

1. The Witness to the Word (1:6-8)
 - a. The Witness Introduced (6-7)
 - i. The Authority of the Witness – “There was a man sent from God” (6a)
 1. John the Baptist was sent (entrusted, charged, commissioned with a message).
 2. John the Baptist’s commission was from God Himself.
 - ii. The Identity of the Witness – “whose name was John” (6b)
 1. The name “John” occurs 18 times in the Gospel; each time the name refers to John the Baptist.
 2. John the Baptist was the last forerunner in a long line of forerunners beginning with Moses.
 - iii. The Task of the Witness – “The same came for a witness to bear witness of the Light” (7a)
 1. This term should be understood in the legal sense of testifying.
 2. John the Baptist was charged with delivering eye-witness testimony to the Light!
 - iv. The Purpose of the Witness – “that all men through him might believe” (7b)
 1. The purpose of John the Baptist’s witness was so that all men, from the time of John to the present day, might believe.
 2. “Through him” refers to John the Baptist and his witness; we are saved through faith in Jesus, not faith through Jesus; the witness provides the foundation for faith (Romans 10:17).
 - b. The Witness Explained (8)
 - i. “He was not that Light (8a)
 1. John the Baptist was not the Light, and therefore not to be an object of worship.
 2. It is very easy to put our faith in the human messenger rather than the divine message.
 - ii. “but was sent to bear witness of that Light” (8b)
 1. John the Baptist did all He could to point the way to Jesus and get of the way.
 2. John the Baptist said, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30).
2. The Manifestation of the Word (1:9-14)
 - a. The Word was and still is the true Light (9).
 - i. “That was the true Light” (9a)
 1. The Word was and still is the true, authentic Light.
 2. The Word was and still is the true Light whether or not He was acknowledged as such.
 - ii. “which lighteth every man that” (9b)
 1. The witness of creation – “The heavens declare the glory of God” (Psalm 19:1)
 2. The witness of the conscience – “Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness...” (Romans 2:15)
 3. The witness of God’s Word – “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17)
 - iii. “that cometh into the world” (9b)
 1. The witness is continual.
 2. The witness of Scripture has reached its climax in the manifestation of the Word into the world through the means of the incarnation!
 - b. The Word was in the World (10).
 - i. Using the same 3-fold structure as verse 1 in which the deity of the Word is taught, verse 10 now teaches the presence of the Word in the world He created.
 1. “He was in the world” (10a)
 2. “and the world was made by **him**,” (10b)
 3. “and the world knew **him** not” (10c)
 - a. “World” (used 78 x) is certainly focusing on humanity, the focus of God’s attention.
 - b. “Know” is being used in the Old Testament sense of experiential knowledge of intimate relationship.
 - ii. “He came unto his own” (neuter, that which belongs to Him) (11a)
 1. “and his own (masculine, His own people, Jews) received him not” (11b)
 - a. The word for “people” is used with two different genders, the first showing the relationship of the Word to the world as Creator, the second showing the relationship of the Word to His people, the Jews.
 - b. The message of the Gospel of John is that God has chosen relate to us not just as His possession, but as His people, which is made possible by the coming of the Word.
 - c. The rejection of the Word by the Jews is representative of the rejection of the Word by the world.
 2. “But as many as received him,” (12a)
 - a. In this verse, the prologue shifts from tragedy to triumph!
 - b. “Receive” in John means to accept or recognize someone’s authority (cf. 5:43; 13:19).
 3. “to them gave he power to become the sons of God,” (12b)
 - a. “Power” (exousia) means “authority”; John does not speak of power in the sense of an inherent ability, but instead an imparted status.
 - b. “Sons” (tekna) is the term meaning “children” and is different that of “huios” (son) which always refers to the Son of God. “Children of God” is the imparted status.
 4. “even to them that believe on his name:” (12c)
 - a. To receive him, to recognize His authority, we must believe on his name.
 - b. “Believe” is simple faith and trust in the claims of Jesus.
 5. “Which were born,” (13a; cf. John 3)
 - a. “not of blood,” (13b) – God’s children are not born by natural means.
 - b. “nor of the will of the flesh,” (13c) – not through physical union.
 - c. “nor of the will of man,” (13d) – not through human authority (andros, husband).
 - d. “but of God” (13e) – God is the source of this new birth (cf. John 3:16).

