This was a term the Gnostics used in their erroneous teaching for a span of beings (aeons) that emanated from the original God to the lesser and corrupted god of the Old Testament who created the earth. This span of beings was called the pleroma of God. John debunks this by saying that Jesus was the **pleroma** of God. He is the original, true God who created the earth and man.

[\[Col. 2:9-](#) fulness- Gr. pleroma]

2. **we all**

- a. This can mean **we all** as speaking to all of humanity or **we all** speaking of believers. Both are true.
- b. God reveals His goodness to all men. He causes the sun to shine on all men. He sends rains to bless all men. [Matt. 5:45](#) God has made this world and all of its abundance and goodness, for all men to enjoy, not just believers.
- c. In another sense, believers have received grace for grace much more than unbelievers. We have received not only the natural graces of the Lord but also all the spiritual graces of the Lord, such as forgiveness of sins and the gift of righteousness.

3. **received-** Gr. **lambano**

- a. Mankind is a recipient of grace. We do not create, achieve, or earn anything. Mankind owes its very existence to the grace of God, who is sustained by it every moment of every day. Our every breath is a grace gift from God!

B. **and grace for grace**

1. **grace for grace-** lit. *grace in exchange for grace*

- a. We all have received grace which is replaced by fresh and new grace which goes on and on.
- b. A picture of this is like the ocean waves hitting the beach. One wave hits and is then replaced by a new wave that comes in. This goes on and on and on...

17. **For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.**

A. **For the law was given through Moses,**

1. **law-** Gr. **nomos**

1. The first five books of the Bible are called the Torah.

2. **given-** Gr. **didomi**

1. There was no relationship under the Law. You cannot have a relationship with two cold pieces of stone. Jesus came with all of his love and warmth!

3. **Moses-** means *drawn out*

1. Moses was given the law orally by God and he then wrote it down for Israel.

B. but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ

1. grace- Gr. **charis**

a. Grace is a person. That person is Jesus!

2. truth- Gr. **aletheia**

a. Truth is a person. That person is Jesus! [John 14:6](#)

b. We saw in vs. 14 that Jesus is the perfect balance of both grace and truth. (see [vs.14](#) notes)

3. came- Gr. **ginomai**- *commenced, to arrive*

a. Notice that the Law was given, but grace and truth **CAME**.

b. This reveals that both **grace and truth** are a person! Grace and truth came. Things do not just happen by themselves. However, Grace and truth came. That speaks of a person.

That person is Jesus. [John 14:6](#)

c. This shows that before Jesus came on the scene, grace and truth were not native to the earth. They were brought in by Jesus Himself.

d. *The law was given on a quaking mountain. Grace and truth were born in a quiet manger. The law was written on tables of stone. Grace and truth were wrought in a heart of love. When the law came down, three thousand people died ([Exo 32:28](#)). When the Spirit came down, three thousand were saved ([Act 2:41](#)). The law kills. Jesus gives life.*

-Courson Commentary

18. No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.

A. No one has seen God at any time

1. No one

a. No mere human. Jesus was both God and man. He has beheld God the Father.

b. No mere human can see God, the Father and live. [Exo 33:20](#)

2. seen- Gr. **horao**- *to see with the natural eyes*

a. When God is seen in the Old Testament, it is always the second member of the Godhead that is revealed. I.e. the angel [lit. **messenger**] of the Lord. [Gen 22:11-18](#);

[Gen 31:11-13](#); [Exo 3:2-5](#); [Num 22:22-35](#); [Jdg 6:11-23](#);
[Jdg 13:2-5](#); [1Ki 19:5-7](#)

- b. Jesus Christ is the visible member of the Godhead.
- c. We see God through Jesus.

3. **God-** Gr. **theos**

- a. This refers to God the Father.

B. **The only begotten Son,**

1. **only begotten-** Gr. **monogenes-** *one of a kind, unique*

- a. Again, Jesus was the unique Son of God in that he had eternal sonship and existence with God before He was born as a man.

2. **Son-** Gr. **huios**

- a. As a man Jesus was born, but as the eternal Son He was given. [Isa. 9:6](#)

C. **who is in the bosom of the Father,**

1. **bosom-** Gr. **kolpos-** *the chest, or a safe harbor*

- a. The heart of the Father is a safe harbor for us!

2. **Father-** Gr. **pater**

- a. Individuals in the Old Testament did not know God as their Father. They knew Him as God, but not as their Father. Jesus introduced God as our Father to those who believed in Him. [John 20:17](#)

D. **He has declared Him**

1. **declared-** Gr. **exegeomai-** *to be a leader; to detail, to set forth in language; to tell, narrate, recount, to make known, reveal*

- a. We get our English word **exegesis** from this word. **Exegesis** means the process of careful study undertaken in order to produce useful interpretation.
- b. Jesus provided a perfect **exegesis** of the Father. What does that mean? Jesus provided a close and careful interpretation to mankind of God's heart, character, and ways through His life and ministry. It is very useful when we can correctly interpret God's heart, character, and ways. Our lives will be dysfunctional and hurt if we misinterpret God's heart, character, and ways. It will end up creating dysfunction and hurt in all our relationships as a result.
- c. Jesus is **perfect theology**. Theology is the study of God. If you want to see exactly how God the Father is, look at Jesus and His life. He perfectly showed and interpreted His Father

to mankind. For instance, He healed everyone that came to Him and did not reject or refuse to heal anyone. That is how God is today!

- d. **Joh 14:9** Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? **He who has seen Me has seen the Father**; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

19. Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

A. Now this is the testimony of John,

- 1. **testimony-** Gr. **marturia**

B. when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him,

1. Jews

- a. No doubt this is referring to the Sanhedrin.

2. sent- Gr. **apostello**

- a. This word means to send with delegated authority.

3. priests- Gr. **hiereus**

4. Levites- Gr. **leuites**

- a. *The **priests** were those who carried on the important services in the temple, while the **Levites** were servants who attended to common duties there.* -Believer's Bible Commentary

5. Jerusalem

- a. This was the capital of the Jewish religion. It was the home of the Sanhedrin the Jewish ruling body.

6. ask- Gr. **erotao-** *to ask, interrogate, inquire of*

C. Who are you

- 1. The world will ask you this question. The world will make you doubt the answer to this question. The world is even getting people to question if they are men or women!
- 2. We need to know who we are. We can only find that answer from God since He is our Creator. We will never know who we are or where we came from if we do not know the Creator.

20. He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."

A. He confessed,

1. **confessed**- Gr. **homolegeo**- *to say the same thing as another, i.e. to agree with, assent, to concede, to profess*

B. and did not deny,

1. **deny**- Gr. **arneomai**- *to decline, refuse*

a. John did not decline or refuse to answer the question. If he had, it would have continued or increased the rumor that he was the Messiah. Many would have done this to milk the situation for their own good or pride.

C. but confessed,

1. **confessed**- Gr. **homolegeo**- *see above*

D. I am not the Christ

1. **I am not**

a. *We will find our true identities when, like John the Baptist, we realize we are not the Christ. "Oh, I already know I'm not the Christ!" you say. Do you? If you go to your job thinking you can pull it off through your own ability; if you work on your marriage thinking you can make it because of your own insight; if you raise your kids thinking you can draw on your own experience—no matter what your mouth may say, your life says, "I am the Christ." If, however, you truly realize you are not the Christ, you will be a man or woman who spends significant time in prayer today, because you will know that without Him, you can do nothing ([Joh 15:5](#)). Life starts when you put away your "Can Do" mentality and realize you can't do anything without Jesus. -Courson Commentary*

2. **Christ**- means *the Messiah or the Anointed One*

a. Many people at this point would have realized how much they could capitalize on people thinking they were the Messiah, and they would have claimed it! If he had claimed it, He would have instantly received great notoriety, and fame, and could have leveraged it for great personal gain. This shows the humility of John and that He was a true servant of God. A servant looks to advance the interests of his Lord, not his own.

b. How many people are leveraging the false opinions of others about them? Many. They even go out of their way to foster these false opinions.

c. By this answer it is evident that their first question was if he was the Christ, the Messiah.

