

120819 Growth Group Study

We Beheld His Glory: The Light John 1:6-13



Background: Like a musical overture to a symphony, the prologue to John's gospel introduces the major themes of his work -- the pre-existent Word, light, life, witness, darkness, rejection, believing, birth, glory. It is poetic -- prose, dense with layers of meaning, ambiguity and especially surprise. After we are initially captivated and seized by awe with John's exalted view of the the Word -- preexistent, creator of all things, equal with God (John 1:1-5) -- we can't help but wonder, How will the Word make its grand entrance on planet earth? What kind of reception will the Word receive? What impact will it have in a world shrouded in darkness? The answers John gives are not what we would expect, but equip us with realistic expectations and tools for how to spread God's light and love in a hostile world.

Sermon Text (ESV):

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 was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. 9 The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. 15 (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") 16 For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. As you reflect on the sermon, what stands out to you most?
- b. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- c. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?

2. Sermon questions (Pick 3)

- a. **Love:** “The very essence of the universe is love” because God is a trinity. If God were a solitary being, the essence would be ultimate power. But, God being a community of persons means the center of the universe is love. How does this affect how you view the world, and how you live your life?
- b. **Witness:** All four Gospels present John the Baptist as the initial primary witness to Jesus. John never exalted himself but always pointed toward Jesus. He lived to make Jesus great. In your everyday life, do you live to make your name great or do you live to make Jesus’ name great (following in John the Baptist’s footsteps)? A follow-on question might be - is it ever ok to promote yourself?
- c. **Witness:** Brian said, “Witnessing is not what we do, it’s who we are.” How do you respond to this statement? How does it impact your life at home, at work, on the road, at the gym, etc?
- d. **Witness:** Brian said, “An army of personal witnesses is more effective than media evangelism.” Do you think that is true? Why or why not?