

WE HAVE SEEN HIS GLORY

John 1:1-18; 20:30-31

A small girl, reading a children's Bible story book, asked a significant question:

"How do I tell the difference between Jesus and God? They look alike to me!"

Jesus responds to Philip's question by telling him,

"Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father."

That's the conclusion John wants us to come to when we look at Jesus in his gospel.

Who is Jesus?

No more fundamental question has ever been asked!

Who He is has everything to do with our eternal destiny.

For many religious people, Jesus is just a good man who taught good moral lessons and showed us how to do good to others.

For John, who Jesus is, is the basis for everything!

It's not enough just to believe that Jesus was a good man!

For John's Jewish audience,

Jesus is everything they hoped for in their Messiah—plus a lot more!

For us as well, Jesus is everything we hoped for in a Savior—plus a lot more!

Who is Jesus?

He answers that question for Himself in John.

Why did John write this book? What does he want to tell us?

Purpose of John's Gospel

John 20:30-31 tells us what he wants to accomplish:

"Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disci-ples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, & that by believing you may have life in his name."

John's purpose is revealed on 3 levels:

1) He wants to show that Jesus is God's Son.

When Jesus claims to be God's Son, He and His Jewish listeners under-stand He's claiming to be God.

2) John wants us to trust Jesus personally.

[This trust in God's Son produces John's 3rd purpose:]

3) He wants us to receive life.

This is our purpose also,

We want to be sure *WE* under-stand Who He is & why He came.

John's message also develops on 3 levels:

1) Central theme: Jesus is God's Son;

Therefore He makes a legitimate claim to be God

2) Evidence produces 2 responses: some trust Jesus; others reject Jesus

WE must make a choice!

3) People who trust Jesus receive life.

Foundation of book:

Found in **John 1:1-18**.

He begins by telling us Who Jesus is and what He came to do:

Jesus is God Himself, Who came to earth in human form to reveal to us what God is like.

The Word Was God 1:1-13

1:1-3 *"In the beginning was the Word, & the Word was with God, & the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."*

As he continues, it will become clear he's talking about JESUS.

Jesus was already there, when the beginning began!

Jesus was present, in the beginning, *with God*—before creation began!

Go back as far as you want – billions of years.

We believe in a young earth, but we believe in a VERY OLD God.

Not that *HE* ages; He's as young and vigorous as He ever was.

But He's been around since before time itself! He invented time!

Jesus is God!

Structure directs our attention to GOD, GOD is the center:

"GOD was the Word!"

There's no question in John's mind that **Jesus is God**.

In the beginning, Jesus partici-pated in creation of *everything*.

He always WAS, always IS, & always WILL BE GOD!

His function as life & light

1:4-9 *"In him was life, & that life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. ⁶There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. ⁹The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world."*

As God, He is the source of all life and light.

He is THE LIGHT, sent to shine in darkness so *people in darkness might see the light!*

In spite of light He revealed, people didn't understand.

His relationship to those who believe 1:10-13

"He was in the world, & though the world was made by him, the world didn't recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."

He came to give us life!

While He was in the world, people didn't recognize Him.

Even Israel, God's own people, didn't welcome Him.

Nevertheless, those who do trust Him, become God's children.

The Word became flesh

1:14 ***"The Word became flesh & made His dwelling among us..."***

The Word resided among us

He “*pitched his tent*” among us!

“Tent” would cause O.T. reader to think of the Tabernacle!

God lived in that tent

so people could be with God and see what He is like

So Jesus “*pitched his tent*” in our midst, so we might see what God is like.

The Word reveals what God is like 1:14 => 18

*“The Word became flesh & made His dwelling among us. **We have seen His glory, the glory of the One & Only, who came from the Father, full of grace & truth.***

¹⁸ *No one has ever seen God, but **God the One and Only, who is at the Father’s side, has made Him known.***

Jesus was **BORN to show us what God is like!**

Jesus is God Himself, come in human form, to reveal what God is like

The Word died for us 18-19

The Word lives 20-21

2 LESSONS FOR US:

Because the Word lives, we can enjoy new life 1:11-12

“He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—

As Jesus came to reveal the Father, So we live to reveal God to people around us 17

For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

JESUS’ AFFIRMATION OF HIMSELF—THE GREAT “I AM” –5 times

[In 1st main section of book:]

PRESENTATION OF THE SON OF GOD 1:19-4:54

Witness to Samaritan woman concerning Water of Life 4

Question concerning the place for worship 4:19-24

Identification of Jesus as Messiah 4:25-26

He’s Messiah—but He’s a whole lot more!

“Jesus tells her, ‘I am, the One speaking to you.’”

Translators have problem with Jesus’ grammar—in all 5 passages.

