

Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia



# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

4 Year Olds

## Sunday Morning

Study 15

*The Word of God*

# Word of God

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The “Main passage” is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the “reward box” found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God’s Word

**Objective** To teach that Jesus is the word of God that instructs and teaches us.

## Key Verses

John 1:1-14

Matthew 4:4

**Memory Verse** John 20:31 (October Memory Verse)

“But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”

## Hook

Challenge the students to see who can hold their breath for the longest. See if any of them can hold their breath for longer than you.

Show the students that air is something that we need, and if we don’t get it for a just a few seconds our body shows us that we need it.

Ask the students how many times a day they eat. Do they eat 3 times a day? More than that?

Show them that we need food in order to live.

In the same way, we also need the word of God.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

# BOOK

So far we have studied the nature of Christ by looking at the names He gives himself in the gospel of John. This week we look at our dependence on Him as the Word of God. We will be combining the idea of Jesus being the Word of God, as found in John chapter 1, with Matthew 4:4 “Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.”

John’s Gospel begins with a profound declaration of Jesus divinity and sovereignty. He states that Jesus existed before time began, with the Father. He says that all things were made through Him and by Him. John also shows us very clearly that Jesus took on the form of a man, entered into the world, yet the world did not recognize Him or understand Him. Jesus is described as the Word, meaning that through Him God communicates to us. He shows us who He is, and in Christ we see how much God cares for us and loves us.

In Matthew 4 Jesus says that in the same way that we need food, water, or air, we need Jesus. He is the Word of God and we need Him to have life. This goes directly with John 1:4 “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.”

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

# LOOK

It is very important that we learn early on in life the difference between ‘want’ and ‘need.’ There are lots of things that we might want, but there are only a few things that we really need.

You might want a new toy or video game, but you don’t really NEED that thing to survive. What we really do need are things like water, and air. We also need to eat food everyday. The Bible tells us that we need something else though. It tells us that we NEED the word of God everyday, in exactly the same way that we need food. Matthew 4:4 tells us that we don’t live by just eating food (bread in this case) but that we also need the Word of God. That means that it is very important to understand what the word of God is. If we need the Word of God to live we should do everything we can to know it and to understand it.

In John chapter 1, we are told something amazing. The Word of God is not a what, the Word of God is a who! Jesus Christ is the Word of God. That means that we need Jesus. It means that Jesus is actually our source of life itself.

How often do you eat food? Do you eat food once a year? Once a month? Once a week? No, you eat food at least three times a day.

# LOOK (Continued)

If you eat food all the time, and the Bible says that we need the Word of God just as much as we need food, how often should we spend time praying to Jesus? Once a year? Once a month? Once a week? No, we should spend time with Jesus every day. More than once a day! We should care about talking to Him, and reading about Him, just as much as we care about eating our breakfast, lunch and dinner.

John chapter 1 tells us that life is found in Jesus, and that Jesus deliberately came into the world so that we could have life. That through knowing Him, believing in Him, and trusting Him, we can an eternal, everlasting life, that knows no end.

Jesus is more important than anything that this world could ever offer us. He is more important than money, or friends, or toys or even food. We need to desire Him more than all of those things.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life.

# TOOK

Review the lesson by asking the class what things we need. Does Jesus, the Word of God, fit onto that list? How important is it that we spend time with Him every day?

**Pray:** Thank the Lord for His desire to give us abundant life. Praise Him for sending Jesus, in the form of a man, to the Earth so that we can have life through Him. Ask Him to help us prize Him more than anything else in the world.

**Parent Question:** Why is it important to talk to Jesus?

# FURTHER STUDY

## Commentary Here

Prologue to the Gospel of John.

*This remarkable, profound portion is not merely a preface or an introduction. It is a summation of the entire book. The remainder of John's Gospel deals with the themes introduced here: the identity of the Word, life, light, regeneration, grace, truth, and the revelation of God the Father in Jesus the Son.*

1. (1-2) The pre-existence of the **Word** (*Logos*).

