

1. John 1:1-18

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Getting started

When people want to know about God where will they go to find out – what people, experiences etc?

Where would you advise people to look, and listen if they wanted to find out about God?

Observation

1. According to verse 1&2 what is the relationship between God and the word?
2. According to verses 3-4 what is the word responsible for?
3. What was John's role according to verses 6-9?
4. According to verses 5,10-11 what is the relationship between the word and the world?
5. How does one become a child of God according to verses 12-13?
6. According to verse 14 what did the word do and what did this mean?
7. Who is the word?
8. According to verse 18 what are the consequences of the word, Jesus Christ, becoming flesh and dwelling amongst us?

For your information

The 'word' or 'logos' as John uses it in John 1:1 would have been a significant 'title' for both Jews and Greeks. For Jews it would have reminded them about God's activity in the Old Testament - God works through his word - in creating etc.

Greeks saw the 'word' or 'logos' as the organising principle of the universe, it was the logos that gave order to everything.

Both Jews and Greeks would have been shocked to think that the word became flesh.

In verse 14 John uses language which has its background in Exodus 34 and 40 – God shows Moses his glory and makes his dwelling with Israel in a tent – the word John uses for dwelling literally means 'pitched his tent' amongst us.

Interpretation

1. Why do you think it took John so long to say that Jesus was the word?
2. From what you know of John's gospel why do you think John has written 1:1-18? How does this passage 'set up' the rest of the gospel?
3. Who do you think the 'we' are mentioned in v 14?
4. What are the benefits of Jesus coming into the world?
5. What are the implications of this passage for those who want to say that Jesus is one of many ways/people to knowing God?

Implications

1. "If anyone tries to talk about what God is like and does not refer to Jesus Christ then they can be ignored as not really knowing what they are talking about. It may be interesting but ultimately futile."

How do you respond to this statement? What are the implications of John 1:1-18 for the truth claims of other religions and philosophies that claim to speak about God?

2. How would you explain to someone what it means to receive, to believe in the name of Jesus?

Prayer suggestions

- Thank God for sending Jesus to accurately reveal who he really is
- Ask that we might better understand how Jesus can be both identical to and distinct from God
- Ask that God will help us to receive Jesus and to believe in his name, living this out in our daily lives