

November 30, 2025 - John 1:1-5 - "Somethin' about this Word"

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[0 : 00] Please turn to John 1, 1-5. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

! He was in the beginning with God, and all things were made through Him. Without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. This is God's Word. It's great to have kids just doing those motions.

I couldn't take my eyes off Maria. Did you see her? Those pigtails. I mean, I'm not singling one family out, but everyone was cute.

We'll make equity there with the observation. But, man, it is just so cute to see some of these kids worshipping the Lord. I think it's a testimony of the work that Cassie has been entrusted to downstairs.

[1 : 10] While we're up here in this sanctuary, you can kind of hear sometimes the bass kind of reverberating throughout the floors of the sanctuary.

But a lot of the workers downstairs go unnoticed. A lot of the kids are kind of like, oh, yeah, they're down there. And a lot of churches treat that like daycare, like everything like that.

But we don't. There's discipleship occurring downstairs. And every volunteer is dedicated to the discipleship of children. And so seeing them, they really know what John says about the gospel, which is just incredible.

And so praise the Lord for the work that he's doing in the young lives of this church. These are the next generation of disciple makers that the enemy wants to take out. And we will do our due diligence to train them for that battle.

And praise the Lord for that. We're stepping into a new series in John. And this Advent, we're going to be specifically just in John chapter 1.

[2 : 20] And taking this in smaller bite sizes of verses, which can get a little bit more into the detail and nuances of words and things like that.

And for me, definitely a little bit of Greek. And I am so happy about that. But I'm not going to be teaching you Greek. But I'm going to be helping us all understand why different things matter in the text.

Why John uses different words and doesn't use other words. And all of this reinforces significance in God's communicated word and revelation through us through the Bible.

And so I'm really excited about this Advent series through chapter 1 of John's gospel. And I think it's impossible to begin this series without prayer.

And so I'd like to open with a word of prayer. Lord, we give to you this time for you to guide our minds, engage our hearts, and equip our hands to serve this world, the truth of the gospel.

[3 : 39] That it might be heard from our lips. It might be seen through our actions. Father, help us to be ambassadors of this truth. Help us to hear your word.

Not just hear it, but be transformed by it. And we know that this is possible only by the power of your Holy Spirit working. We pray this in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. So it's possible to spend our entire lives, our entire lives, placing hope in things that cannot bear weight for our souls.

We say all the time, I hope that this year is going to be better. I hope that the scan at the doctor's office is clear.

I hope that the new job works out. I hope that the kids turn out okay. But let's be honest.

[4 : 47] Most of our hopes are just baptized wishes. Right? We kind of tether our hopes to circumstances in our lives.

It could be people in our lives. It could be our health. It could be our plans. Politics, even. Or even our own spiritual performance can be the tether of our hope.

And so, naturally, when these things in our lives begin to shake, so does our hope. Because it's tethered to something unstable.

I want you to imagine for a moment, like, your hope is a rope. And, yeah, this isn't a Dr. Seuss illustration, but that rhymes. And for non-intentional purposes.

But imagine your hope as a rope. So, many of us, we could kind of see this hope being tied to things, like, inside of our lives.

[5 : 46] And so, when storms come, this instability is felt in our souls and in the depths of our hearts and our minds. We begin to doubt and question everything in our lives.

Because the storm has come and we've tethered our hope to something inside this storm. Whether that's your job, whether it's your relationships, or your bank account, or any sense of your control.

Any control freaks out there? Oh, yeah. And when the storm hits, the very thing you've tied your hope to starts to sink with you.

What we desperately need is a hope that exists outside the storm. A hope that's anchored beyond time.

Beyond creation. Beyond the darkest night we'll ever face. And John's gospel, as we heard read today, thank you, Gracie.

[6 : 46] It doesn't begin with Bethlehem and a manger. John's gospel doesn't begin with Caesar's decree. It doesn't begin with an angel's pronouncement to shepherds.

John's gospel begins before Genesis. Before Genesis 1-1 that reads, We have to see what John is doing here.

As he reaches back far as language as it can take him. And he says, hang on a minute. Let's take one step further. That's where John is.

And he says, In the beginning was the word. This morning, Scripture invites us not to build a hope from the ground up, but to receive hope from God who speaks from eternity, before Genesis.

And I'm going to break this passage up, these five verses up, into three separate sections to analyze where hope can be found.

[8 : 08] And what we'll see is, we'll see hope before time. We'll see hope in every atom. We'll see hope in the darkness. And at the end of the time that we have today, I believe that we'll see something begin to unfold.