**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.**

a. **In the beginning:** This refers to the timeless eternity of Genesis 1:19 (*In the beginning, God created the heavens and earth*). John essentially wrote, "When the **beginning** began, **the Word** was already there." The idea is that **the Word** existed before creation or even time.

i. John makes it clear that **the Word** is not just the beginning, but it is the beginning of the beginning. He was there **in the beginning**, before anything was.

ii. **Was the Word:** "Had the Word a beginning? John says, 'No: for if we reach back to any beginning, there already was in existence the Word.' At once it is evident to John's vision 'The Word' is no other than God the self-existent." (Trench)

iii. "This description is given in order that we may at once grasp a continuous history which runs out of an unmeasured past, and the identity of the person who is subject of that history." (Dods)

b. **In the beginning was the Word:** **Word** translates the ancient Greek word *Logos*. The idea of the *logos* had deep and rich roots in both Jewish and Greek thinking.

i. Jewish rabbis often referred to God (especially in His more personal aspects) in terms of His word. They spoke of God Himself as "the word of God." For example, ancient Hebrew editions of the Old Testament change Exodus 19:17 (*Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God*) to "Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet the word of God." In the mind of the ancient Jews, the phrase "the word of God" could be used to refer to God Himself.

ii. The Greek philosophers saw the *logos* as the power that puts sense into the world, making the world orderly instead of chaotic. The *logos* was the power that set the world in perfect order and kept it going in perfect order. They saw the *logos* as the "Ultimate Reason" that controlled all things. (Dods, Morris, Barclay, Bruce, and others)

iii. Therefore in this opening John said to both Jews and Greeks: "For centuries you've been talking, thinking, and writing about **the Word** (the *logos*). Now I will tell you who He is." John met both Jews and Greeks where they were at, and explained Jesus in terms they already understood.

iv. "John was using a term which, with various shades of meaning, was in common use everywhere. He could

reckon on all men catching his essential meaning." (Morris)

v. "The word being thus already in use and aiding thoughtful men in their efforts to conceive God's connection with the world, John takes it and uses us to denote the Revealer of the incomprehensible and invisible God." (Dods)

c. **And the Word was with God, and the Word was God:** With this brilliant statement, John 1:1 sets forth one of the most basic foundations of our faith - the Trinity. We can follow John's logic:

- There is a Being known as **the Word**.
- This Being is God, because He is eternal (**In the beginning**)
- This Being is God, because He is plainly called God (**the Word was God**).
- At the same time, this Being does not encompass all that God is. God the Father is a distinct Person from **the Word (the Word was with God)**.

i. So, the Father and the Son (the Son is known here as **the Word**) are equally God, yet distinct in their Person. The Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father. Yet they are equally God, with God the Holy Spirit making one God in three Persons.

ii. **The Word was with God:** "This preposition implies intercourse and therefore separate personality. As Chrysostom says: 'Not in God but with God, as person with person, eternally.'" (Dods)

iii. **And the Word was God:** "This is the true form of the sentence; not '*God was the Word*.' This is absolutely required by the usage of the Greek language." (Alford)

iv. "Luther says 'the Word was God' is against Arius: 'the Word was with God' against Sabellius." (Dods)

v. **And the Word was God:** "Everything that can be said about God the Father can be said about God the Son. In Jesus dwells all the wisdom, glory, power, love, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth of the Father. In Him, God the Father is known." (Boice)

d. **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God:** The Watchtower (the Jehovah's Witnesses) bible, called *New World Translation*, translates this line quite differently. The Jehovah's Witness translation reads like this: "In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god." Their translation is used to deny the teaching that Jesus is God, and is a wrong and misleading translation.

