

The Word is Divine

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- [0 : 0 0] Well, yeah, if you want to keep your thumb open in that part of the Bible, I think it's page 1063, John's Gospel. So we're just going to spend some time thinking about those over the next few weeks.
- You know, it's just a small section. We're just going to look at verses 1 to 18. So it's just verses 1 to 5. Today, let me pray for us before we look into it.
- Almighty God, we thank you so much for your word. Lord, we thank you that you speak to us through the Bible. And we thank you that it is powerful, Lord, to change us.
- And so we ask, Lord, that whatever we've got going on in life, that you, for these next few moments, Lord, that you would center our attention on what you have to say to us through your living word.
- That this word that you have for us is a life, not a dead word, but it is living and active. It is sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing all the way to the very heart of who we are, the bone and marrow.
- [1 : 0 0] Lord, it cuts in us and cuts off the rubbish and shapes and makes you the good. And so we ask that you do that this morning, that you fixate our attention and what you have to say to us.
- In Christ's name we pray. Amen. So I've mentioned it a few times already. Officially start to Christmas begins today. And I mentioned that one of the things that, you know, the kids have only got on their minds one thing.
- Like, we had Channel 5 on this morning. In the morning, sometimes we have that milkshake to watch the cartoons. I'm not joking. There seems to be more adverts than there are actually cartoons. And every single one, Heidi and Angus and Naomi would say, with the next one that came on, I want that.
- So that's what they're thinking about Christmas, what they're going to get. But for us, there's other stuff to concern, isn't there? It's the food. Not only what we want, but making sure we've bought all the presents and the cards.
- Not only are they bought, but that they're sent in time. Not only are they bought, but they're sent in time. There's the inevitable, for some of us, the inevitable works night out that is looming. I don't know how we feel about that. There's the school Christmas show will soon be upon us.
- [2 : 1 7] It is a time of year that is great, but it can be all-consuming. It can be all-consuming. Wonderful to celebrate, but so busy. Or for some of us, it can be.
- And so, in the midst of having all that go on, even with the best intentions, with the best intentions, it is difficult, isn't it, to stop and to pause.
- Lots of folk will celebrate, well, lots of folk do celebrate Christmas, not giving what we think about at Christmas even a second thought. But, that can just be hard for us, to stop, to pause, to reflect on the significance of this season, the significance of Jesus Christ entering the world.

One of the things I love, and I'm sure we all do, everybody loves a rainbow, don't they? Everybody loves a rainbow. You know how rainbows happen. A rainbow happens when the sun's light shines through water droplets in the sky.

It's as the sunlight passes through the water that something happens to the light. The light, the water does something to the light. It causes the sunlight almost to, you might say, break up.

[3 : 31] So that out of the other end of the water, the light is seen as all the colours of the rainbow. That is what happens. But here's the thing. Here's the thing.

You know that the colours that make up light, they're there all the time? We can't see them, we just see light. We can't see them, but when we don't see a rainbow, nobody's thinking about rainbows, generally, unless you see them.

We don't think about those colours until we see the rainbow in the sky, but they are always there. And when we see it, what do we do? We all do the same thing. We shout, well I do.

I grab whoever's nearest. Say, look, look, there's a rainbow in the sky and your attention is drawn to it. You draw someone else's attention to it. To the things that are always there, but that have been made visible.

We admire it, we praise it, we point others to it. As we look at the Bible this morning, you know, there is truth and beauty about Jesus Christ that is always there.

[4 : 37] It's always there. But there's moments when it becomes more tangible, when it becomes visible, when we see the beautiful array of colours that make up the sun of God.

That we understand more about him. When we lift up our, when we stop and pause and lift up our eyes, there is beauty, there is truth about him that causes us to admire him all the more, to praise him, to point others to him.

And so as we enter this build-up to Christmas, my hope and prayer for us, for myself, is that we lift up our gaze and fix it on the beauty, on the magnificence, on the wonder of the who Jesus is.

And that as we look at him, we see Jesus in all the colours that he appears in, in high definition, with colours and shades that are always there but we didn't realise were.

This little baby that entered our world. The third thing that we're going to consider for my reading is, you may have picked up on it, there's this phrase, the word. First thing we're going to, the first question that we're going to answer, who is the word?

[5 : 48] Who is the word? And what does that tell us about Jesus and what does it tell us about God? Who is the word? What does it tell us about Jesus? And what does it tell us about God? Our first two verses, or the first two verses of John's Gospel are packed full to the brim.

They definitely add colour to our understanding of Jesus, don't they? Have a look with me in verse one. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.

He was with God in the beginning. There are a few things that I just want to touch on initially. I'm going to go through these slowly. The first thing that we see is that the word was before everything else.

In the beginning was the word. John starts his Gospel, his good news about Jesus Christ, in the same way, actually, that the first book of the Bible starts. The book of Genesis 1, verse 1, in the beginning, God.

Very similar start to what we have here. But now we don't read, in the beginning, God. But in the beginning was the word. At the very least, at the very least, we know that the word refers to someone who predates, who is before everything else.