That true hope is tethered beyond creation. True hope is tethered beyond creation. The sermon title today is Something About This Word.

Something About This Word. And as we make our way through this text, within these five short verses, a single question is going to be whispered throughout the text.

Of what kind of word is this? What kind of word is this? There's something about this word. Let's look at the first section here today.

Section one. We see hope before time in verse one through two. It says, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

[9 : 23] He was in the beginning with God. This kind of sounds, if this was sped up, this would be another one of David's rap songs that he loves to do.

It's just all over the place with very similar circular writing. And John is opening his gospel as if to converse with the opening of Scripture.

He's having a conversation with Genesis. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And John, in this circular, cyclical writing, he's a very contrasting, cyclical writer.

He makes contrasts, intentional contrasts, in all of his writings. And it isn't necessarily reinforcing this old creation.

That's not the purpose of him opening up with this. He's not reinforcing it, but it's clear that he's introducing the dawn of something deeper. In so doing, John is not alluding to Scripture, but he is expounding upon Scripture of old, of Genesis 1.1, filling in what was before the beginning.

[10 : 35] Now, from original hearer's perspective, the Jewish readers didn't have books that were titled Genesis. Their books were labeled basically by the first phrase, in the beginning.

So he's literally not going back to Genesis. He's triggering for these original hearers, in the beginning, saying, you know what that means.

Go to the book. In the beginning was the Word. And so he's saying, go back to Genesis. Go back to in the beginning before anything was made, something, or maybe perhaps someone, was already there.

The word beginning, *arane*, is used here to be deeper than just like the first tick of time, like the origin of time.

But its use, it rewinds history beyond our lives, beyond the founding of our country, beyond the cross of Christ, beyond Abraham, beyond Adam, and beyond the first glimmer of light that God created.

[11:55] *Arcane* is used here, and John pushes us to the edge of the precipice of thought, to the horizon beyond which human language cannot go.

There's just no words to explain and describe. And he says, there, you will find the Word.

Upon the precipice of language, there's something there, the Word. The verb that John uses continues to prove to be intentional.

He says, in the beginning, before all this, was the Word. He could have used a *genito*.

He could have said that, which means came into being. He'll use that a lot in verse 3. He didn't use that here. He used a different verb here that says, was, was the Word.

[13:03] This means the Word has always existed. It wasn't created at any certain point in time. It was always there. And the Word doesn't just join the story.

It stands before the story. In fact, it would sound like someone saying, before Abraham, I was where I am.

Now, this Word existed with God, which is a distinct person in real fellowship with God. This is unique, too.

And yet, John goes even a step further. Not only was this Word in the beginning, not only was this Word with God, but this Word was God.

Now, this can get complicated, can't it? He doesn't mean that the Word is a different God, and he doesn't mean that the Father is the Word.

[14:13] this is what the church later summarized as three persons, like one God, the same substance in personhood, equal in power, equal in glory.

The Father is God, the Word is God. And so, they are distinct in person, yet they're the same in essence. If that sounds hard to grasp, that's a doozy for a Sunday morning at 1030, right?

Well, 11, so there's no excuse. If that sounds hard to grasp, think about it this way, and I'm going to try not to commit heresy, but you and I are different persons, right?

But we share the same human nature. We're essentially human, but we're different persons. Now, but think about it in a far greater sense, infinitely more mysterious ways.

John is saying, the Father and the Word are different persons, but fully share the divine nature, one divine nature. They are not two gods.

[15:21] They are one in more than one person. They are God in more than one person. And verse 2 says, this one, our translation says he, but better translated as this one was in the beginning with God.

This one was in the beginning with God. Before the beginning, the Word existed with God and as God. There's something about this Word, isn't there?

There's something about this Word. He's not merely close to God. He is truly God, this Word, possessing everything that makes God, God.

One verse unpacks a triad of hope that is outside of time.

Preexistent hope. We see His hope in the presence of God, being with God, and we see also the person, the essence of God in this Word.

[16:39] This is something, there's something about this, isn't there? And so, the Word gives us hope because it stands before time itself, but John's not finished.

There's a couple more verses. The next verse tells us what this Word has done. And it changes everything. In section 2, we see there's hope in every atom.

And we see this in verse 3. John makes two parallel clauses, one positive and one negative. And he says, all things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.

It's reinforcing this, John's reversing our instincts, I believe, that the Word does not arise from creation. Creation actually arises from the Word.

