



JOHN 1:1-14

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was with God in the beginning. **3** *Through him* all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. **4** *In him was life*, and that life was the *light* of all mankind. **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 testify concerning that light, so that through him all might *believe*. **8** He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

9 The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the *world*. **10** He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not *recognise* him. **11** He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. **12** Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his *name*, he gave the right to become children of God – **13** children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

14 The Word became *flesh* and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of *grace* and *truth*.

CLOSING PRAYER

by David Adam, from *The Open Gate*, p. 26

Blessed are you,
Lord God of all creation.
You have called us out of darkness into light.
Open our eyes to your presence,
open our ears to your call,
open our hearts to your love,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen

COMMENTARY

primary source: UBS Handbooks for New Testament

v.3 *Through him*: the Word was the Father's agent of creation (see 1 Cor 8:6, Col 1:16, Heb 1:2). **v.4** *In*: John often begins a sentence with 'in'. **v.4** *life*: *zoe* in Greek, meaning real, true life, the kind of life we have when God rules our lives; used 36 times in John's gospel (e.g. John 20:31). **v.4** *light*: a key theme in John's gospel (see 8:12, 9:5), symbolic of the revelation of God, or of God himself. **v.5** *darkness*: represents evil, sin, death. **v.7** *witness*: to speak in someone's favour, based on personal experience, revealing important aspects of who they are. **v.7** *believe*: more than merely believing the truth about something. **v.9** *world*: could mean a) 'created order', b) 'world of mankind' or c) 'people aligned with the power of evil in opposition to God'. **v.10** *recognise*: acknowledge God and respond in obedience and faith. **v.12** *name*: equivalent to the person, who they are in essence. **v.14** *flesh*: a neutral term in John's gospel, meaning a frail and mortal being. **v.14** *grace*: loving kindness. **v.14** *truth*: the faithful, trustworthy, true or complete revelation of God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What caught your attention? Why?
2. John chose a poetic, meditative style for this opening passage. What is the effect? On the message? On you?
3. What does John tell us about Jesus' role in creation?
4. How is the ministry of John (the Baptist) described and how does it compare with the ministry of 'the Word' (v. 6-8)?
5. During the 400-year period between the Old and New Testaments 'light' as a concept became increasingly linked to the power of good engaged in a struggle with 'darkness' representing the power of evil. How are 'light' and 'darkness' used in this passage?
6. What is the connection between 'recognise', 'receive' and 'believe'?
7. What does it mean to be 'born of God' (v. 13)?
8. Reflect on verse 14 and discuss ways in which these truths might help us in our daily life.
9. **In Summary: How does this passage reflect the theme of 'light in the darkness'?**
10. What did you learn? What do you want to explore further?