21. **And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No."**

A. **And they asked him,**

1. **asked-** Gr. **erotao**

B. **What then**

1. If you are not the Christ, then who are you?

C. **Are you Elijah,**

1. **Elijah-** means *My God is Jehovah*

a. [Mal 4:5](#) (see note there) promises that the prophet Elijah will return before Messiah establishes His earthly kingdom. "If John was the forerunner of Messiah, was he Elijah?" they asked. The angel announcing John's birth said that John would go before Jesus "in the spirit and power of Elijah" ([Luk 1:17](#)), thus indicating that someone other than literal Elijah could fulfill the prophecy. God sent John who was like Elijah, i.e., one who had the same type of ministry, the same power and similar personality ([2Ki 1:8](#); cf. [Mat 3:4](#)).

- MacArthur Commentary

b. The Scribes taught that Elijah would come again before the coming of the Messiah ([Mat 17:10](#)), and this belief is repeatedly alluded to in the Talmud. Comp. [Mal 4:5](#).

-Cambridge Commentary

c. These religious leaders confused Jesus' first coming and His second coming. John the Baptist would come as a forerunner to His first coming and ministry. [Mal. 3:1](#). However, right before Jesus' second coming Elijah will return and minister. [Mal. 4:5-6](#) He will come before the great and dreadful day of the Lord, which is the second coming of Christ, not His first coming. Elijah will be one of the two witnesses, Moses being the other one. Elijah will shut up the heavens from raining and Moses will turn water into blood as they did in their earthly ministries in the Old Testament.

Rev. 11:6 These two, Moses and Elijah, represent the law of the prophets which both bear witness to the coming of Jesus Christ.

D. He said,

1. **said-** Gr. **lego**

E. I am not,

F. Are you the prophet

1. **the prophet-** Gr. **o' prophetes**

a. *The prophet spoken of by Moses, Deu 18:15, Deu 18:18. This text they had also misunderstood: for the prophet or teacher promised by Moses was no other than the Messiah himself. See Act 3:22. But the Jews had a tradition that Jeremiah was to return to life, and restore the pot of manna, the ark of the covenant, etc., which he had hidden that the Babylonians might not get them. Besides this, they had a general expectation that all the prophets should come to life in the days of the Messiah. -Clarke Commentary*

G. And he answered, No

1. **answered-** Gr. **apokrinomai-** *to respond back*

22. Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"

A. Then they said to him,

1. **said-** Gr. **epo**

B. Who are you,

1. Again, this is a question we must all answer for ourselves. We get that correct answer from our Creator God. The world and the enemy will question us on this and make us doubt our identity. Satan did this with Jesus in the wilderness of temptation. If you are the Son of God...

2. There is a huge identity crisis today. There is a real problem when people do not even know which bathroom to go into!

C. that we may give an answer to those who sent us

1. **give an answer-** Gr. **didomi apokrisis-** *to give an answer back*

a. Do not always be pressured to answer people's questions, but in this case, it was important that John cleared the air so

that any confusion about the identity of the Messiah would be dispelled.

2. **sent-** Gr. **pempo**

D. **What do you say about yourself**

1. **say-** Gr. **lego**

- a. It is important what you say about yourself and to yourself. It needs to be in agreement with what God says about us- no more and no less. Anything other comes from pride. The fastest way to humility is to agree with God and say what He says. And to believe it!

23. **He said: "I *am* 'THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS: "MAKE STRAIGHT THE WAY OF THE LORD," ' as the prophet Isaiah said."**

A. **He said,**

B. **I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness**

1. **I am**

- a. Please notice that John discovered His identity in God's Word. He quotes from the book of Isaiah about himself.
- b. We need to find our identity in God's Word as well. We find it in the New Testament scriptures that say "in Christ" or "in Him". We are in Christ and in Him. Whatever it says about us being in Christ and in Him is our new spiritual identity as children of God.

2. **voice-** Gr. **phone**

- a. Man has been given authority on earth. God must have a man or woman called by Him to be a mouthpiece and give voice to His word in the earth.
- b. That big mouth of yours is going to work out after all!
- c. We need to have firsthand revelation from God to be a fresh voice to our generation or we will become just become a stale echo!

3. **crying-** Gr. **boao**

- a. When you know who you are and what you are called to do, you will be bold. He did not come whispering but crying out!

4. **wilderness-** Gr. **eremos**

- a. This is where great men and women of God have their beginnings. They start in anonymity in the wilderness.

Moses did. David did. Jesus did.

- b. It is in the wilderness you are alone with God getting to know Him, in a relationship but also as your source for all things.

C. Make straight the way of the Lord,

1. make straight- Gr. **euthuno**

- a. This implies the way was not straight at the time but crooked. The way of God had been made crooked by religion and legalism. It was made crooked by crooked people.

2. way- Gr. **hodos**

- a. God's way in which you approach Him and become acceptable to Him has never changed from the garden to now. The way is by grace through faith in the person of Jesus Christ. [Gen. 15:6](#)
- b. Jesus said he was the WAY, the truth, and the life. [John 14:6](#)

3. Lord- Gr. **kurios**

- a. This is the Lord Jesus.

D. as the prophet Isaiah said

1. prophet- Gr. **prophetes**

- a. After [Gen. 1:26](#) you never see God speaking directly to the earth. He calls prophets and people to be His spokesmen because He gave authority on the earth to men.
- b. Not everyone is called to be in the office of a prophet, but every person is called to be the prophet over their own lives. We must speak God's Word over our own lives to see it work in our life.

2. Isaiah- means *Jehovah helps*

3. said- Gr. **epo**

- a. This is a quote from [Isa. 40:3](#)
- b. Our ministry and message must be in line with the Word of God. Your message should end with- "even as the Scripture has said."

24. Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees.

A. sent- Gr. **apostello**

B. Pharisees- means *separated ones*

- 1. A previous delegation of priests and Levites was sent from the

Sanhedrin asking about the identity of John. Now a delegation from the Pharisees came and interrogated John regarding his identity.

