

Nine Keys to Discipleship

1. Who Is the Jesus of the Bible? John 1:1-5, could also use Hebrews 1:1-14
2. What Is Authentic Christianity? 1 Peter 4:7-11
3. How Do You Become a Christian? Romans 10:9-15, 4 Symbols
4. What 6 Things Happen When You Become a Christian? FHIDLS
Luke 22:20, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Ezekiel 36:26-27, Hebrews 8:6-13
5. Who Has God Made You Now that You've Become a Christian?
IN Christ, alive spiritually, a saint by nature 2 Corinthians 5:17
6. How Do You Walk as the Christian You Now Are?
2 Cycles ECRAT Galatians 5:16,18, Ephesians 5:18
7. How Do You Serve as a Christian? Spiritual Gifts
Romans 12:5-8, 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 1 Peter 4:10-11
8. How Should You Respond When Under Spiritual Attack?
Six pieces of armor from Ephesians 6:10-18
9. How Can You Study the Bible? 2 Timothy 2:15, 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Who Is the Jesus of the Bible? (John 1:1-5)

L. Newbigin: “What if the person [Jesus] is in fact the original truth by which all else has to be confronted and questioned?” Who was Jesus before time and creation even existed? Who has He forever been? When the apostle John wrote from Ephesus around 90 A.D. (Jesus died and was raised from the dead around 30 A.D.), all the other letters of the NT had been written. Christianity had gone out to the Gentile (non-Jewish) world. The Christian Church was no longer predominantly Jewish. John’s message was Jesus!

In **John 1:1-18**, we have the identification of “the historic Jesus with the eternal Word who was with the Father and who is God.” This is the life of the Word in eternity, before the world was (**1:1-5**). **Read 1:1,14,18. 1:1-13** The Pre-Incarnate Word (before Jesus became flesh and dwelt among mankind). **1:14-18** The Incarnate Word (when He became flesh). Use as your pattern of study: What does the passage say and mean, and then, how can I apply?

Read John 1:1-5. :1 In the beginning the Word (Greek logos) already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God (NLB). If you had to wrap up the essential message of these 5 verses in 15 words or less, what would yours be? Take time right now to write yours.

Mine was: The always-existing Word was with God, was God, Creator of everything, Life, and Light.

In the beginning: The Word is eternal: He has always existed. When you go back to creation, the Word was already there (**17:5**). The pre-existence of Jesus is also taught by the apostle Paul (**Phil. 2:6, Col. 1:17**) and in **Heb. 1:2**. The Word is One whose existence lies beyond time and creation.

Was the Word: As a NT designation of Jesus, the term Word (Logos) occurs only in **1:1,14, 1 Jn. 1:1, Rev. 19:13**. It means to “pick out or select words in order to express one’s thoughts.” Look at the ‘Word’ and you’ll see the expression of the mind and thoughts of God! The 7 (out of 35) wonderful ‘signs’ by Jesus that the writer John recorded are “windows opening on to the reality who is God.” In every sign John saw the display of the reality of God breaking into time and into human affairs. Jesus is the visible and audible expression of the mind and thoughts of God. The Bible is the written expression of the mind and thoughts of God.

And the Word was (imperfect tense, something continuous) **with God:** The Word is separate and distinct from God the Father, yet existed with or face to face with Him. One in essence and nature, yet personally distinct.

And the Word was God. There was never a time when the Logos was not fully God. The Bible asserts the Word’s full deity and perfect humanity (**1:1,14,18, Mt. 1:23, Is. 9:6, Mic. 5:2, Phil. 2:6-11, Col. 2:9, Heb. 1:1-3, Rev. 19:16**). The Word was very God, fully God. **:2 Lit. This one (He) was in the beginning with God.** In time He came to be with man.

Questions or comments on these truths we are learning?

:3 All things came into being through Him [Creator], and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. The Word was involved in creating everything that exists (**Gen. 1, 1 Cor. 8:6, Col. 1:16-17, Heb. 1:2**). He and the Father thought it and then spoke it into being (see **Rom. 4:17**). The Word is not a created being; He is the One who creates, yet later became part of His creation! **Read Hebrews 11:3.** If your God can’t do this, your God is too small! John MacArthur on **gty.org** has an excellent series on creation under **Genesis 1**.

What has been your exposure to the creation of the world? What do you believe about creation? Why is this important to God and you? Questions, comments, and/or lessons learned on this truth?

:4-5 Life and Light: The Word is both. These are 2 essential things every person needs. **In Him was life.** We must go to the One who is life and gives life if we truly want to have life that is eternal (it is both duration and quality of life). Life occurs 36 times in John’s Gospel. Look at **John 20:31**, “**You may have life in His name.**” Life is the opposite of perish, judgment, death (**3:16, 5:24,29, 10:28**). Those who believe Jesus and believe in Jesus will have life (**6:40**). Eternal life is knowing Jesus (**read 17:1-3**).

And the Life was the Light of men. When Life is given, there comes with it Light. The Word is the Light. It is characteristic of light to shine. Only in Jesus (the Light of the world **8:12, 9:5, 12:46**) can we see people and things as they truly are. Only in Jesus can we see who we are, why we are here, and get the answers. And yet, **read 3:19-21**. Men loved the darkness, for their deeds were evil. With Jesus’ coming, everything became clear. He is our absolute authority.

:5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome or overpower it. **Read 2 Cor. 4:6:** God shone in the midst of perishing, blinded, and unbelieving mankind! Only Jesus could do this! The Light shines (present tense, the Light has always shone and is still shining)! The darkness has never extinguished the Light. Comprehend = lay hold of something, to make one’s own, to seize. “I have come as Light into the world” (**12:46**). It was only when Jesus came that they saw fully and completely who God is and what Jesus has always been: the always-shining Light. Yet, people deliberately rejected the Word, God, their Creator, Life, Light. Unbelievers are eternally lost not because they do not know the truth, but because they reject it (John 1:9-11, Rom. 1:18-21).

This always-existing Word who was with God and was God, Creator, Life, and Light, who became flesh and dwelt among us (1:14) is at the center of our faith. The Word’s name is not mentioned until **1:17**, and then 246 more times! It’s all about the Word Jesus! Just think, **The Word became flesh & dwelt among us!!** Only in the Word Jesus and the Bible do I understand everything!

We could also study **Hebrews 1** to learn further about the Jesus of the Bible.

What are 2 questions and what are 2 truths you learned from **Jn. 1:1-5**? Why are these 5 verses so important?