

**Text:** John 1:1-18

**Meaning:** John proclaimed the deity of Christ

**Big Idea:** Jesus always has been and always will be God

**Objective:** I want the hearers to receive Christ & believe in His name

**Theme:** **THE REAL JESUS**

### **Samuel Upham – Counterfeit Money**

Journalist turned counterfeiter Samuel Upham initially produced fake Confederate notes as novelty items in an attempt to support the Unionists in the Civil War.

The notes which sold for a penny each contained a line across the bottom which read “Fac-simile Confederate Note – Sold wholesale and retail by S.C. Upham 403 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.” However, cotton traders got hold of these bills and started trimming off the line and spending the money. Soon the South was flooded with counterfeits.

Learning this Upham decided to exchange letter stock for high quality banknote paper and began mass producing his forgeries.

By the time the operation ended, Upham had a \$10,000 bounty out for his capture and claimed to have printed \$15,000,000 worth of fake notes. That’s a modern day equivalent of over \$500 million worth of counterfeits.

It is estimated that as much as \$200 million in counterfeit bills are in circulation at any given time according to the United States Department of Treasury. The \$20 bill is the most frequently counterfeited note reported by Reuters. About 60% of \$20 is counterfeit money circulation in the USA. It is estimated that there is \$200 BILLION worth of counterfeit bills in circulation worldwide.

(<https://www.businessdit.com/counterfeit-money-statistics/#:~:text=will%20shock%20you,-.An%20estimated%20%2470%20%E2%80%93%20%24200%20million>

[%20in%20counterfeit%20bills%20are%20in,United%20States%20Department%20of%20Treasury.&text=The%20%2420%20bill%20is%20the.money%20circulation%20in%20the%20USA.\)](#)

That will make you want to pull the money out of your wallet and inspect it thoroughly!

Jesus had a lot to say about counterfeit Christianity. Jesus said that in the last days there will be many false prophets, many false Christ’s, who will come declaring themselves to be the real thing, when in actuality they are leading people astray.

CHURCH – THERE ARE A LOT OF COUNTERFEIT PREACHERS, COUNTERFEIT GOSPELS, AND COUNTERFEIT MINISTRIES IN THE WORLD TODAY!

The question is WHAT IS THE TRUE GOSPEL and WHO IS THE REAL JESUS?

Well – how do you spot a counterfeit? Law enforcement officials who are trained to spot counterfeit currency don’t focus on the different nuances of all the counterfeits out there. They intricately study every little detail of real money so that any slight difference immediately catches their eye.

IN ORDER TO SPOT THE COUNTERFEITS IN THESE LAST DAYS WE MUST KNOW THE REAL JESUS!

**READ JOHN 1:1-5, 9-18**

**WRITER: THE APOSTLE JOHN**

He refers to himself as the “disciples whom Jesus loved” multiple times throughout the book.

John – one of the original 12 disciples. He and his brother James were referred to as the Sons of Thunder (Mark 3:17). He, along with Peter and James are considered pillars of the early New Testament church (Galatians 2). They were the only ones with Jesus at the raising of Jairus's daughter from the dead. They were the only three with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. And they were the only three with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane when he was betrayed and arrested.

John went on to pastor the church at Ephesus, which was the leading Gentile megachurch, and he is credited with having started multiple churches across Asia minor, modern day Turkey. Interestingly enough, Jesus gives him specific messages for 7 churches in the book of revelation which were all located in Asia Minor.

John also wrote 5 books of the New Testament, this gospel, then 1-2-3 John and the book of Revelation.

#### **DATE: AROUND 90 A.D.**

**Synoptic Gospels** – Matthew, Mark, and Luke

This means they are very similar or synonymous

**John** – totally different presentation of the gospel of Christ.

John had a strong Jewish heritage, but like the Apostle Paul he went on to have a significant ministry to the Gentiles.

#### **AUDIENCES:**

Matthew – Jewish

Mark – Roman

Luke – Greek

John – TO EVERYONE, THE WORLD

**Martin Luther** said that if we should lose all the books of the Bible except two—John and Romans—Christianity could be saved

#### **THEME OF JOHN: BELIEF (Word used 98 times in the gospel)**

##### **John 20:30-31**

30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

##### **John 21:25**

<sup>25</sup> Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written

#### **ONLY IN JOHN:**

Changing of water into wine (2:1–11)

Nicodemus story and its discourse (3:1–36)

Account of the Samaritan woman (4:1–42)

Resuscitation of the dead Lazarus (11:1–44)

Good shepherd comparison (10:1–30)

Vine comparison (15:1–11)

Christ washing disciples feet (13:1–20)

Great prayer of Christ in Gethsemane (17:1–26)

Appearance to Thomas (20:26–29)

Recommissioning of Peter (21:15–23)

#### **7 – I Am Statements**

#### **7 – Signs of Jesus (miracles)**

**JOHN 3:16** – *For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*

**John 1 – Prologue of the book.** This section contains some of the most important theological concepts concerning the Lord Jesus. What we see here is NOT A COUNTERFEIT JESUS but THE REAL JESUS!