2. *The Pharisees were the most numerous and wealthy sect of the Jews. They derived their name from the Hebrew word Pharash, which signifies to set apart, or to separate, because they separated themselves from the rest of their countrymen, and professedly devoted themselves to special strictness in religion. Their leading tenets were the following: that the world was governed by fate, or by a fixed decree of God; that the souls of men were immortal, and were either eternally happy or miserable beyond the grave; that the dead would be raised; that there were angels, good and bad; that God was under obligation to bestow special favor on the Jews; and that they were justified by their own conformity to the law. They were proud, haughty, self-righteous, and held the common people in great disrespect, [Joh 7:49](#). They sought the offices of the state, and affected great dignity. They were ostentatious in their religious worship, praying in the corners of the streets, and seeking publicity in the bestowment of alms. They sought principally external cleanliness, and dealt much in ceremonial ablutions and washing. They maintained some of the laws of Moses very strictly. In addition to the written laws, they held to a multitude which they maintained had come down from Moses by tradition. These they felt themselves as much bound to observe as the written Law. Under the influence of these laws they washed themselves before meals with great scrupulousness; they fasted twice a week – on Thursday, when they supposed that Moses ascended Mount Sinai, and on Monday, when he descended; they wore broad phylacteries, and enlarged the fringe or borders of their garments; they loved the chief rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues. In general, they were a corrupt, hypocritical, office-seeking, haughty class of men. There are, however, some honorable exceptions recorded, [Act 5:34](#); perhaps, also, [Mar 15:43](#); [Luk 2:25](#); [Luk 23:51](#); [Joh 19:38-42](#); [Joh 3:1](#); [Joh 7:50](#). -Barnes Commentary*
3. Religious people will come to you and guise their pride by asking you questions that are never intended to learn and receive but are to correct and criticize.

25. And they asked him, saying, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

A. And they asked him,

1. asked- Gr. erotao

B. saying- Gr. epo

C. Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ,

1. baptize- Gr. baptizo- *to dip or immerse*

a. *On receiving a proselyte from "paganism" baptism was common before the time of John, but it was not customary to baptize a "Jew." John had changed the custom. He baptized "all," and they were desirous of knowing by what authority he made such a change in the religious customs of the nation. They presumed, from the fact that he introduced that change, that he claimed to be a prophet or the Christ. They supposed that no one would attempt it without "pretending," at least, authority from heaven. As he disclaimed the character of Christ and of the prophet Elijah, they asked whence he derived his authority.*

-Barnes Commentary

2. **Christ-** Gr. **christos-** *Anointed One, Messiah*

D. nor Elijah,

1. **Elijah-** see note on [vs. 21](#)

E. nor the Prophet

1. **the Prophet**

a. The Prophet mentioned by Moses actually was the Messiah, but the Jews at this time thought them to be separate people.

26. John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know.

A. John answered them,

1. answered- Gr. apokrinomai

B. saying- Gr. lego

C. I baptize with water,

1. baptize- Gr. baptizo

a. Baptism is an outward display of the inner reality of a believer when they get saved. Their old man dies and is

buried with Christ, and then is raised with Christ in the newness of life.

b. Baptism does not save but is an outward demonstration and witness of one who has been saved.

2. water- Gr. **huder**

a. John did not answer their question on why he was baptizing. We do not always have to answer the questions of religious and legalist people.

D. but there stands One among you whom you do not know

1. stands- Gr. **histemi**

a. Jesus was standing among them at the beginning of His ministry and then He worked among them. Now, Jesus is seated at the right of the Father. His Spirit has been sent to stand among us today, but most do not know His Spirit.

2. know- Gr. **eido-** *to know fully*

a. Some people knew who Jesus of Nazareth was, but not fully. They did not know He was the eternal Son of God. They only knew him after the flesh.

b. John the Baptist knew Jesus in the flesh because they were cousins. However, he did not know Him fully as the Son of God and the Messiah until that was revealed to Him by God.

c. No one can know Jesus as the Son of God without it being revealed to him by God. Peter was an example of this.

[Matt. 16:17](#)

27. It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose."

A. It is He who,

B. coming after me,

1. coming after- Gr. **erchomai opiso**

C. preferred before me,

1. preferred- Gr. **ginomai-** *to commence, arise, or come*

a. This speaks of Jesus Christ's prior existence as the eternal Son of God.

b. This is a repeat of what John said in [vs. 21](#).

D. whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose

1. sandal strap- Gr. **hupodema himas**

a. *The “latchet” of sandals was the string or thong by which they were fastened to the feet. To unloose them was the office of a servant, and John means, therefore, that he was unworthy to perform the lowest office for the Messiah.*

-Barnes Commentary

b. Ministers are in desperate need of humility in this day and age. Many ministers walk around like they are the Messiah themselves, full of pride.

2. **worthy**- Gr. **axios**- *equal to, worthy*

a. In ourselves, we are unworthy to be used by God in any capacity; only by the grace of God are we what we are and are used by God.

3. **loose**- Gr. **luo**

28. **These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.**

A. **These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan,**

1. **done**- Gr. **ginomai**- *began*

2. **Bethabara**- means *house of the ford*; *Bethany*- *house of God*

a. *“The interview took place at Bethany (House of the ferry-boat) on the east bank of the Jordan at the spot called in Origen’s time Bethabara (House of the ford) – the traditional place of the passage of the Ark and the nation under Joshua ([Jos 3:14-17](#)).”* (Trench)

b. It is interesting that John chose to baptize people where the ark, a type of Christ, went down into the bottom of the Jordan River and back up again on the other side. This is a type of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection.

3. **beyond**- Gr. **peran**- *across*

4. **Jordan**- means *the descender*

a. *The geology of the Jordan is unique. Rising high up among the foothills of Mt. Hermon, it flows almost due south by a most tortuous course, through the two lakes of Huleh and Galilee, following the bottom of a rapidly descending and most remarkable geological fissure, and finally emptying itself into the Dead Sea, which is 1292 feet below the level of the Mediterranean.* -Hastings Commentary

B. where John was baptizing

1. baptizing- Gr. baptizo- *to dip or immerse*

29. The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

A. The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him,

1. next day- Gr. epaurion
2. saw- Gr. blepo
3. coming- Gr. erchomai

a. The Lamb came to us. We did not go to Him.

B. and said,

1. said- Gr. lego

C. Behold- Gr. ide

1. We must all behold God's Lamb and decide if He will be what makes us worthy before God, or decide to reject Him and trust in our own works to save us.
2. John had already baptized Jesus at this point and knew Him to be the Messiah, the Lamb of God.

D. the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world

1. lamb- Gr. amnos

- a. *This was said in allusion to what was spoken [Isa 53:7](#). Jesus was the true Lamb or Sacrifice required and appointed by God, of which those offered daily in the tabernacle and temple, [Exo 29:38](#), [Exo 29:39](#), and especially the paschal lamb, were only the types and representatives. See [Exo 12:4](#), [Exo 12:5](#); [1Co 5:7](#). The continual morning and evening sacrifice of a lamb, under the Jewish law, was intended to point out the continual efficacy of the blood of atonement: for even at the throne of God, Jesus Christ is ever represented as a lamb newly slain, [Rev 5:6](#). -Clarke Commentary*
- b. *He calls him a "lamb", either with respect to any lamb in common, for his harmlessness and innocence; for his meekness and humility; for his patience; and for his usefulness, both for food and clothing, in a spiritual sense; as well as for his being to be a sacrifice for the sins of his people. -Gill Commentary*

2. of God

- a. In the Old Testament the people had to provide the lambs for sacrifice themselves, however, in the New Testament God provides the Lamb for the sacrifice of our sins. He is God's Lamb provided for us.
- b. We can bring nothing to God in order to save us. All is provided for us, by.

3. **takes away-** Gr. **airo-** *to lift away*

- a. This would be done by Jesus becoming sin for us and shedding His blood at Calvary.

4. **sin-** Gr. **hamartia**

- a. Notice that this is singular. This is the nature of sin itself. Jesus bore our sins plural in His own body, but He also became sin singular at the cross. He removed the guilt of this sin through His death. The wages of sin is death. [Rom. 6:23](#)
- b. There are two comings of Jesus. First time was when He came to take away our sin. His second coming is to reign over the earth. There is no mention of sin with Jesus' second coming.

