

Sermon Series: Life in His Name
Sermon Title: "The Word of Life"
Text: John 1:1-18

Discussion Questions:

We all know the phrase *"In the beginning—"*. They are the three words that start the Bible. When I hear or read these words, my mind almost reflexively "hears" them spoken in a deep, *Charlton-Heston-like* (the man who portrayed Moses in the iconic 1956 film "The Ten Commandments"), resounding bass voice. In the beginning - God!

Moses is believed to have written those words in Genesis 1:1 (inspired, of course, by the Holy Spirit).

~ Think about the first 10 words in Genesis 1. Break them down into four distinct parts - and discuss each part:

- **"In the beginning"** (*Beginning of what? Eternity? etc.*)
- **"God"** (*A personal God? Mythological God? Common views on this? etc.*)
- **"Created"** (*How? A moment in time? Fully formed & functioning? etc.*)
- **"The heavens and the earth"** (*Including outer space? Earth as we know it? etc.*)

Examination:

• Read **John 1:1-5**

Note: *These remarkable and deeply profound verses are not merely a preface or an introduction to the Gospel of John. They are a summary of the entire book. The remainder of John's Gospel will deal with the themes introduced here: The identity of the Word; Life; Light; Regeneration; Grace; Truth; and the Revelation of God the Father in Jesus the Son.*

- John begins his Gospel in exactly the same way that Moses began Genesis - *"In the beginning."* John is essentially saying: "When the beginning began, the Word was already there." Why do you think John restated the words of Genesis to begin his Gospel?
- There is much we don't understand regarding the significance of the phrase "Word of God." Jewish rabbis often referred to God as "the word of God." Greek philosophers used the Greek word *logos* ("word") to describe the power that put sense or meaning into the world - making the world orderly instead of chaotic. John is speaking to both Jews and Greeks, telling them that for centuries they have been talking, thinking and writing about the "Word" - now let me tell you who HE is!
 - How do we know that John is clearly telling us that "the Word" is Jesus (see verse 14)?
 - What do we learn about Jesus when we think of Him as "the Word"?
 - Does this have any connection to the words of the Bible - or the fact that the Holy Scriptures are God's revelation to us in written form?
 - What light does **Revelation 19:11-16** shed on this?
- **"The Word was with God, and the Word was God."** These are two power-packed phrases! What do they teach us?

- We see that “*without Him nothing was made that has been made*” (v. 3). In other words, the Word created ALL THINGS, and therefore He Himself is an uncreated Being. Discuss this truth in light of what Paul says in **Colossians 1:16**.
- Verse 4 tells us that “In Him was life.” The Word is the source of all life. The Greek word for “life” here is the word “*zoe*” - as opposed to the word “*bios*”. *Bios* means “biological life.” *Zoe* means “the life source, or the life principle - abundant or overflowing life.” Why is it so important to understand the distinction - that Jesus isn’t just the source of physical life (*bios*), but that He is the source of spiritual...and emotional...and “abundant” life?
- John seems to be referring back to the Genesis account in verses 4 and 5, when He tells us that the LIFE that is in the WORD is the LIGHT of all mankind. In what ways is Jesus the light of the world?

• Read **John 1:6-13**

- What was John’s purpose in life (vv. 6-8)?
- This is the first reference in John’s Gospel to the concept of “believing” (v. 7). What did John want us to believe?
- Why does the light need a witness (v. 8)?
- Verses 7 and 9 speak in very broad and far-reaching terms: “...so that through Him all might believe”; “...the true light that gives light to everyone.” What does this tell us about God’s heart for the world? How do these verses speak to the person who says: “Yeah, but God can’t love me...”?
- Why didn’t the world recognize Jesus (v. 10)? Why didn’t the world receive Jesus (v. 11)?
- John returns to the very important truth of “believing” in Jesus in verse 12. He includes or adds the idea of “receiving”. What does receiving have to do with believing - and how does this result in “rebirth”?

• Read **John 1:14-18**

- How does all of Luke chapters 1 and 2 fit into these four words in John 1:14 - “The Word became flesh...”?
- How have we seen the glory of Jesus - the one and only Son?
- What does it mean that Jesus was “before” John (v. 15)?
- Jesus is described here as being “...full of grace and truth” (v. 14). Think about this. Discuss it. How was Jesus full of both grace - and truth (see also v. 17)?
- What does it mean that out of the fullness of Jesus - we have received grace in place of the grace already given (v. 16)?
- Who does verse 18 say that Jesus is?

Application:

“Receiving” Jesus isn’t just a “one-and-done” event. I believe we are called to receive Christ each and every day. It includes opening up our hearts to Him. Being aware of Him. Praying to Him - and then listening to Him. Trusting Him...and making the choice NOT to worry. Be aware of this. Be intentional each and every day about receiving Christ, and believing in Him.