

# Encountering Jesus in the Gospel of John

## John 1

### Pastor Guy Gray

#### A Life Changing Vision of Jesus Christ

When Luke thought of the birth of Jesus, he thought of shepherds and angel choirs and a manger. Matthew thought of genealogies and wise men bearing gifts. John knew these truths; but his heart and mind were filled with an even bigger picture. John thought of timeless eternity and then the world being created out of nothing by the Word of God almighty. He thought of the deep mystery of God's divine nature. He thought of life and light—but also the darkness that pervades our beautifully created, but tragically fallen world. John includes all this in the first five verses of Chapter one of his gospel. John starts at the deep end of things and goes from there!

From the very first paragraph, it's clear that John wants to give us a life changing vision of Jesus Christ—a vision that will cause us to think more deeply about Jesus than ever—a vision that will move us to a deeper faith than we have ever known. This is confirmed once again at the end of the Gospel, where John summarizes his reason for writing:

*“Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. <sup>31</sup> But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name (John 20:30-31).”*

Are you ready for a life changing vision of Jesus Christ?  
Are you hungry for this?

#### Our Quest

All of John 1 is stunning. But the ultimate shocker comes in verse 14:

*“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14 ESV).*

This verse is the key to the Gospel. This Gospel is a revelation of the glory of Jesus Christ, who is the revelation of the glory of God almighty. Every page, every word, every story in this gospel is there to reveal His glory. As we see His glory, our faith will grow. As our faith grows, we experience life in His name. So this is our quest: to see His glory like never before. John invites us to join him as he shares the ultimate depths of the Glory of God in Jesus Christ. Will you go on this quest with an open, seeking heart?

#### How to Read the Gospel of John

John's gospel is unique for many reasons. One of the most amazing things about it is how we are “set up” to read it in a special way. The prologue of John (1:1-18) is so deep in thought and rich in content as to be overwhelming. But it is placed there for an important reason. As we continue into the Gospel, we are to read every word, sentence, and story with the words of the prologue ringing in our hearts and minds. That's the only way we are really going to get it.

But there is something more. We are also to read every page of John with the ending in mind just as clearly! That's why in chapter two (2:19-22), we have a reference to the resurrection of Jesus. Throughout John we are reminded to think about how the story ends, even as we are reading each and every word. This is fascinating; and it's important. There is something so huge going on in the Gospel of John. There is a life changing vision of Jesus being given to us. But to get it, we need to think deeply. We need to pay attention to all the parts, all the stories, all the teachings. All the while we need to see each part as it relates to the bigger picture of the both the incarnation and

the resurrection of Jesus. This is the only way we will understand who Jesus really is, what He has done, and what that means for our lives. Only then can we fully respond in faith to Jesus.

### **A Prayer**

Lord God almighty, maker of heaven and earth, help me open my heart and mind to the amazing truth of the Gospel. Let me see and understand the glory of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Most of all help me to respond in fullness of faith. The darkness of this world still presses in on us, Lord; I feel it. But your light in Christ cuts through. Give me eyes to see, Lord. May I know the grace, truth, and life that shine through Christ in the Gospel of John—in Jesus Name, amen.

### **For further reflection:**

This week, read John 1:1-18 every day. Reflect and write about John's vision of Jesus Christ as revealed in these verses. What is significant and unique about what John tells about Jesus? How can and should it impact your life this week?

## **Here's what's Happening at River West:**

### **This Week:**

#### **Wednesday, October 1st • Student Ministries Prayer Group at River West Church @ 7-8pm]**

Come and pray for our Jr. High & High School students and the Student Ministry leaders at River West. Contact Cynthia Weston @ 515-1464 or [cwweston@juno.com](mailto:cwweston@juno.com) for more information

### **Photo Directory]**

We have had such a fantastic response to our new photo directory!

October 7<sup>th</sup> is our last date available and we have very few time slots left. If you haven't signed up and would like to, contact [gretchen@riverwest.org](mailto:gretchen@riverwest.org) or 699.2226

### **Coming up:**

#### **Friday, October 10th • The Hub @ 7pm**

A growing community of Christ for those in their 20's. This first kick off event will start at Chris & Julie Coffman's home for worship & food and then off to bowling! For more information contact, Pastor Eric at 699.2226 or [eric@riverwest.org](mailto:eric@riverwest.org)...see back of this page for more events!

### **Get Involved:**

#### **Here's the chance you've been waiting for to get involved...]**

We have a few opportunities for you to become a part of River West by getting involved through our service teams-being a part of these teams does not mean that you will be serving every weekend, or making a meal each week, it simply means that that you are on the team and are willing to help out when you can...

- **Meals Ministry:** is in need of people willing to make/and or help in the scheduling of meals for those in time of need. Contact Mary Halvorson at [Mary@riverwest.org](mailto:Mary@riverwest.org)

- **Service Squad:** Projects vary from month to month based on the needs of others. Call Kevin Floyd for more information 892.8907

- **Community Builders:** The folks responsible for the after-service food and fellowship time. Come to an informative breakfast meeting Saturday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 9-10:30am at the Community Center to learn more about this valuable ministry. Contact Charlene Carlock at [Charlene.c@comcast.net](mailto:Charlene.c@comcast.net)

- **Communion:** The team responsible for preparing the elements for communion once a month. Contact Mary Halvorson at [mary@riverwest.org](mailto:mary@riverwest.org)

- **Greeters:** We need your friendly face to welcome those who come to worship at the 11:00am & 5:30pm services. 11:00//Judi Dinan at [judidinan@comcast.net](mailto:judidinan@comcast.net) or 5:30//Gretchen Russell at [gretchenr@verizon.net](mailto:gretchenr@verizon.net)