i. The claim of the Watchtower defending their translation of John 1:1-2 is that because before the second time "God" is used in the passage, no article appears (it is written "God" and not "the God"). In answer to this approach to Greek grammar and translation, we can only refer to the multitude of other times in the New Testament where "God" appears without the article. If the Watchtower were honest and consistent, they would translate "God" as "god" every place it appears without the article. But it seems that this grammatical rule only applies when it suits the purpose of backing up the doctrinal beliefs of the Watchtower. The Greek text of Matthew 5:9, 6:24, Luke 1:35 and 1:75, John 1:6, 1:12, 1:13, and 1:18, Romans 1:7 and 1:17, shows how the Watchtower translates the exact same grammar for "God" as "God" instead of "god" when it suits their purpose.

ii. In the main resource the Watchtower uses to establish their claim (*The Kingdom Interlinear*), the Watchtower quotes two well-known Greek authorities to make them *appear* to agree with their translation. But they both have been misquoted, and one of them, Dr. Mantey has even written the Watchtower, and demanded that his name be removed from the book! Another "scholar" whom the Watchtower refers to in their book *The Word - Who Is He? According to John*, is Johannes Greber. Greber was actually an occult-practicing spiritist,

and *not* a scholar of Biblical Greek.

iii. *Real* Greek scholars do not recognize the Jehovah's Witness translation of John 1:1-2.

- "A GROSSLY MISLEADING TRANSLATION. It is neither scholarly nor reasonable to translate John 1:1 'the Word was a god.' But of all the scholars in the world, so far as we know, none have translated this verse as Jehovah's Witnesses have done." (Dr. Julius R. Mantey)
- "Much is made by Arian amateur grammarians of the omission of the definite article with 'God' in the phrase 'And the Word was God.' Such an omission is common with nouns in a predicate construction. 'A god' would be totally indefensible." (Dr. F.F. Bruce)
- "I can assure you that the rendering which the Jehovah's Witnesses give John 1:1 is not held by any reputable Greek scholar." (Dr. Charles L. Feinberg)
- "The Jehovah's Witness people evidence an abysmal ignorance of the basic tenets of Greek grammar in their mistranslation of John 1:1." (Dr. Paul L. Kaufman)
- "The deliberate distortion of truth by this sect is seen in their New Testament translations. John 1:1 is translated: '... the Word was a god,' a translation which is **grammatically impossible**. It is abundantly clear that a sect which can translate the New Testament like that is intellectually dishonest." (Dr. William Barclay)

e. **He was in the beginning with God:** This again makes the point that the Father is distinct from the Son, and the Son distinct from the Father. They are equally God, yet they are separate Persons.

2. (3-5) The work and nature of the Word.

All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

a. **All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made:** The Word created *all* things that were created. Therefore He Himself is an uncreated Being, as the Apostle Paul wrote in Colossians 1:16.

i. "In Genesis 1:1, GOD is said to have created all things: in this verse, *Christ* is said to have created all things: the same unerring Spirit spoke in *Moses* and in the *evangelists*: therefore *Christ* and the *Father* are ONE." (Clarke)

b. **In Him was life:** The Word is the source of all life - not only biological life, but the very *principle* of life. The ancient Greek word translated **life** is *zoe*, which means "the life principle," not *bios*, which is mere biological life.

i. "That power which creates life and maintains all else in existence was in the Logos." (Dods)

c. **The life was the light of men:** This **life** is **the light of men**, speaking of spiritual light as well as natural light. It isn't that the Word "contains" life and light; He *is* **life** and **light**.

i. Therefore, without Jesus, we are *dead* and in *darkness*. We are lost. Significantly, man has an inborn fear towards both death and darkness.

d. **And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it:** *Did not overcome it* is another way to translate the phrase, "**did not comprehend it**." The light cannot lose against the darkness; the

darkness will never overcome it.

i. **Comprehend:** "The Greek verb is not easy to translate. It contains the idea of laying hold on something so as to make it one's own. This can lead to meanings like 'lay hold with the mind', and thus 'comprehend' ...[Yet] The verb we are discussing has a rarer, but sufficiently attested meaning, 'overcome'. It is that that is required here." (Morris)

ii. "In the first creation, 'darkness was upon the face of the deep' (Genesis 1:2) until God called light into being, so the new creation involves the banishing of spiritual darkness by the light which shines in the Word." (Bruce)

3. (6-8) The forerunner of the Word.