He's reinforcing that fact here. And here, the verb that he left out in the beginning that never was created, he says, again, it's here. He says it actually three times, two in an aorist tense and one in a perfect tense.

[17 : 52] The aorist tense points back to the moment of creation. All things were made through Him. Back there. All things were made through Him. And without Him was not anything made.

Talking about past. But then in the perfect tense, a completed action with present effects. We see here, it's highlighting the testimony of this Word's power in creation that sustains creation and is everlasting in life now.

The universe did not arise from preexistent matter that God simply put into order. That He said, let's make sense of all this stuff.

Let's put some buildings together. Let's put an ocean here, right? Like all this stuff existed. It didn't, the universe did not come from preexistent matter.

Not according to this verse. Not according to this verse. Regardless of what science, Bill Nye the science guy taught you, this verse says no.

[19 : 05] No, there was nothing. Nothing. There was no matter. There was no energy. There was no time. There was no space until the Word spoke.

everything that we see then, galaxies to blades of grass, angels to atoms, came into being, a genito, came into being through Him.

And in the perfect tense, that means that He sustains. His creation sustains and remains sustained. there is something about this Word, isn't there?

All things are utterly dependent on the Word, and the Word is utterly independent of all things. Now, John's not writing theology in a vacuum, as if this doesn't translate today.

He's confronting every worldview, whether ancient or modern, that tries to shrink God down to the size of creation. John's statement collides with ancient and modern spiritual ideas.

[20 : 24] You may hear about it as spiritual or New Age mysticism, which is Eastern mystical ideologies. It's ideas that, say, you might hear it, I think many actors attribute God to the universe.

You might hear it in that type of language, like God is the universe, or God is an impersonal energy, or God is a force that's flowing through things.

So, take your shoes off when you're going to the park and ground yourself to nature, like, this is weird Eastern mystical thought. Like, it's nonsense. And beware of that.

If your family members are doing that, I would encourage you to explain the truth to them in John. John says no. The Word was not just a part of a chain of spiritual beings.

beings, the entire chain exists because of Him. The entire chain exists because of Him. Every spiritual power, every angel, every planet, every human being depends upon the Word.

[21 : 47] Avid atheist and physicist Stephen Hawking once said that the goal of science is, a single theory that describes the whole universe.

A single theory that describes the whole universe. And so John actually helps Stephen with his statement.

He says that the theory is not a formula. The theory is this one. the theory is this word that explains the whole universe.

And you see, when Scripture speaks of creation, it's not offering like poetry or just some lavish language that sounds nice in Greek or Hebrew or maybe even metaphors.

It's identifying an architect, the designer behind the design. And if this is true, we must be guarded from turning creation itself into our hope, tethering our hope into creation.

[22 : 58] We can't worship nature. We worship the Creator. And because He stands outside the world that He made, He is free to enter it in His grace and, dare I say, to redeem it.

There is something about this word, isn't there? This word gives us hope because He is God before all things and creator of all things.

But John wants to take us a step further as creation is only sort of like this stage that is being set right now.

John brings a drama to life. you kind of like hear the words waltzing together of life and light and darkness that cannot be overcome.

And we see this in the third section today in verse four and five. It says, in Him was life and the life was the light of men and the light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. [24 : 11] You can hear that dance and drama. Notice the shift. John doesn't say, through Him was life, as if the Word simply passes life along, passes the baton of life along, but he's describing the essence of the Word.

Was life. Life was the Word. The Word was life, just as it were with God. And so we see that life is in Him, in His essence.

John assumes something that we often forget. We wonder about darkness all the time in the world and even in creation.

But we understand that there's something that John is assuming here, that darkness is actually not a substance, but darkness is a condition of having an absence of light.

And we see that in the darkness, the Word then radiates life. John uses the word zoe, life, more than any New Testament author.

[25 : 32] In the New Testament, in total, it's 135 times. In John's gospel here, it's like 36 times. And then his other writings, 1 John and Revelation, it's another 36 times.

Over half of the usage, there's something significant that John likes to communicate with this, but he always speaks about zoe relating to the fullness of life, equality and essence of life, relating to spiritual and eternal, not just temporal, like our hearts beating or anything like that.

It's something deeper than that. And this life found in the words being is a general revelation, a general revelation to humanity as the word radiates light toward humanity.

In other words, all humanity, all humanity can see the light. All humanity can see it. You can see it through a human conscience. You can, the humanity can see it through having a gauge of right and wrong.

