
1

Who is Jesus?

John 1:1-18

We are going to study from the book of John. John was one of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ, one of His closest men. He walked with Jesus for three years. He watched Him live. He watched Him die. He claimed to have seen Him after He rose from the dead. He was said to be present when Jesus ascended back into heaven. John's message is an eyewitness account of who and what Jesus was. We will begin by reading the text and then move to answering the questions.

The purpose of this lesson is to establish a few of the key claims the Bible writers made about Jesus. Since John wrote his gospel *"that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name"* (John 20:31) you can continue this series confident that it can produce faith in even the faithless if they are willing to listen.

1. What is John referring to when he speaks of "the Word" in verses 1-3? Compare these verses with John's statement in verse 14.

Don't get caught up in the theology of how Jesus and God can be the same. There are many places you could go and things you could say. You should probably leave them for another time. Don't overwhelm your learners. Just be sure the point is made that Jesus is full deity, was present in the creation, etc.

2. What four claims are made about this "Word" in verses 1 and 2?

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- A. Existed from the beginning.
 - B. Was with God.
 - C. Was God i.e., deity, in the beginning.
 - D. Was active in creation.

The greatest controversy in the religious world is "who is Jesus Christ?" This is also one of the most important questions any individual can consider, both because of the claims of Jesus and the great

number of people who follow Him today. Without entertaining any of the controversy, this verse comes right to the point. Whatever you might presently believe about Jesus, if you accept what the Bible says, it must harmonize with these verses.

Other views:

A. Jesus was not deity (the view of other world religions and atheists.)

B. Jesus was deity, but less so than God the Father (the view of some modern religious cults.)

3. Why do you think John calls Jesus "the Word"? What are words used for among people? With this in mind, what do you think John means by what he said in verse 18?

Allow your students to speculate both to learn where they stand and to help them clarify their own views.

Words are used to communicate and inform.

Jesus came to inform us about God, to explain Him.

4. What qualities does John attribute to the Word in verses 1-5 and 14?

Deity
Creator
Pre-existent
Possessor of life

5. What was John's role in relation to Jesus? (See verse 7-8)

6. According to John in verse 12, who can become God's children?

You may know other verses that address this issue of becoming God's children more specifically. For the purpose of this lesson, stick to the context here in John. Your main aim is to produce faith in your participants. There will be opportunity later to discuss the issue of salvation and the New Birth in more detail.

Note that John here tells *who* may become God's children but he does not explain *how* this is done.

That You May Believe

To answer that question one will have to go elsewhere.

7. What do you think might be implied in verse 12 about those who do not believe/receive Jesus?

This is probably not the time to lean on your group members for a decision. There will be time for response later or perhaps outside of the group setting. Your purpose here is simply to establish the role of faith and the necessity of receiving Jesus.

8. What do you think John meant about being born of God in verse 13?

We enter God's family not by physical birth (blood, flesh, etc.) but by being born of God. Physical birth does not make us members of God's family. We are not Christians just because we were born in a "Christian nation" or were born to Christian parents or agree with Christian morality.

9. Where are you with regard to these claims John makes about Jesus?

I believe them without reservation.

I'm not sure.

I find these things difficult to believe.

Don't pressure people here for a commitment of faith. There will be opportunities to commit as you continue through the book of John. This lesson will at least give you an idea where all of your group members are in their progress toward faith.