There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

a. **There was a man sent from God:** John the Baptist bore witness of the light, **that all through him might believe**. The work of John the Baptist was deliberately focused on bringing people to faith in Jesus the Messiah.

i. "The testimony of John is introduced not only as a historical note but in order to bring out the aggravated blindness of those who rejected Christ." (Dods)

b. **He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light:** John the Baptist's work was remarkably well received and widely known. It was important for the John the Gospel writer to make it clear that John the Baptist **was not that Light**, but that He pointed towards and bore witness of **that Light**.

i. **He was not that Light:** "Possibly this was directed toward the sect that survived John and perpetuated his teaching but had not knowledge of the completion of the work of Christ (Acts 18:24-25; 19:1-7)." (Tenney)

ii. "We know him as 'John the Baptist' but in this Gospel the references to his baptism are incidental....But there is repeated reference to his witness." (Morris)

iii. The matter of **witness** is a serious thing, establishing truth and giving ground for faith. Yet, **witness** "does more. It commits a man. If I take my stand in the witness box and testify that such-and-such is the truth of the matter I am no longer neutral. I have committed myself. John lets us know that there are those like John the Baptist who have committed themselves by their witness to Christ." (Morris)

4. (9-11) The rejection of the Word.

That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

a. **That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world:** John did not mean that the Word gives this **light** to everyone in the ultimate, saving sense. He meant that the reason why anyone is born into a world with any love or care or goodness at all is because of the **true Light** and the light He gives to the **world**.

b. **The world did not know Him:** This is strange. God came to the same world He created, to the creatures made in His image, and yet **the world did not know Him**. This shows how deeply fallen human nature rejects God, and that many reject (**did not receive**) God word and **Light**.



i. **He came to His own:** "We might translate the opening words, 'he came home'. It is the exact expression used of the beloved disciple when, in response to Jesus' word from the cross, he took Mary 'unto his own home' (John 19:27; cf. 16:32). When the Word came to this world He did not come as an alien. He came home." (Morris)

ii. "It is said of 'His own' that they did not 'know' Him, but that they did not receive Him. And in the parable of the Wicked Husbandman our Lord represents them as killing the heir not in ignorance but because they knew him." (Dods)

iii. "This little world knew not Christ, for God had hid him under the carpenter's son; his glory was inward, his kingdom came not by observation." (Trapp)

5. (12-13) The receiving of the Word.

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

a. **But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:** Though some rejected this revelation, others received Him and thereby became children of God. They became **children of God** through a new birth, being **born . . . of God**.

i. "The end of the story is not the tragedy of rejection, but the *grace* of acceptance." (Morris)

ii. **As many as received Him:** The idea of "receiving Jesus" is Biblically valid. We need to embrace and receive Him unto ourselves. **As many as received Him** is just another to say **those who believe in His name**. "Faith is described as 'receiving' Jesus. It is the empty cup placed under the flowing stream; the penniless hand held out for heavenly alms." (Spurgeon)

iii. **The right to become children of God:** "The word *children* (*tekna*) is parallel to the Scottish *bairns* - 'born ones.' It emphasizes vital origin and is used as a term of endearment (cf. Luke 15:31). Believers are God's 'little ones,' related to him by birth." (Tenney)

b. **Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God:** John reminds us of the nature of the birth. Those who received Him are born of God, but not of human effort or achievement.

i. "They are 'not of bloods'. The plural is curious...The plural here may point to the action of both parents, or it may refer to blood as made up of many drops." (Morris)

ii. This new birth is something that brings change to the life. "The man is like a watch which has a new main-spring, not a mere face and hands repaired, but new inward machinery, with freshly adjusted works, which act to a different time and tune; and whereas he went wrong before, now he goes right, because he is right within." (Spurgeon)

6. (14) The Word became flesh.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

a. **And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us:** This is John's most startling statement so far. It would have amazed both thinkers in both the Jewish and the Greek world to hear that **the Word became flesh**.