Humanity can see it for this longing for beauty or even for justice. I've heard it said that there is no such thing as a godless person.

[26 : 53] God is too near every one of us. And the simple fact that we can talk about goodness, we can talk about evil, we can talk about beauty, we can talk about meaning, proves the light actually can be seen, doesn't it?

Which leaves the world without excuse, like Romans, Paul gets into in Romans chapter one.

Additionally, as John plays upon this light concept of Genesis one, we see, we might see an advanced emphasis upon physical darkness and spiritual darkness, just as in the beginning, God created and there was light, remember?

Like physical light. Well, this light that John's talking about is a little bit deeper, it's spiritual light, a new creation coming about. This would mean that while the light is perceived, it's not always received from creation.

And the present tense of shine truly matters in spiritual matters, because this means that the one, the word is the reason for ongoing internal hope of inextinguishable light of salvation from darkness to be brought out of darkness.

This one, there's something about this word, isn't there? I love and appreciate how John assumes the spiritual darkness, an effect of sin that originates from Adam at the fall of humanity.

[28 : 30] Original sin doesn't simply mean that we occasionally do wrong things. It means that since the fall of humanity, every human being is born morally corrupt, with a morally corrupt nature, born inclined towards darkness, not the light.

And this is precisely what John 1.5 assumes, that the light shines, but the human heart left to itself does not run towards the light.

That's not our natural instinct. It resists, it hides, it suppresses, and it prefers the darkness. Friends, if you doubt original sin, you don't need a theology degree.

you just need to have kids. You just need kids around. G.K. Chesterton once said, original sin is the only part of Christian theology which can really be proved.

And it certainly is true. Think about it, you don't have to train a child to love the dark. You have to train a child to love the light. it. No one has to teach a toddler how to be selfish, to grab, to drag their siblings by the hair through the hallway with a chunk of hair in my hand.

[30 : 04] I'm not telling you from personal experience or anything like that. We don't have to teach them to throw a fit. We don't have to teach them to resist authority.

No, these things flow naturally. naturally, because they flow from the dark nature that we've all inherited. It's a theological reality that can be proved and observed as G.K. Chesterton points out. But there's something about this word that makes all the difference, isn't there? Something stronger than our nature, that's brighter than our darkness, deeper than our rebellion.

All through this passage, I've been asking, we've been asking ourselves, whispering the question, what kind of word is this? Because there's something about this word.

What is this word? We may think, okay, word, put one word with many words, you get a message, right?

[31 : 12] You might piece that together, it might be a message. message. You might think, well, maybe this is a divine, eternal message of life and light and initiative of God.

But friends, what if this word is a person? What if this word is a person? What if this, the message is actually not a what, but a who?

what if this word is Jesus Christ? What if it is? If this word is Jesus, our hope would not be anything new, right?

It would be as old as time itself, older than the Bible. If this word is Jesus, our hope would not be abstract and temporal creation.

If this word is Jesus, our hope is not in the denial of darkness, but in the reception of light. If this word is Jesus, we have a true hope tethered beyond creation.

[32 : 33] Beyond creation. God this hope would begin with God, not with us. A God who is holy and sovereign over his creation, who made all things good, including us.

We were literally made for God, to enjoy him forever, to bring him glory, worship him. But instead of worshiping God, we turned away.

We turned away from him. Sin became our idol as we reject the ruler. Our rebellion is an attempt to take God's throne and overthrow him as ruler and to claim life as our own.

You see, sin makes us guilty then, corrupt,! Corrupted nature, enslaved to sin, unable to save ourselves. Friends, this is why Jesus came.

The eternal son took on flesh, lived the perfect life in obedience that we failed to live, died the death that we deserved, and on the cross he stood in our place as a substitute.

[33 : 44] The wrath of God was satisfied and justice once and for all was served. Jesus rose from the dead though in victory, right?

Proving that he is a king. He is the king, an offering of forgiveness, of righteousness, and eternal life to all who trust him.

There is something about this word, isn't there? And if this word is Jesus, it is in Christ alone where our hope is found.

Because when we turn from our sin to Jesus, God forgives our sin and counts Christ's righteousness as our own.

We're adopted into the family of God. We are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. And so the word who existed eternally is the word who secures eternally.

[34 : 49] And friends, if this is Jesus, I pray that we have unyielding faith in Him above all things, that in Christ alone our hope is truly found.

Let's pray.