5. **world-** Gr. **kosmos**

- a. Jesus died for the world, removing the sin of the world. [1Ti 4:10](#), [Heb 2:9](#), [1Jn 2:2](#); [1Jn 4:14](#) This does not mean That the world is automatically saved. Jesus provided forgiveness and salvation for all of mankind, but each person must choose to accept and put their faith in it. God has provided for reconciliation on His part but man must receive it and be reconciled to God on their part. [2 Cor. 5:18-20](#)
- b. Sin is no longer the barrier between the Holy God and unholy man. Jesus removed it at the cross. However, there is still a barrier between God and man. That new barrier is now Jesus! He stands between a Holy God and an unholy man. The question now is not what will you do with your sin, but what will you do with Jesus Christ and what He did for you! Jesus stands as the door of salvation. He must be entered through faith to receive eternal life and salvation. [John 10:9](#)

30. **This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.'**

- A. **This is He of whom I said,**
- B. **After me comes a Man who is preferred before me,**

- 1. **man-** Gr. *aner-* *a human male*

- C. **for He was before me**

- 1. **before me**

- a. In this verse, you see both the humanity and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. John calls Jesus a man. He was a man. He was 100% a man. However, John states Jesus existed before Him, even though, humanly speaking, John was older than Jesus. This speaks of the pre-existence and divinity of Jesus. Jesus was divine. He was 100% divine. He was 100% man and 100% divine in one person. This makes Him unique and qualified to bridge the gap between God and man and provide us with salvation.

- 31. **I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."**

- A. **I did not know Him,**

- 1. **know-** Gr. *eido-* *to know fully*

- a. *At first John did not know that Jesus was the Messiah, (although they were cousins). All John knew was that he was to baptize with water and that the Messiah would be manifested to Israel through him by that means. God had given John a sign by which he would know the Messiah—the descending of the Holy Spirit as a dove. When Christ came to be baptized, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him (v. [Joh 1:32](#)), revealing to John Jesus' identity (v. [Joh 1:33](#)). Matthew's account adds that a voice came from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" ([Mat 3:17](#)). Nelson Commentary*

- B. **but that He should be revealed to Israel,**

- 1. **revealed-** Gr. *phaneroo-* *to be made manifest or plain to see*

- a. It had been revealed to John that the Messiah Himself would be revealed in baptism to the nation of Israel.

- 2. **Israel**

- a. Jesus stated that He had come to and for the nation of Israel. [Matt. 15:24](#) They rejected Him, and the door was

opened up for the Gentiles to receive Him by faith and be grafted into Israel.

C. therefore I came baptizing with water

1. **came-** Gr. **erchomai**

2. **baptizing-** Gr. **baptizo**

3. **water-** Gr. **hudor**

a. John was baptizing so that the Messiah would be revealed, more so than for the sake of the others being baptized. It was revealed that the Messiah would be revealed in His baptism when the Spirit descended and remained on Him.

b. *John's mission was to prepare the way of the Lord, and then to point Him out **to** the people of **Israel** when He appeared. It was for this reason that John baptized people in **water**—to prepare them for the coming of Christ. It was not for the purpose of attracting disciples to himself.*

-Believer's Bible Commentary

32. And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him.

A. And John bore witness,

1. **bore witness-** Gr. **martureo**

a. This is repeatedly stated about John. He was a witness and nothing more.

B. saying- Gr. **lego**

C. I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove,

1. **saw-** Gr. **theomai-** *to behold, look upon, view attentively, contemplate (often used of public shows)*

a. This word means *to show publicly*. From this word, it implies that the Holy Spirit could be seen landing on Jesus as a dove by everyone watching when Jesus was baptized.

2. **the Spirit-** Gr. **ho pneuma**

3. **descending-** Gr. **katabaino**

4. **heaven-** Gr. **ouranos**

a. The Holy Spirit brings the realities of heaven to earth.

5. **like-** Gr. **hosei**

a. Notice John said "like" a dove, not that the Spirit "was" a dove.

6. dove- Gr. peristera

- a. The dove is a symbol of gentleness and peace.
- b. A dove was sent out three times from the ark of Noah. The first time, it did not find a place to land and had to return. The second time it left the ark, it was for a while, but it came back with an olive leaf in its beak. The third time, it did not return but stayed in the earth. This is symbolic of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, the Spirit had no place to permanently land on the earth and returned to the Father. At the second coming of the Spirit, He landed upon Christ and attended and witnessed peace being restored between God and man, and then He returned to the Father. The third time He came was on the Day of Pentecost. and He has come to abide with us forever.

D. and He remained upon Him

1. He

- a. The Holy Spirit is a person, not a force or an it.

2. remained- Gr. meno

- a. He remained on Jesus during His earthly ministry.

33. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'

A. I did not know Him,

1. **know-** Gr. **eido-** *to know fully*

B. but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me,

1. sent- Gr. **pempo**

- a. Baptizing was not John's idea, but a command and commission from God.

2. baptize- Gr. **baptizo-** *to dip or immerse*

3. water- Gr. **hudor**

4. said- Gr. **epo**

C. Upon whom you see the Spirit descending,

1. see- Gr. **see**

2. the Spirit

3. descending- Gr. **katabaino**

D. and remaining on Him,

1. **remaining-** Gr. **meno**

- a. The Holy Spirit found a comfortable and suitable home upon Jesus!

E. **this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit**

1. **baptizes-** Gr. **baptizo**

2. **the Holy Spirit-** Gr. **hagios pneuma-** omit the word **the** as it is not in the Greek.

- a. When the two words "**Holy Spirit**" are used in the New Testament together it is without the article "the" in the original Greek text. The word "the" has been inserted by the translators. If the sole word **Spirit** is used you find the article "the" before it- "the Spirit".

- b. This speaks of **Holy Spirit** being a person, not a thing or a force.

- c. Jesus baptizes in Holy Spirit.

[Mat 3:11](#); [Luk 3:16](#); [Luk 24:49](#); [Joh 1:33](#)

- d. John, a natural man, could only baptize with what was natural- with water, but Jesus, being the Lord, can baptize with what is spiritual- with Holy Spirit.

34. **And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."**

A. **seen-** Gr. **horao**

1. It states five times in this chapter that John saw Jesus. Five is the number of grace. We must first see grace before we can receive grace.

B. **testified-** Gr. **martureo**

1. This is the seventh and final time in this book that we see John bear witness to Christ. Seven speaks of what is complete or perfect.

C. **Son-** Gr. **huios**

1. Jesus was the one and only unique Son of God who has been eternally God's Son. We become sons at our new birth, never to die. We are everlasting in that we will never die, but not eternal in that we had an existence prior to being born.

35. **Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples.**

A. **Again,**

B. the next day,

1. **next day**- Gr. **epaurion**

C. John stood with two of his disciples

1. **stood**- Gr. **histemi**

- a. The usual position for a master while teaching his disciples was to be seated. Here he was standing, which implies he was finished teaching and was now waiting for the Messiah to appear.

2. **two**- Gr. **duo**

- a. Two is the number of witnesses.
- b. One of the disciples was Andrew, Peter's brother. The name of the other disciple was not mentioned.

3. **disciples**- Gr. **mathetes**- *a learner, pupil, disciple*

- a. John did not come to make his own disciples. I am sure they just came and attached themselves to John. We will see that John will point to Jesus and testify to Him. The disciples would leave John, but he did not try to keep them. He kept an open hand. He did not seek them out to start with, and he let them go freely.
- b. This is a mark of a true minister of Jesus Christ. They will point people to Christ, not themselves.

36. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

A. And looking at Jesus as He walked,

1. **looking**- Gr. **emblepo**- *to look in or upon*

- a. John looked upon Him, but even more, he looked "in" Him, seeing His true identity as the Lamb of God.

2. **walked**- Gr. **peripateo**

B. he said,

1. **said**- Gr. **lego**

C. Behold the Lamb of God

1. **Behold**- Gr. **ide**

- a. This was the second appearance of Jesus. In verse 29, John said, **Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world**. This is His second coming and John just says, **Behold the Lamb!** He says nothing about the sin of the world. Why?
- b. This pictures the two comings of Jesus Christ. His first

coming was to bear and remove the sin of the world. In His second coming, He will appear without sin and without any reference to sin, since it had been removed at His first coming. [Heb. 9:28](#) The second appearance of Jesus will be to rule and reign over the earth.

2. Lamb- Gr. amnos

- a. Jesus will forever be the Lamb of God. He will forever have nail prints on His hands, and feet, and an opening in His side. After Jesus was raised from the dead, the disciples put their fingers into the nail prints and into the opening in His side.
- b. Jesus is seated, right now, at the right hand of God and He has these marks in His body forever.

37. The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

A. The two disciples heard him speak,

1. **two disciples-** Gr. **duo mathetes**
2. **heard-** Gr. **akouo**
3. **speak-** Gr. **laleo**

- a. Jesus said the sheep hear the voice of their Shepherd and they follow Him.
- b. Once these two heard Jesus, speak they heard their Shepherd and followed Him.
- c. Likewise, when a person hears their pastor speak, they will recognize them and follow them.
- d. As a pastor, no one is everyone's cup of tea, but you are someone's cup of tea.

B. and the followed Jesus

1. followed- Gr. **akoloutheo**

- a. John experienced those who were with him leave and follow another. Every pastor will experience this and they need to let them go. They are not your sheep. They are the Lord's sheep.
- b. Pastor, someone in your church may hear another speak and feel led to follow them. Do not get possessive or jealous. Let them be led by God to be fed where God directs them.
- c. If they are leaving after a false teacher you are to warn them, in love. You cannot make people stay with you. Do not

put pressure on people to stay. Do not manipulate them into staying.

d. The key to following Jesus is hearing Him first. We follow by faith and faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

38. Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "**What do you seek?**" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?"

A. Then Jesus turned,

1. turned- Gr. *strepheo*

B. and seeing them following,

1. seeing- Gr. *theaomai*

2. following- Gr. *akoloutho*

C. said to them,

1. said- Gr. *lego*

D. What do you seek

1. seek- Gr. *zeteo*

a. This is a question the Lord has for every human being. What do you seek? Many are not seeking the Lord but their own desires.

b. Not all those coming to church are seeking the Lord. Some are seeking a mate. Some are seeking business connections. Some are seeking self-justification. Some are seeking to correct what is being taught. What are you seeking the most in your life?

c. Paul had those who sought to be mentored by him. and be on his ministry team, but Paul said except for Timothy, the others were seeking their own selfish ambitions and not seeking the Lord. [Phil. 2:21](#)

d. This is the **first recorded question** Jesus had in His ministry. Jesus loved to ask questions.

E. They said to Him,

1. said- Gr. *epo*

F. Rabbi- Gr. *rhabbi*- *my great one, my honourable sir, my master, teacher*

1. At this point, these disciples just saw Jesus as another teacher, not the Messiah, the Son of God.

2. As a minister, there will be people who come and give you lofty descriptions- "oh great one!" When someone gives me too much honey, there are stingers nearby.

G. which is to say,

1. **say-** Gr. **lego**

H. when translated,

1. **translated-** Gr. **hermeneuo-** *to explain, interpret, translate*

I. Teacher- Gr. **didaskalos**

J. where are you staying

1. **staying-** Gr. **meno**

- a. This reveals they were seeking a more protracted time with Him. It was not just a transitory few questions and then they would leave.
- b. This was an introductory phase of discipleship. They wanted to know where they could find him in the coming days. Their initial response was not, "Who are you?"
- c. Often a sinner's first question is, "Where are you Lord?" before they ask, "Who are you Lord?".

39. He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).

A. He said to them,

1. **said-** Gr. **lego**

B. Come and see

1. **Come-** Gr. **erchomai**
2. **see-** Gr. **eido**

- a. In this first meeting, Jesus just said, "**come and see**". Later, He would say, "**come and follow**". [Mark 1:16](#)
- b. If you are going to mentor someone or join a church, there first needs to be a "**come and see**" period to check them or it out. Then the Lord can lead you into a deeper commitment of "**come and follow**".

C. They came and saw where He was staying,

1. **came-** Gr. **erchomai**
2. **saw-** Gr. **eido**

- a. They obeyed the first and most simple direction of the Lord. It is amazing how people will want to follow you in order for

you to mentor them, but will not even do the first initial request you make of them.

3. staying- Gr. meno

- a. John the Baptist was ministering on the south side of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus was apparently staying close by where John was ministering.

D. and remained with Him that day

1. remained- Gr. meno

2. day- Gr. hemera

- a. They came and checked Jesus out for the day.
- b. You need to know who you are going to follow. Where did they come from? What have they done? Whom have they sat under? What is their track record?

E. now it was about the tenth hour

1. tenth hour- Gr. dekaatos hora

- a. *The Jews divided the daylight period of the day into twelve hours (starting at sunrise; approximately 6:00 a.m.). This would make the time about 4:00 p.m. John mentions the precise time, most likely, to emphasize that he was the other disciple of John the Baptist who was with Andrew ([Joh 1:40](#)). As an eyewitness to these events occurring on three successive days, John's first meeting with Jesus was so life-changing that he remembered the exact hour when he first met the Lord. -MacArthur Commentary*
- b. Some compute this according to the **Roman** method of timekeeping, and thus it was 10:00 a.m. in the morning. It would appear this time computation was used because it states they spent the day with Jesus. If it was 4 p.m. when they first talked to Jesus, taking in the traveling time, there would not be much of the day left to spend with Jesus.

40. One of the two who heard John *speak*, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

A. One of the two who heard John speak,

1. heard- Gr. akouo

- a. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God [Christ]. [Rom.10:17](#)

2. **speak**- omit. *not in Greek*

B. and followed Him,

1. **followed**- Gr. **akoloutheo**

C. was Andrew- means *manly*

1. Andrew was from Bethsaida, which was north of the Sea of Galilee. John the Baptist was presently baptizing a bit south of the Sea of Galilee, at the Jordan River, which shows that Andrew was spiritually hungry and traveled to where John was, upon hearing about his ministry.

2. God will fill the hungry heart!

3. What if Andrew had not acted upon his spiritual hunger and traveled to where John was? He might not have ever had a chance to be a close disciple of Jesus.

D. Simon Peter's brother

1. **Simon Peter's**- means *one who hears, piece of rock*

a. Simon Peter was also from Bethsaida, north of the Sea of Galilee. Peter may have followed his brother Andrew to where John the Baptist was, or Andrew may have traveled a good distance to Bethsaida to tell Peter about Jesus.

b. Simon means *one who hears*, and Peter means *a rock*. Together, it means *one who is firm and stable because of what he hears*. Peter was firm when he trusted the words of Jesus. When he got his eyes off of Jesus, that is when he became unstable and fell.

2. **brother**- Gr. **adelphos**

a. Andrew always lived in the shadow of his brother. There is no sign that he resented it or tried to change that fact.