They know He’s NOT saying, “*I am the one speaking to you.*”

So to make grammatical sense, they assume Jesus *meant* to say “*I am He.*” So they add a pronoun.

NAS—“*I who speak to you am He.*”

“He” is in italics. It’s not in the original text.

KJV does the same thing: “*I that speak unto thee am he.*”

NIV doesn’t use italics that way.

It just says, “*I who speak to you am he.*”

But the original just says “**I am.**” Period.

That makes no more sense in Greek than in English.

UNLESS Jesus is affirming that He IS Messiah, *but He's a lot more!*

There's good reason to assume that His repeated affirmation is intended to remind His Jewish readers about **Exodus 3:13-14**.

"Moses said to God, 'Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of Your fathers has sent me to you, and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?' God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

"I AM" is root for God's Name: Yahweh.

If Jesus is claiming to be "I am,"

He's claiming to be Yahweh, God

Isaiah 43:10-11 in the Greek O.T. affirms the same about God:

"You are my witnesses, and I am witness, says the Lord God . . . that you may know and believe and understand that I AM. Before Me there was no other god and after me there will be none. I am God."

To be sure we get the point,

Jesus repeats that affirmation 4 more times:

[Again, in 2nd main section of book:]

OPPOSITION TO THE SON OF GOD 5-12

Rejection of His Words and works 8:12-12:19

Discourse concerning the Light of the World. 8:12-30

Jesus tells the Jewish leaders He's going to leave them,
and go to a place where they won't be able to go. 8:21-30

In the midst of this discussion Jesus says: **8:24** ~~(26)~~

Unless we trust in "I AM," we will die in our sins.

"Unless you believe that I am, you will die in your sins."

NAV—"Unless you believe that I am HE, you will die in your sins."

Again, it's italicized—it's not there!

Even if translators add the pronoun, you don't solve the problem!

There's no antecedent here to pick up.

Who is "He"? No "he" is mentioned!

NIV (even more creative) *"If you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins."*

This is another reminder that **Jesus is Yahweh**, the God of Moses.

8:28, Jesus picks up the same thread, the same thing happens

***"When you lift up the Son of Man,
then you will know that I am."***

NAS—"You will know that I am he."

NIV—"You will know that I am the one I claim to be."

He again reminds us that **Jesus is the Great I AM. He is God.**

But *don't miss John's point*; remember his purpose.

He wants us to trust Jesus, so we might receive life.

Thus he inserts the warning:

"Unless you trust Him, you will die in your sins."

Debate concerning the children of Abraham 8:31-59

When they claim to be Abraham's children,

Jesus rejects their claim; they don't act like him. **8:56-59**

This time Jesus breaks the rules of grammar a different way.

This time it's the tense of the verb He "confuses."

They question Jesus' claim to know Abraham.

How can a man less than 50 claim to have seen Abraham?

Jesus responds: ***"Before Abraham came into being, I AM."***

NAV and NAS get it right: *"Before Abraham was born, I AM"*

Grammar requires that He use past tense: *"I was."*

Jesus claims to be **the eternally self-existent One—the I AM.**

Jesus is GOD!

The Jews get the point!

They pick up stones to stone Him for that "heretical" claim.

[The final affirmation that Jesus is "I AM" is included in 3rd main section:]

INSTRUCTION BY THE SON OF GOD 13-16

Washing of the Disciples' Feet 13:1-20 13:19

After predicting His betrayal, Jesus adds: *"I am telling you before it happens, that when it does happen, you might believe that I AM."*

"When it happens, you will believe that I am."

Again, both NIV and NAS add "he" to try to make sense of it.

Again, Jesus is affirming that HE is **the Great I AM**—that He is God.

Some might protest that He only affirms it five times.

But *how many times does He have to say it to demonstrate that He means it?*

WHAT DOES THIS REPEATED CLAIM MEAN TO JOHN, AND TO US?

1. Jesus, the One and Only God, 1:14, 18

came to reveal what God is like.

If we want to know God, we must see Jesus.

2. The people Jesus came to reveal God to reject Jesus. 1:11

They want nothing to do with Him.

3. [3 Benefits of trusting Jesus:]

All who trust Jesus receive eternal life, forgiveness of sins, and the right to become God's children. 3:16; 8:24; 1:12

3:16 Those who trust Jesus receive eternal life.

8:24 Those who trust I AM receive forgiveness of sins.

1:12 Those who trust Jesus receive

the right to become God's children.

SO WHAT WILL YOU DO ABOUT JESUS?

C.S. Lewis: He's either a liar, a lunatic, or GOD.

If He's a liar, the Jews are right. He should be stoned.

If He's a lunatic, He should be committed.

If He's God, WE better trust Him!

What do you think? Will you trust Him?