

## **"There is No Life Without the Light!"**

### **John 1:1-13**

#### **I. INTRODUCTION: BIBLICAL CONTEXT/HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

We are introduced in the Gospel of John to an understanding of the person of Jesus Christ authored by John the Baptist. What an introduction as the Book of John offer to us a deeper look at the marvelous mystery of the world as created and established by Jesus and witnessed by a man called John. We will see how he weaves these first 14 verses we are studying today so profoundly. No one else better describes this assertion as documented by John. **"These things are written that you may maintain your belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God"** (20:31).

Scholarly resources indicate that the possibility of this took place with an eye on the Gentile world, possibly in Ephesus, one of the largest Christian centers in the Gentile world of the first century. The very theological foundation of the church was being shaken and certain false teachers was in denial about Jesus being the Son of God. John wrote this gospel to meet the spiritual need of the church and he wanted perfect clarity and 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. The total thesis of the Gospel is belief in the Son, who came from the Father. The unity of these verses and throughout this Gospel is built on one remarkable unity built on one purpose of convincing us that the Jesus was supernatural in his origin, power, and goal.

The ministry of John introduces us to what is known as "The Prologue: The Proposal for Belief" here in verses 1-14. What an honor to be a presenter of our Lord! It is a preface, an introduction as to what lies ahead. We are to get a descriptive nature of the person on whom the belief is fixed and demonstrates it to, the reader as none other. None of the other Gospels are like John...so unique in these verses and distinctively illustrates his personal relationship with the Man called Jesus, who is "the Word", "the Light", "the One and Only" and John is just a witness. He promotes a man called Jesus with a definitive pronouncement from that of a disciple who has been entrusted to follow declaring the Gospel with an inner consciousness that could only be possible as a close associate who had a personal relationship of which he boldly declares that we should have also.

#### **II. LESSON: John 1:1-13**

##### **THE FIRST REVELATION: REVELATION OF THE WORD (Vs. 1-5)**

In the beginning was the Word,<sup>(A)</sup> and the Word was with God,<sup>(B)</sup> and the Word was God.<sup>(C)</sup> <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning.<sup>(D)</sup> <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.<sup>(E)</sup> <sup>4</sup> In him was life,<sup>(F)</sup> and that life was the light<sup>(G)</sup> of all mankind. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness,<sup>(H)</sup> and the darkness has not overcome<sup>[a]</sup> it.<sup>(I)</sup>

Related Scriptures – (Mic. 5:1; Heb. 1:5-14; Rev. 1:8, 17; 22:13.) John had a personal relationship and became a disciple of Jesus for three years becoming a genuine first-century witness. Some of John's enemies (Acts 4:13) characterized the disciples as "unschooled, ordinary men"-not meaning that they were illiterate or stupid since they had not received the formal education in the Law that was the prerogative of biblical scholars of their day. They were not lacking in knowledge of OT content, nor devoid of the ability to apply their knowledge. They were so good that their opponents had to resort to violent reactions, physically and verbally. This fisherman had such powerful godly spiritual insights and had gained such soulful knowledge of God and a facility of expression that it is recorded he died as a martyr in the early church. He was a beloved disciple of Jesus and the one Jesus entrusted his Mother to when he was on the cross!

John's intention was to write to ordinary folk (the Gentiles) who needed encouragement and deepening of faith and belief in Jesus. They already had faith but needed further confirmation of faith to understand Jesus' person who dared to assert his godly authority as many were being deceived by false teachers, who came in the guise of great pretenders. The times were so perilous as these false prophets were saying Jesus was just a human personality "possessed" and baptism was his mission; that the cross did not terminate that mission, that it was a stage; confusing the people. John wanted to defy the false preachers writing with perfect clarity with one purpose of unity – **belief**. He walked, talked and was a friend of Jesus who stayed close with him and wanted the readers to be stimulated in their faith. John's Gospel has varied scenes he shared with us: dialogues/illustrations, parables, signs and miracles are not as in the other Synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke – John had a unique personal relationship with the Man called Jesus.

REVELATION OF THE WORD is highlighted in these verses. It is a dramatic, revelatory presentation of not so much as the life of Jesus as it is an identity of the powerful Creator. What a humbling privilege to have "known" Jesus and to have a real fellowship with him. He saw him as the eternal being who is a part of the Divine Trinity. He met the promised ruler for all, the Son of our Father. Jesus so loved this disciple that he entrusted him to present Him to the world as the Word. How personal can you get – the created meets the Creator who made all things! Jesus was God and always will be, eternally divine through which all creation came. Indeed, this was a personal relationship, so personal he became a witness who was entrusted to be with him in God's very presence. John actually experienced the ultimate hope and seeing the strong contrast between light and darkness which represented good and evil and how we can "overtake" or "overcome" evil/darkness with Jesus if we have a personal relationship.