41. He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ).

A. He first found his own brother Simon,

1. **found**- Gr. **heurisko**

a. We are to find others to tell them about who and what we have found.

2. **brother**- Gr. **adelphos**

3. **Simon**- means *one who hears*

B. and said to him,

1. **said**- Gr. **lego**

C. We have found the Messiah

1. **found**- Gr. **heurisko**

a. This means they were looking for and anticipating Him.

2. **Messiah**- Gr. **messias**- *the Anointed One, Messiah*

a. *The Greek transliteration of the Hebrew: Mashiyach, meaning anointed-* Dake

b. *The one anointed by God and empowered by God's spirit to deliver His people and establish His kingdom. In Jewish thought, the Messiah would be the king of the Jews, a political leader who would defeat their enemies and bring in a golden era of peace and prosperity. In Christian thought, the term Messiah refers to Jesus' role as a spiritual deliverer, setting His people free from sin and death.*

-Nelsons Dictionary

c. What Jesus said and did must have convinced Andrew that Jesus was indeed the Messiah whom they were waiting for.

D. which is translated,

1. **translated**- Gr. **methermeneuo**- *to translate over from one language into another, interpret*

a. Translations are needful but make sure you use a good one.

E. the Christ

1. **Christ**- Gr. **christos**- *Anointed One*

a. Christ is not Jesus' last name! It speaks of His divine origin and role as the Savior of the people.

42. **And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).**

A. And he brought him to Jesus

1. **brought**- Gr. **ago**

a. This word always means to be brought along by the agency of another.

b. This helps us understand being led [Gr. ago] by the Spirit. This means the Spirit brings us along through the agency of His own power.

B. Now when Jesus looked at him,

1. **looked**- Gr. **emblepo**- *to look in or upon*

- a. Jesus' gaze penetrated into Simon and saw not only his present character but also God's call and potential in him. God does the same for each of us.

C. **He said,**

1. **said**- Gr. **lego**

D. **You are Simon the son of Jonah**

1. **Simon**- means *one who hears*

- a. If you just have an open ear to hear what God says and respond to Him, He can make you into anything and take you anywhere!

2. **son**- Gr. **huios**

3. **Jonah**- means *dove*

- a. Obviously named after the prophet Jonah. Jonah means dove. and his name implies that he is the one who brings peace. God wanted Jonah to bring peace to the Ninevites, but Jonah only wanted them to be destroyed and experience calamity. We need to learn the meaning of our name and agree with it. Jonah did not.

E. **You shall be called Cephas**

1. **called**- Gr. **kaleo**

- a. Jesus wants to rename you according to what He sees in you. We often call ourselves something other than what the Lord sees in us. We need to spend time with Jesus and let Him impart to us the revelation of our new identity in Him.

2. **Cephas**- means *a stone*

- a. When Jesus first met Peter he was anything but stable. However, after walking with Jesus and being changed by Him, he became a firm and stable pillar in the church and laid a firm foundation.

F. **which is translated,**

1. **translated**- Gr. **hermeneuo**

G. **Stone**- Gr. **petros**- *a detached mass of rock*

43. **The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."**

A. **The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee,**

1. **following day**- Gr. **epaurion**

2. **wanted**- Gr. **thelo**

3. **Galilee**- means *circuit*

a. *A Roman province of Palestine during the time of Jesus. Measuring roughly 50 miles north to south and about 30 miles east to west, Galilee was the most northerly of the three provinces of Palestine—Galilee, Samaria, and Judea. Covering more than a third of Palestine’s territory, Galilee extended from the base of Mount Hermon in the north to the Carmel and Gilboa ranges in the south. The Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River valley were its western and eastern borders, respectively. All the disciples of Jesus, with the exception of Judas Iscariot, came from Galilee.*

-Nelson's Dictionary

B. and found Philip and said to him,

1. **found**- Gr. **heurisko**

a. We see here that Jesus found Philip. Praise God that Jesus will find us even if we are not looking for Him. This does not mean that Philip had no hunger for God. The fact that he was from Bethsaida and was now down at the place where John the Baptist was ministering, spoke of his spiritual hunger for God and what He was doing.

2. **Philip**- means *lover of horses*

a. Andrew, Peter, and Philip all knew each other. They were all from Bethsaida and may have all come down together to see John the Baptist upon hearing about his ministry. It speaks of their spiritual hunger. We think that Jesus just randomly picked some guys out of a crowd to follow him. No, he chose men who were hungry for God, all except Judas Iscariot.

b. *This apostle was a native of Bethsaida in Galilee. Eusebius says he was a married man, and had several daughters. Clemens Alexandrinus mentions it as a thing universally acknowledged that it was this apostle who, when commanded by our Lord to follow him, said, Let me first go and bury my father, [Mat 8:21](#), [Mat 8:22](#).*

-Clarke Commentary

3. **said**- Gr. **lego**

C. Follow me

1. follow- Gr. *akoloutheo*

- a. This is the first disciple that we see Jesus speak these words to: Follow me.

44. Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

A. Now Philip was from Bethsaida,

1. Bethsaida- means *house of fish*

- a. *A city whose name in Hebrew imports a place of fishing or of hunting, and for both of these exercises it was well situated. As it belonged to the tribe of Naphtali, it was in a country remarkable for plenty of deer; and as it lay on the north end of the lake Gennesareth, just where the river Jordan runs into it, it became the residence of fishermen. Three of the Apostles, Philip, Andrew, and Peter, were born in this city. It is not mentioned in the Old Testament, though it frequently occurs in the New: the reason is, that it was but a village, as Josephus tells us, till Philip the tetrarch enlarged it, making it a magnificent city, and gave it the name of Julias, out of respect to Julia, the daughter of Augustus Caesar.*

-Watson Commentary

B. the city of Andrew and Peter

1. city- Gr. *polis*

- a. Andrew and Peter, being from the same city, no doubt knew Philip already, and were probably friends, and traveled together to see John the Baptist.

2. Andrew- means *manly*

3. Peter- means *a detached mass of rock*

45. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

A. Philip found Nathanael and said to him,

1. found- Gr. *heurisko*

2. Nathaniel- means *gift of God*

- a. Nathanael is not mentioned in the synoptic Gospels. But in every list of the apostles in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the

name Bartholomew is listed with Philip, as Nathanael is linked with Philip here. It is likely that Nathanael and Bartholomew was the same person.

b. Obviously Philip and Nathaniel were good friends because he immediately thought of Nathaniel and went to tell him about Jesus.

3. said- Gr. **lego**

a. The most effective marketing method then and now is word of mouth. Many churches are spending thousands of dollars on marketing, but let me tell you that if your church is not worth talking about, all that money is wasted!

b. If you have a great meal at a new restaurant, I promise you that you will start telling people about it. If you go to a church that feeds you really well, then you will tell people about it.

c. A church not built on word-of-mouth testimony is artificially grown.

B. We have found Him of whom Moses in the law,

1. found- Gr. **heurisko**

a. This statement is ironic. In verse 43 we see that Jesus found Philip, but here Philip said he found Jesus. We never find Jesus, He finds us. We did not choose Jesus first, but He first chose us.

2. Moses- means *drawn out*

3. law- Gr. **nomos**

C. and also the prophets,

1. prophets- Gr. **prophetes**

a. The Law and prophets both testified about Christ.