## JESUS IS:

### THE ETERNAL CREATOR (V.1-3)

God's existence is simply assumed here – in the beginning. Whether or not God exists is not even a consideration. Everyone on this earth believes either something or someone pre-existed mankind and is the cause of our very existence. One ideology makes life meaningless and void, the other gives life incredible purpose and meaning – I'm going with the latter! There is an eternal all powerful God who made us and everything we see and know.

Jesus was not created, He is the Creator!

**Artificial Intelligence** – A.I. is becoming a major technological focus in our world today. What is the goal of A.I.? TO PRODUCE A TECHNOLOGY THAT PROCESSES INFORMATION AS EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY AS THE HUMAN BRAIN! So, they're trying to make a man.

*THERE'S ONE WHO HAS ALREADY MADE A MAN – AND HIS NAME IS JESUS! I'M JUST GOING TO TRUST IN HIM!*

### THE WORD (V. 1, 14)

This carries significance both for the Jew and the Gentile. For the Jews this title was synonymous with Yahweh God. So where we see Christ referred to as the Word it is a direct assertion of His deity to the Hebrew. The word in the Greek here is the word **LOGOS**. For the Greeks this word referred to the very rationale behind the universe. It was the very pursuit of all knowledge and philosophical pursuit. So, Jesus is the answer to every question, and the very embodiment of all wisdom and knowledge. John is saying that only the person who pursues Jesus will find the ultimate purpose for life. **THE WORD WAS WITH GOD** – What does it mean that Jesus was with God? The word in the Greek speaks of a face to face relationship with God. So, this is a direct reference to the Holy Trinity. Jesus was

and is a distinct Person, yet He is also one with the Father and the Holy Spirit. All three are equally God, and all three are eternal God.

### THE LIFE (V. 4)

Thirty-six times in John, we find the word **ZOE**, which is translated LIFE. This is a subtheme in John. Jesus Christ the Creator provides physical life; Jesus Christ the Redeemer provides spiritual life; and Jesus Christ the Savior provides eternal life. What does it take to receive spiritual and eternal life? BELIEF!

### THE LIGHT (V. 4, 9)

John says the life of Christ is the light of all mankind. Light speaks of illumination, truth, integrity, honesty, and clarity. Jesus illuminates God's will for us so that we know which way to go. Whenever we seek Jesus His light shines on the path in front of our feet so that we know which way to go. Also, His light dispels the darkness, so when evil begins to rear its ugly head and we are disillusioned or have doubts and fears, He bursts onto the scene and gives us clarity and we recall the fact that He is sovereign over all things.

NOTHING COMES INTO MY LIFE OR YOURS OUTSIDE HIS PERMISSION AND COMPASSION.

By the way – the darkness HAS NOT and NEVER WILL overcome the light! No weapon formed against us will prosper. Greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world.

### NOTICE THE STARK CONTRASTS HERE

The world – darkness, death, evil, sinful mankind, brokenness  
Jesus – LIGHT, LIFE, GRACE, TRUTH

Jesus is not the PROBLEM in our society. He is the SOLUTION!

### **GOD WITH US (v. 14)**

John says the Word BECAME flesh and dwelt among us. One of the leading heresies of the first century church was the heresy of **GNOSTICISM**. The Gnostics taught that matter was inherently evil and the spirit was inherently good, so Jesus could not be God because He came in a human body. If matter is evil, then it doesn't matter what you do in your physical body as long as your spirit connects with God. So they justified even the grossest immoralities. They also taught that they possessed a higher knowledge than Scripture because they had a deep mystical spiritual connection with God. Salvation for the Gnostics was a matter of finding this knowledge, not trusting in Jesus.

Beloved – Jesus came in the flesh – 100% God and 100% man at the same time. The Bible is our foundation for all truth. Salvation is by faith in Jesus not acquiring some mystical spiritual knowledge. And when we trust in Christ he radically transforms our physical lives – our moral decisions, our words, thoughts, and actions! He is GOD WITH US who CHANGES US!

### **FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH (V. 14, 17)**

This is what defines Him as God beyond us. Jesus is the perfect combination of both grace and truth. Compassion and conviction. Righteousness and relationships. Both are equally important, and finding the perfect balance of the two in every situation and circumstance is impossible for us. BUT NOT WITH JESUS. He is both full of GRACE and full of TRUTH.

This is the pursuit of the Christian life – in fact, it's very goal. The BE LIKE JESUS! TO LIVE OUT THAT PERFECT BALANCE OF GRACE AND TRUTH!

### **Colossians 1:15-20**

*<sup>15</sup>He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. <sup>16</sup>For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup>And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup>And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. <sup>19</sup>For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup>and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.*

**What am I to do with Jesus?**

**RECEIVE AND BELIEVE**

**The world** – doesn't know Jesus

**Hebrews** – rejected Jesus

Those who receive and believe become His Children! They are born again of the Spirit, not of the flesh

**Receive** – means to welcome Him in

**Believe** – speaks of complete trust in His atoning work on the cross, His resurrection, and His very character and grace.

**COUNTERFEIT – The real Jesus**

There is also such a thing as counterfeit faith. Faith that appears to be genuine, but when you put it under investigation it doesn't pass the test.

**What about you? Do you have REAL FAITH in Christ or COUNTERFEIT FAITH?**