### **THE SECOND REVELATION: THE PROPHETIC ANNOUNCEMENT BY A WITNESS**

**(Vss 6-9)** <sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God whose name was John.<sup>(A)</sup> <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify<sup>(B)</sup> concerning that light, so that through him all might believe.<sup>(C)</sup> <sup>8</sup> He

**himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.<sup>9</sup> The true light<sup>(D)</sup> that gives light to everyone<sup>(E)</sup> was coming into the world.**

(Related scriptures: Rev. 3:14; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2; Eph. 3:9)

These verses identified John the Baptist (“Baptist” used 19 times in this Gospel and never by that title Baptist, in all the other gospels). God knew the world would not understand, so he placed “a man” named John to present Him! OMG! What a privilege to be so empowered to show everyone where to look, who to believe in, to show the way to the **Light**, the real light, to testify concerning this **Light** so that we may believe. A man sent from God declaring Jesus was the **Light**. John was the lamp that bore witness to the light who was the Amen, Faithful, True Witness, and a Ruler of God’s Creation. He was making it plain to everyone the administration of this mystery has been revealed and made known, the **Word** with manifold wisdom of the heavenly realms through those who are the called, appointed, and anointed of God declaring his eternal purpose which can be accomplished through the Man called Jesus the Christ. What a privilege to testify, bear witness or to declare. In the Gospel of John “witness” is translated 33 times as a verb and 14 times as a noun in his Gospel. It is particularly important to God’s purpose to record and be an adequate witness to Jesus. So then, is it incomprehensible to send such a man to talk about the Man. He himself was not the **“Light”**, he was coming only as a witness to that **“Light”** that gives light to every man coming into the world. He is stating the **“Word”** is divine, thusly John was sent to be a witness to testify. He was ‘sent’; a forerunner, would confer/proclaim/declare on them the Holy Spirit and he was a witness asking them to repent, or change their attitude, in anticipation of meeting Jesus, the genuine Light to attest for it! Clearly John was the human agent that introduces the Word to us, stating his importance as the forerunner of Christ, expressing his subordinate role. The important thing is that John was sent.

### **THE THIRD REVELATION: THE RECEPTION OF THE WORD AS (9-13)**

**He was in the world, and though the world was made through him,<sup>(A)</sup> the world did not recognize him.<sup>11</sup> He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.<sup>(B)</sup> <sup>12</sup> Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed<sup>(C)</sup> in his name,<sup>(D)</sup> he gave the right to become children of God<sup>(E)</sup>— <sup>13</sup> children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.<sup>(F)</sup>**

(Related scriptures: John 17:2; Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Mt. 1:18; Lk. 1:35; Rom. 1:3; 8:3; Gal. 4:4; 1 Tim 3:16, Heb. 1:1:5)

John continues in verses 9-13 after identifying himself humbly as a witness (vs 6-9) who had a personal relationship and a witness to the Light. His intent now is to glorify the Son who had the authority over people who wanted eternal life. Jesus is identified clearly in the OT, NT, and the Gospels as to his genealogy, birth, human nature, Son of God, and being born of a woman.

Now John has asserted that Jesus is the real light of humanity and he was to give the light of truth about the “Light” he now emphasizes the something about the “world”. World refers to the current organization or culture in which people lives, the total environment that the Word created and those who did not recognize him. Verse 11 refers to “his own people”, the nation he belonged to. Jesus came to the place he had created and had a right to possess. Yet, those who inhabited it turned him away in rejection.

Verses 12-13 makes another contrast from darkness and light, shifting to another direct contrast between rejection and reception. Some rejected the Word, there were some who received him. How does “believe” equate with “receive”. When we accept a gift, whether tangible or intangible, we thereby demonstrate our confidence in its reality and trustworthiness. We make it a part of our possessions. By being so received, Jesus gives to those who receive him a right to membership/discipleship in the family of God.

1. To “become” children clearly indicate people are not the spiritual children of God by natural birth, for we cannot ‘become’ what we already are. This means a change of nature. Not natural birth!
2. Children are ‘born ones’ ...meaning endearments. Believers are God’s ‘little ones’ related to him by birth. Not endearments!
3. “not of natural descent” excludes a purely physical process
4. “nor of human decision” rules out biological urge
5. “or of a husband’s will” rules out the outcome of a legal marriage

The relation is a spiritual, not biological – not of fleshy desire. It is a new birth, elaborated by Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus (John 3:3-8).

It is a personal relationship that each of us must have – born again, believing and receiving!

### **III. CONCLUSION/APPLICATION**

- We must have a personal relationship with God through the Man called Jesus. To be a witness and then have the opportunity to attest to being in his presence is a phenomenal and spiritual encounter like none other. It's personal!!
- Be a ‘witness’ to the light given by the Light.
- Believe and receive and request of God you want to be in his presence.
- Become a disciple and develop your relationship with him. It is spiritual, not biological, and physical or of human will, it requires a personal relationship!!
- God loves us and of the necessity of staying intimately connected to Jesus. Allow the Holy Spirit to minister to you in every area of your life.