[Luk 24:27](#), [Luk 24:44](#), [Act 10:43](#); [Act 26:22](#)

D. wrote-Jesus of Nazereth,

1. wrote- Gr. **grapho**

2. Nazereth- means *seperated*

a. A town of lower Galilee where Jesus spent His boyhood years ([Mat 2:23](#)). For centuries Nazareth has been a beautifully secluded town nestled in the southernmost hills of the Lebanon Mountain range. Situated in the territory belonging to Zebulun, the city must have been of late origin or of minor

importance. It is never mentioned in the Old Testament. Nazareth lay close to the important trade routes of Palestine. It overlooked the Plain of Esdraelon through which caravans passed as they traveled from Gilead to the south and west. North of the city was the main road from Ptolemais to the Decapolis, a road over which the Roman legions frequently traveled. This fact may account for the possible source of the name Nazareth in the Aramaic word meaning "watchtower." However, Nazareth itself was situated in something of a basin, a high valley about 366 meters (1,200 feet) above sea level overlooking the Esdraelon valley. To the north and east were steep hills, while on the west the hills rose to an impressive 488 meters (1,600 feet). Nazareth, therefore, was somewhat secluded and isolated from nearby traffic. This apparent isolation of Nazareth as a frontier town on the southern border of Zebulun contributed to the reputation that Nazareth was not an important part of the national and religious life of Israel. This, coupled with a rather bad reputation in morals and religion and a certain crudeness in the Galilean dialect, prompted Nathanael, when he first learned of Jesus of Nazareth, to ask, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" ([Joh 1:46](#)). - Nelson's Dictionary

- b. This town was in southern Galilee and was so looked down upon, even Philip who was from Cana in Galilee [a three-hour walk away] said, "Can anything good come from Nazareth!"
- c. Nazareth was the boondocks of its day. You could say it was where the rednecks lived.
- d. It does not matter where you come from geographically if you have God's calling and hand upon your life. He can take you to great places! God loves taking nobodies and making somebodies out of them.

E. the son of Joseph

- 1. **son-** Gr. **huios**
- 2. **Joseph-** Gr. means *increase*

- a. At this time, Philip did not know Jesus' divine origin. He did not fully know Jesus. As a matter of fact, at the end of Jesus' ministry, Philip still did not fully know Him! He asked Jesus to show them the Father, and Jesus asked, "Philip, do you still not know me?"
- b. We think it would have been great to have been one of Jesus' disciples during His earthly ministry. No, it was not great. They were not yet born again or had the Holy Spirit. Most of the time, they were "the Disciples". You can only really know Jesus through revelation by the Spirit.

46. And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"

Philip said to him, "Come and see."

A. And Nathanael said to him,

1. **said-** Gr. **epo**

B. Can anything good come out of Nazareth?

1. **good-** Gr. **agathos-** *intrinsic good*

- a. There are two main Greek words for good. One is **kalos**, which means beautiful or attractive to the senses. The other is **agathos**, which means intrinsically good. Ice cream is good [kalos], but spinach is good [agathos]. The word **agathos** is used here.

2. **come out-** Gr. **einai ek**

- a. *The whole country of Galilee was had in contempt with the Jews; but Nazareth was so mean a place, that it seems it was even despised by its neighbours, by the Galilaeans themselves; for Nathanael was a Galilean, that said these words. It was so miserable a place that he could hardly think that any sort of good thing, even any worldly good thing, could come from thence. – Gill Commentary*

- b. We should never judge people on the basis of where they were born or what family they came from.

C. Philip said to him,

1. **said-** Gr. **lego**

D. come and see

1. **come-** Gr. **erchomai**

2. **see-** Gr. **eido**

- a. These were the words of Jesus to the first two disciples that questioned him. He told them, "Come and see". Philip used these same words with Nathaniel.
- b. This is the best response to those who want to debate you. Tell them to come and see for themselves.

47. **Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!"**

A. Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him,

- 1. **Nathanael**- means *gift of God*
- 2. **coming**- Gr. **erchomai**

- a. Nathaniel was hungry enough to come and see.

B. and said of him,

- 1. **said**- Gr. **lego**

C. Behold- Gr. **ide**

- 1. Nathanael said, "What good can come out of Nazareth?" Jesus immediately saw the good in Nathanael. Do we look for the good in others, or do we see their faults?

D. an Israelite indeed,

- 1. **Israelite**- Gr. **israelites**

- a. Not all of Israel is Israel. Only those who believe in God's promise are considered Israel. [Rom. 9:6-8](#)

E. in whom is no deceit

- 1. **deceit**- Gr. **dolos**- *a bait or contrivance for entrapping, fraud, deceit, cunning, guile*

- a. *The word translated "guile" is "Jacob" in the Septuagint. Jacob was tricky. He tricked his brother Esau out of his blessing and birthright and tricked his uncle Laban out of the better part of his goods. But after wrestling one night with the Lord, Jacob realized that what he wanted all along was not Esau's birthright nor Laban's riches but the Lord's blessing ([Gen 32:26](#)). And at that point, the Lord changed his name from "Jacob" to "Israel," from "Heel Snatcher," "Guile," and "Tricky One" to "Governed by God."*

-Courson Commentary

- b. Jesus will speak about Jacob now [the ladder set up to heaven that Jacob saw]. Jacob was a trickster and self-reliant

until he met with the Lord and wrestled with Him. He could not overcome the Lord and just gave up, clung to Him, trusted Him, and asked to be blessed. His name was changed to Israel, who prevails. Gen. 32:22-28 We prevail through faith in God's grace!

c. There was nothing of the old, self-reliant, tricky "Jacob" in Nathaniel. He was identified as being an "Israelite", won who prevails with God by trusting Him!

48. **Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."**

A. **Nathanael said to Him,**

1. **said-** Gr. **lego**

B. **How do you know me?**

1. **know-** Gr. **ginosko-** *to know in a personal and relational way*

a. Jesus did not know Nathanael because He was God. Jesus laid aside the attribute of omniscience when He became flesh. He knew Philip because He was anointed by the Holy Spirit, and the gifts of the Spirit operated in Him. The gifts will operate also in us!

C. **Jesus answered and said to him,**

1. **answered-** Gr. **apokrinomai**

2. **said-** Gr. **epo**

D. **Before Philip called you,**

1. **called-** Gr. **phoneo-** *to address with one's voice*

a. Jesus had knowledge of Nathanael before Philip had spoken to him. Jesus did not hear about Nathanael from Philip.

E. **when you were under the fig tree,**

1. **fig tree-** Gr. **suke**

a. *Probably engaged in prayer with God, for the speedy appearing of the salvation of Israel; and the shade of this fig tree was perhaps the ordinary place of retreat for this upright man. There are many proofs that the Jewish rabbins chose the shade of trees, and particularly the fig tree, to sit and study under.* -Clarke Commentary

b. *In Jesus' day, students traditionally studied under fig trees.*

The fig tree being the national symbol of Israel, I believe it was under a fig tree that Nathanael was very likely studying Genesis 28—the story of Jacob in the wilderness.

-Courson Commentary

- c. The fig tree represents legalistic Israel in the Scripture.
[Matt. 24:32](#) Nathanael came out from under the fig tree and came to Jesus who was grace. Jesus came to call those sitting under legalism into grace and into a relationship with Him. Nathanael answered the call, but most of Israel did not.

F. I saw you

1. **saw**- Gr. **eido**- *to see or know*

- a. This was not by natural observation but by a gift of the Holy Spirit. This was a word of knowledge coupled with a vision.

49. Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

A. Nathanael answered and said to Him,

1. **answered**- Gr. **apokrinomai**

2. **said**- Gr. **lego**

B. Rabbi- Gr. **rhabbi**- *my master, my teacher*

C. You are the Son of God,

1. **son**- Gr. **huios**

- a. *The confession is the highest that has yet been made, for it is impossible to understand 'Son of God' as the simple equivalent of Messiah (see note on [Joh 1:34](#)). Yet it is a confession coming out of the very heart of Old Testament prophecy, and to be accounted for by those circumstances of Nathanael's past history and present position that have been already noticed. It was not merely of a great Deliverer that the prophets had spoken. They had spoken not less of Jehovah Himself as coming, and as coming to be their Deliverer and their King. In the second Psalm, in particular, we find the two ideas of the Son of God and of Zion's King closely conjoined; and in the seventy - second Psalm the psalmist had described in glowing language that kingdom of peace and righteousness, extending over the whole earth, of which a shadow and type were afforded by the reign of*

Solomon. But if it be undeniable that these ideas were imbedded in the Old Testament, there is nothing inconceivable in their being gathered from it and enunciated by those who in meditation and prayer had caught its spirit. Add to this the self-evidencing power of the Person of Jesus, which must have been so much more to Nathanael than the mere record can be to us, and we need not wonder that he should thus acknowledge Jesus. Nor is there any warrant for describing his feelings as vague. What he did was to rise to the height of Old Testament prophecy; what he saw was that this must be Jehovah that was to come, the universal King.
-Popular NT Commentary

- b. Philip had called Jesus- "the son of Joseph", but Nathanael recognizes Him as much more- "the Son of God!"
- c. We must see Jesus as significantly more than just a man, but also as God Himself. The title- "the Son of God" identifies Jesus as God. [Joh 1:34](#), [Joh 6:69](#); [Joh 9:35](#); [Joh 11:27](#); [Joh 19:7-8](#); [Joh 20:31](#), [Psa 2:7](#), [Pro 30:4](#), [Mat 14:33](#); [Mat 16:16](#); [Mat 26:63](#), [Mar 1:1](#); [Mar 9:7](#); [Mar 12:6](#); [Mar 14:61](#), [Luk 1:35](#); [Luk 22:70](#), [Act 9:20](#), [Rom 1:3](#), [2Co 1:19](#), [Gal 2:20](#), [Rev 2:18](#).
- d. Nathanael was the first disciple to call Jesus, the Son of God. When you are free from all deceit, you are able to believe the truth entirely and immediately.

D. You are the King of Israel

1. king- Gr. basileus

- a. *This was one of the titles by which the Messiah was expected, and this was the title which was affixed to his cross, [Joh 19:18](#).* -Barnes Commentary

2. Israel

50. Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these."

A. Jesus answered and said to him,

- 1. answered- Gr. apokrinomai**
- 2. said- Gr. epo**

B. Because I said to you,

1. **said**- Gr. **epo**
- C. **I saw you under the fig tree,**
 1. **saw**- Gr. **eido**
 2. **fig tree**- Gr. **suke**
- D. **do you believe,**
 1. **believe**- Gr. **pisteuo**
 - a. *"So quickly convinced, and on this evidence only?"*
- an expression of admiration. -JFB
- E. **You will see greater things than these**
 1. **see**- Gr. **optanomai**
 2. **greater**- Gr. **meizon**
 - a. God always has greater for you than what you are experiencing now.
 - b. Jesus promised that we would do the works He did and even greater works because He was going to the Father.
[John 14:12](#)
 - c. Nathanael would see greater soon in his own hometown of Cana, where Jesus would turn water into wine at a wedding.

51. **And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."**

- A. **And He said to him,**
 1. **said**- Gr. **lego**
- B. **Most assuredly**- Gr. amen amen
 1. This word is repeated in the Greek- **amen amen**. The NKJV translates it as "Most assuredly".
 2. A fascinating thing we need to see is that when Jesus used the word **verily** or **amen** in Matthew, Mark, and Luke he **always** used it one single time- **verily**. He does this 50 times in making statements. However, every time Jesus uses the word **verily** or **amen** in John it is **always** repeated double- **verily, verily- amen amen**. He uses this double use 25 times in making statements.
 3. Why is it always repeated in John when Jesus speaks but never used twice in the other gospels? In the Gospel of John, Jesus is shown as being God. As God's word is of the utmost authority and stability, when God speaks, it is impossible for Him to lie. You can

stake your life on the very words of God. It is not just verily, but verily verily- amen amen! In the other gospels, Jesus is seen in different aspects of His humanity: as a king, a servant, and a perfect man. In John, He is seen as the perfect God!

C. I say to you,

1. say- Gr. lego

- a. Jesus had revealed to Nathanael that He had seen him under the fig tree. Now, He will reveal what Nathanael had been meditating on while he sat under the fig tree!
- b. Nathanael had been meditating on Jacob seeing a ladder set up reaching into heaven and the angels ascending and descending on it. Jesus will reveal that He Himself was that ladder that stretched between heaven and earth! He is the ladder between God and man.

D. hereafter you shall see heaven open,

1. see- Gr. optanomai- to see with the natural eye

- a. This means that Nathanael would physically see greater things with his natural eyes.

2. heaven- Gr. ouranos

3. open- Gr. anoigo

- a. It is not recorded in Scripture, but at some point, Nathanael saw the angels of God ascending and descending on the basis of Jesus' name doing their ministry.
- b. Because of what Jesus has done for us, we stand under an open heaven where all our prayers prayed in Jesus' name are heard and answered. Angels have a part in those prayers being answered and executed for us. Angels are sent to minister on our behalf. [Heb. 1:14](#)

E. and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man

1. angels- Gr. aggelos

2. ascending- Gr. anabaino

- a. *Notice Jesus said "ascending and descending." Most people think angels live in heaven, come down to earth occasionally, fly around a bit, and then head back up to heaven. Not true. Angels are ministering spirits assigned to specific saints, churches, and regions of the world (Acts 12; [Rev 2:1](#); Daniel 10). Although they can go up into the heavens, their*

primary place of residence is with us, with this church, and with various nations. Thus, the word order here is significant. Yes, angels ascend into the heavens, but they always descend back to earth. -Courson Commentary

- b. Angels ascend to God on the basis of our prayers and speaking His Word on earth. They receive direction from God in answering those prayers and come back down to minister His will.

3. **descending-** Gr. **katabaino**

- a. Our prayers are made in the name of Jesus. It is on the ladder of Jesus and His perfect life and death that angels ascend and then descend to the earth in bringing answers and help to us on the earth.

4. **Son of Man-** Gr. **huios anthropos**

- a. *This is Jesus' favorite self-designation, for it was mostly spoken by Jesus who used it over eighty times. In the New Testament, it refers only to Jesus and appears mostly in the Gospels (cf. [Act 7:56](#)). In the Fourth Gospel, the expression occurs thirteen times and is most commonly associated with the themes of crucifixion and suffering ([Joh 3:14](#); [Joh 8:28](#)) and revelation ([Joh 6:27](#), [Joh 6:53](#)), but also with eschatological authority ([Joh 5:27](#); [Joh 9:39](#)). While the term at times may refer merely to a human being or as a substitute for "I" ([Joh 6:27](#); cf. [Joh 6:20](#)), it especially takes on an eschatological significance referring to [Dan 7:13-14](#) where the "Son of Man" or Messiah comes in glory to receive the kingdom from the "Ancient of Days" (i.e., the Father). -MacArthur Commentary*