- i. "The most general expression of the great truth He became *man*. He became that, of which man is in the body compounded...The simplicity of this expression is no doubt directed against the Docetae of the Apostle's time, who maintained that the Word *only apparently* took human nature." (Alford)
- ii. The Greeks generally thought of God *too low*. To them John wrote: **the Word became flesh**. To ancient people, gods such as Zeus and Hermes were simply super-men; they were not equal to the order and reason of the Logos. John told the Greek thinkers, "The Logos you know made and ordered the universe actually **became flesh**."
- iii. The Jews generally thought of God *too high*. To them John wrote: **the Word became flesh and dwelt among us**. Ancient Jews had a hard time accepting that the great God revealed in the Old Testament could take on human form. John told the Jewish thinkers, "The Word of God **became flesh**."
- iv. God has come close to you in Jesus Christ. You don't have to struggle to find Him; *He came to you*. Some think they go from place to place to try and find God, and continue their search. More commonly they stay at a place until God draws close to them - then they quickly move on.
- v. "Christ entered into a new dimension of existence through the gateway of human birth and took up his residence among men." (Tenney)
- vi. "Augustine afterwards said that in his pre-Christian days he had read and studied the great pagan philosophers and had read many things, but he had never read that the word became flesh." (Barclay)
- b. **And dwelt among us**: The idea behind this phrase is more literally, *dwelt as in a tent among us*. From the sense and the context, John connected the coming of Jesus to humanity with God's coming to and living with Israel in the tent of the tabernacle. It could be stated, *and tabernacled among us*.
- i. "*And tabernacled among us*: the human nature which he took of the virgin, being as the *shrine, house, or temple*, in which his immaculate Deity condescended to dwell. The word is probably an allusion to the Divine Shechinah in the Jewish temple." (Clarke)
- ii. "Properly the verb signifies 'to pitch one's tent'." (Morris) "The association in John's mind was...with the Divine tabernacle in the wilderness, when Jehovah pitched His tent among the shifting tents of His people." (Dods)
- iii. The tabernacle was many things that Jesus is among His people:
- The center of Israel's camp
  - The place where the Law of Moses was preserved
  - The dwelling place of God
  - The place of revelation
  - The place where sacrifices were made
  - The center of Israel's worship
- iv. "If God has come to dwell among men by the Word made flesh *let us pitch our tents around: this central tabernacle*; do not let us live as if God were a long way off." (Spurgeon)
- v. "The *Shechinah* means *that which dwells*; and it is the word used for the visible presence of God among men." (Barclay)
- c. **We beheld His glory**: John testified to this as an eyewitness, even as John the Baptist testified. John could say, "I saw His glory, the glory belonging to the **only begotten of the Father**."

i. The word **beheld** is stronger than the words “saw” or “looked.” John tells us that he and the other disciples *carefully studied* the glory of the Word made flesh.

ii. 'The verb 'beheld' is invariably used in John (as, for that matter, in the whole New Testament) of seeing with the bodily eye. It is not used of visions. John is speaking of that glory that was seen in the literal, physical Jesus of Nazareth.' (Morris)

d. **Full of grace and truth:** The glory of Jesus wasn't primarily an adrenaline rush and certainly not a side-show. It was **full of grace and truth**.

i. "Beloved, notice here that both these qualities in our Lord are *at the full*. He is 'full of grace.' Who could be more so? In the person of Jesus Christ the immeasurable grace of God is treasured up." (Spurgeon)

ii. "These two ideas should hold our minds and direct our lives. God is grace, and truth. Not one without the other. Not the other apart from the one. In His government there can be no lowering of the simple and severe standard of Truth; and there is no departure from the purpose and passion of Grace." (Morgan)