

John 1:1-2

In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He existed in the beginning with God.

Background Notes

The Gospel of John was written by John the disciple, as confirmed in the final chapter (John 21:20-24). It was likely written between 85-90 AD from Ephesus. John emphasized a different theme or aspect of Jesus than the other three Gospels:

- Matthew highlights "Jesus Christ the King."
- Mark emphasizes "Jesus Christ the Perfect Servant."
- Luke portrays "Jesus Christ the Son of Man."
- John focuses on "Jesus Christ the Son of God."

In these verses, Jesus is referred to as "the Word," a term chosen to communicate with both Jews and Greeks. Just as we express ourselves through words and they reveal our thoughts, Jesus is the visible expression of God. As "the Word," He revealed God to us—who God is, and what God is like. Jesus Christ is the Revelation of God.

Teaching Points

1. The Word is eternal.

In verse 1, the phrase, "*In the beginning the Word already existed*" highlights the preexistence of Jesus. John doesn't say the Word began, but that it always existed, just as God has no beginning (Psalm 90:2). The Word didn't start in Nazareth when Jesus was conceived, or in Bethlehem when Jesus was born. John 1:14 tells us that, "*The Word became human and made his home among us.*" The incarnation was when the eternal Word, the Son of God, took on flesh and lived among humanity, but He always existed.

2. The Word is a distinct Person.

The Bible teaches that God is a Trinity. One essence, three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In verse 1, "*The Word was with God*" shows that the Word (Jesus) is a distinct Person in the Trinity. John 17:24 also highlights an eternal distinction between the Father and the Son, showing their relationship before the foundation of the world.

Notice verse 2 uses "He" to refer to the Word. This emphasizes that the Word was always a Person. He became human at the incarnation, but He has always been the Son of God, a distinct Person of the Trinity.

3. The Word is fully God.

The third phrase of verse 1, "The Word was God," affirms that the Word is *fully* God, not a part of God or a form of God. This is supported throughout the New Testament, including Colossians 2:9: "*For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body.*" The Word is eternal, a distinct Person, and fully God.

Practical Application

1. Don't be fooled by the "Jehovah's Witness" interpretation of John 1:1.

The Jehovah's Witness translation of John 1:1 reads, "and the Word was a god," reflecting their belief that Jesus is not fully God. They argue that the original Greek text justifies this translation, but their interpretation is flawed. To counter their argument, we can again reference Colossians 2:9, "*For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body.*"