

Unit I: Jesus' Public Ministry (John chapters 1-12)

Lesson 1 [Intro and Chapter 1] "The Logos"

Introduction: *[This intro is for the teacher to pick from it what fits the kid's age]*

- ❖ The first books of the New Testament scriptures are the four gospels of Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The word gospel literally means good news or glad tidings. The gospels tell of the life and teaching of Jesus.
- ❖ They were written by the disciples of Christ, who were filled with the Holy Spirit after the Lord's resurrection, to bear witness to the fact that Jesus of Nazareth is indeed the promised Messiah-Christ of Israel and the Savior of the world.
- ❖ The gospels of Saints Matthew, Mark and Luke are called the **synoptic gospels**, which means that they "look the same". These three gospels are very similar in content and form and are most probably interrelated textually in some way.
- ❖ The gospel of Saint John is very different from the synoptic gospels. It is undoubtedly the latest written, being the work of the beloved disciple and apostle of the Lord at the end of his life near the close of the first century.
- ❖ In the Tradition of the Orthodox Church, a tradition expressed in the Church's iconography, the four gospels are considered to be symbolized in the images of the 'four living creatures' of the biblical apocalypse, the lion, the ox, the man and the eagle, with the interpretation connecting **Matthew with the man, Luke with the ox, Mark with the lion and John with the eagle** (Ezek 1.10, Rev 4.7).



- ❖ John is the eagle because his Gospel "flies" highest in revealing who Jesus is as the eternal Son of God.

The Author:

- ❖ From the Gospels, we know that St. John was the son of Zebedee and Salome.
- ❖ His brother is James, who is usually mentioned first, and was older.
- ❖ He and his brother James were fishing partners with Simon [Peter].
- ❖ John and James were preparing their nets in a boat when Jesus called them, both left the boat and their father to follow Jesus, Matthew 4:21-22
- ❖ He was tortured under Domitian and was exiled to the Island of Patmos.

- ❖ There he enjoyed the revelations concerning the Day of the Lord: The book of The Revelation of Jesus Christ. He remained in exile until his death.
- ❖ Of the twelve apostles, he was the only one that wasn't martyred, dying in exile on the island of Patmos. In addition to the gospel of John, he also wrote 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and Revelation.

Place and Date of Writing:

It was probably written in Ephesus, towards the end of St. John's life, in the late 80's or early 90's.

Purpose, Theme and Audience:

The purpose of the Gospel according to St. John is to confirm the believers in their faith that Jesus is the Christ Son of God, and through Him we will have life, written to believers in the whole world

Chapter 1

Lesson Goal:

The goal of this lesson from John 1 is to teach children about who Jesus is.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the everlasting Logos, one in essence with the Father [1-2]. He is the giver of life and light.

Lesson Body:

The Word of God 1:1-18:

Ask students, Is Jesus alive right now?

Jesus is alive right now. He is alive in Heaven. Jesus went to Heaven after His resurrection from death.

How old do you think Jesus is? [Eternal]

Did you know that Jesus has always been alive? Always. Even before He was born on earth.

Jesus is alive in Heaven even before He was born and when He died, He came back to life and went back to His home in Heaven.

Do you know who Jesus is? He's God. He's God in a human body. God has three persons: God the Father, God the Son (who is Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit. Just as the sun is one reality experienced as the source [Father], the light [The Son], and the heat [The Holy Spirit], God is one being eternally existing as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

These verses are telling us that Jesus, the Word, was with God from the very beginning. Jesus was always alive in Heaven. They are also telling us that the Word, Jesus, was God. Jesus took flesh and became God incarnate.

“Could the Word be made by God?”

No, Because He too was with God since the beginning.

In verses 15, John helps us understand something confusing John had said. He was older than Jesus in terms of earthly birth, and yet, because Jesus is God and has always existed, Jesus came before John.

The bible tells us that the true light was coming into the world. [Who do you think the light is?](#) (The light is Jesus.)

[How many of you like to be in the dark?](#)

Sometimes, the dark is nice to sleep in, but the dark can also make trouble for us sometimes because you can't see in the dark. If you try to move and walk around in the dark, you might bump into things or trip over things.

[If we're in the dark, what does “turning on a light” help us to do?](#)

The light helps us to see. We can find our way better if there's a light on. And if there's a light on, it helps us not to be scared.

That's the way it is with Jesus. Jesus is our light that helps us find our way to Heaven. He's also our light because we know He is always with us, and if we know that if Jesus is always with us, then we don't have to be afraid of anything.

Game: Jesus Our Light

Play a game of Red Light, Green Light with the change of turning the light on and off. Students run from one side of the room to the other when the lights are on. But when you turn the lights off, they have to stumble around and pretend to be afraid. If they keep running when the light is off, they're out. The winner is the first one who makes it to the other side of the room.

Remind students that Jesus is our light who helps us find our way and gives us courage not to be afraid.

A Voice in the Wilderness 1:19-28

Now, who remembers what John the Baptist's job was? What was John supposed to do? His job was to prepare the way for the Messiah [a preacher]. He was supposed to tell people about God and Jesus and he fulfilled his job.

"26 John answered them, saying, 'I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. 27 It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose.'"

John is talking here about Jesus, and he says that he, John, is not worthy to untie Jesus' shoe for Him. John, who had such an important job as being a preacher and telling people about God and Jesus, said he wasn't worthy to untie Jesus' shoe. What do you think about that?

It shows his humility. We aren't worthy to serve God, to even untie His shoe for Him, because compared to God, we are nothing. But God made us and He loves us, and He wants us to do our best to serve Him. We only must remember how great He is so that we don't think we're too great.

Go Make Disciples 1:29-42

Hold up several pictures of famous icons that students might be familiar with. Do they recognize these people? If they were to see them out in the neighborhood, what might they do?

Explain that if students were to see a celebrity, they would likely be excited. They might point out the person's presence and be eager to share the sighting with others. Well, that is exactly what happened in the Gospel of John here. John the Baptist noticed Jesus, and He knew who He was. He couldn't wait to tell others about Him. He explained how he had seen the Holy Spirit on Jesus, making sure others knew that his claims were validated.

When we ask the Baptist: 'Then how did you know Him?' His response will be: "I knew Him when the Holy Spirit descended upon Him".

The Lord came to be baptized to serve as a model of humility and to call us to receive our salvation through baptism. The Lord accepted to go through something which was not necessary for Him, yet it was necessary on our account.

John the Baptist shared this news about who Jesus was with his own disciples [Andrew and John] so they would go and follow Him instead.

What did these men do after their friend John pointed out who Jesus was?

They eagerly followed Him, even asking to spend the night! These disciples quickly and readily followed Jesus. But the story doesn't end there.

They were so delighted and excited they found the Messiah that they wanted others to know about Him too. So, Andrew shared the good news with his brother, Peter.

These [Andrew, John and Peter] were the first people to find and follow Jesus. They shared His appearance with others, too excited to keep the good news to themselves.

When something great happens, you should want to announce it and share it!

Our job is to share the love of Christ with one another. Our goal, as children of God, is to tell others about Him. We want to spread the good news of the Gospel. In fact, Jesus told us to do this!

Closing Prayer

Jesus, help us always to remember how great You are. You are God in a human body. You were always alive, even before You came to earth. Help us to serve You the best way that we can. Amen.

Memory Verse:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Jn 1:1