- c. The Word became incarnate (14).
 - i. "And the Word was made flesh," (14a)
 - 1. "Flesh" is the most impermanent part of the human, and the Word became flesh!
 - 2. The Word does not cease to be God; the Word is the God-man.
 - 3. The Word embraced the very nature and state of Adam, the form of a servant (cf. Phil. 2:7).
 - 4. What humility and what sacrifice!
 - ii. "and dwelt among us," (14b)
 - 1. "Dwelt" means to pitch a tent, in this context it creates a beautiful picture reminiscent of the Tabernacle.
 - 2. Whereas the tabernacle was temporary, the incarnation is permanent!
 - iii. "and we (John the Apostle and his fellow eye-witnesses) beheld his glory," (14c)
 - 1. "Glory" is the manifestation of God's being, nature and presence in a manner accessible to human experience" (Dodd). The glory of God revealed in the OT was incomplete.
 - 2. "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father," (14d)
 - a. "Only begotten" is showing a distinction between the "children of God" and the unique divine Son of God.
 - b. The Incarnation is the ultimate creative and redemptive act of God the Father.
 - c. "Father" is the first use of this title in the Gospel introducing the mission of God: the Father sending His Son into the World (cf. 3:16).
 - 3. "full of grace and truth" (14e)
 - a. This is an allusion to Exodus 34:6 in which God grants Moses' request to see His glory.
 - b. God defined His glory as His goodness (Exodus 33:18-19).
 - c. Jesus is the ultimate revelation of God's goodness, grace, and truth.
 - d. "Jesus is explicit evidence that God is a Father to His children" (Klink).
3. The Uniqueness of the Word (1:15-18)
 - a. The Superiority of the Unique Son (15)
 - i. John the Baptist speaks prophetically concerning the incarnate Word – "John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake" (15a).
 - 1. Whereas all other prophets looked *for* the coming Messiah, John looked *upon* Him!
 - 2. There is coming a day when we will behold the One we've proclaimed!
 - ii. John the Baptist proclaims this Unique Son as the true forerunner – "He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me" (15b).
 - 1. John was the forerunner of the ministry of the Son of God.
 - 2. John points to the superiority of the unique Son; John's Successor was the true Forerunner.
 - b. The Fullness of the Unique Son (16)
 - i. All who have believed on His name are partakers of His fulness – "And of his fulness all we received"
 - 1. The Unique Son is full of grace and truth (cf. 1:14).
 - 2. Believers are children of God by means of the Unique Son's grace and truth.
 - ii. The grace of the Unique Son has completed the Grace of the Old Testament – "and grace for grace"
 - c. The Identity of the Unique Son (17)
 - i. The grace in the Old Testament has found its ultimate fulfillment in the person of the Unique Son – "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (17).
 - ii. Grace and truth find their fulfillment in **Jesus Christ!**
 - 1. Jesus Christ is the embodiment of grace and truth!
 - 2. This is the last use of "grace" in the Gospel of John; from here on grace is personified in the person of Jesus Christ!
 - d. The Position of the Unique Son (18)
 - i. "No man hath seen God at any time"
 - 1. Just as Moses longed to see God, no one can see Him (Exodus 33-34).
 - 2. The exception is Jesus Christ, the Unique Son of God.
 - ii. "the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father"
 - 1. The Unique Son shares an intimate union with the Father.
 - 2. When the Word became flesh He did not cease to be God.
 - iii. "he hath declared him" (18).
 - 1. Jesus Christ is the ultimate revelation of God the Father.
 - 2. By seeing Jesus, we see God.

Conclusion:

- 1. If you want to have a relationship with God, you must have a relationship with Jesus Christ. Have you believed in Jesus to be your Savior?
- 2. If you have believed in Jesus, are you proclaiming Him to the world so that they may believe in Him?