- [7 : 04] You go back as far as you can in history, before the ice ages, the fossils, the dinosaurs, before the universe began. Even before time started ticking, the word was there.
- So that's the first thing. The word was before everything else. Second thing, the word was not on his own. The word was not on his own.
- What do we read? The word was with God. There is a relationship between the word and God. They are together. They are with one another. If you don't have transport to get somewhere and someone picks you up for a lift, when you arrive, if you're meeting someone, the person that you meet, say, who did you come with?
- What that means is, who did you, you didn't travel alone, did you? You were not alone. Who did you come with? The word was with God. The word had and has an intimate relationship with God.
- It meant God was not lonely. Before anything else was made, God was not twiddling his thumbs on his own, not knowing what to do with himself. He didn't start making things because he thought, I better get something to do, have something to do with myself.
- [8 : 28] But he himself was with the word, an intimate relationship. We've got two things. The word was before everything else, and the word was not on his own. Neither was God.
- They were with one another. But we've still got to address, who is the word? Who is the word? And why call him? Final thing.
- The word is God. He was with God in the beginning. This word is a person. It's a title given to a person.
- We see the pronoun. He was with God in the beginning. A person who was both with God and is God himself. You see, it all actually really starts to drop into place.
- The word is God the Son. The word is a title given to Jesus. It is Jesus who is the eternal word of God. It's Jesus who's before all things.
- [9 : 22] It's Jesus who has this blessed, sweet, beautiful relationship with God the Father. And it's Jesus who is God himself. But we're still left with it.
- Well, why call him the word? Why not just tell us his name? Words are used, aren't they? We use words to tell others about ourselves.
- We can't get very far if we don't use words to explain who we are. We reveal ourselves. If I want to tell you about myself, I'd either have to speak to you, use words verbally, or I could do it by writing something down.
- Words are the best way to... We have other ways to communicate, but words are the best way to communicate. Jesus is the word of God. It is how God communicates towards most accurately, 100% accurate, 100% accurate, what he is like.
- If you want to know what God is like, if you want to know what the God of the heavens, the all-powerful, all-knowing, everywhere, present God, if you want to know what he is like, then you look at Jesus.

[10:31] when you look at him what you see in Jesus when you meet Jesus in the pages of the scriptures his life, what he did what we're seeing there in his character we're seeing what God is like he is God's word, he is God what does Jesus say, if you've seen me you've seen the fact when was the last time we looked at the character of the person deeply and profoundly stop, pause, gaze at Jesus Christ and I mean properly this Christmas I just want to invite us all over the next month or so to look again you want to know what God is like you want to refresh yourself with the God with the God of the Bible what he is like, then look at Jesus he is God's ultimate self-expression God is self-disclosing himself and showing you what he's like so that's the first thing that's the question who is the word the next two things that we're going to look at are really going to answer what does this word do what does this word do the second point is this all things are made through the word in other words all things are made through Jesus verse 3 through him all things were made without him nothing was made that has been made what that means is that the word

Jesus Christ the eternal word of the Father the eternal Son of God has an intimate relationship with everything that has been made I don't know what taste of music you're into but for all of us there are some musicians aren't there that are instantly recognisable you just have to hear their voice you might not have heard the song before but you hear their voice and you kind of know who's singing for me I think like John Lennon most people would instantly know Elton John or Elvis people would know you kind of hear that and go yeah I know that I don't know I don't know for some maybe Taylor Swift's creeping in there instantly recognisable voice perhaps the point is once you've heard their voice you know who it is when you hear it again if music's not your thing the same could be said about artists my art I'm not that up with my sort of artist knowledge mine would be like Picasso and Banksy

I'd know that I'd know if I saw one of those I'd know it anywhere because their work musician or artist it has the characteristics of what you see or what you hear it bears their fingerprints you can tell who made it here John tells us about the word he tells us all things are made through the word through the eternal the forever word the person of the son of God that everything made everything made within our universe has the thing has his fingerprints all over it what that means is that there is an intimate an intimate connection that exists between God the son and everything created in which everything owes its existence to him in a very specific way it is made through him which again if you take it one step further it means everything has a kind of relationship to everything else because everything has the same point of origin the same beginning all made through the word the universe we live in was not simply the arrangement or the order of things that were previously disordered it's not like there was everything and then along came God and just sort of fashioned it into something that made sense there was nothing there was nothing everything is created from nothing when an artist paints something new they don't start with nothing they have the canvas the paint the brushes they create something new out of what already exists that's not what happens when all things are made through the word he starts with nothing and I mean when I mean nothing

I mean like nothing nothing at all and everything comes into existence from the starting point of nothing every part of creation bears his fingerprints which means you see this is a beautiful thing it means that every part of creation in some way points to Jesus as well the power of the ocean the beauty of a sunset I was thinking like really weird things were coming when I was thinking about this the other day like things in creation the loyalty of a dog to its owner the gentleness of a sheep with her new lamb the attention to detail a spider has when spinning its web you see what even just those few things what they say about Jesus they all came about because of him which means that all those things that we see those things were in his mind to make those things as they are how powerful and beautiful and loyal and gentle and how much attention to detail was Jesus is it all came about more than anything else we see in creation if you see it in creation you can say how much more did Jesus do Jesus like that because it came to him is in his mind to make it like that final thing you're going to look at we've looked at all things come through him final thing in the word is all life which lights up the world so everything we said the whole of the created world comes through is made through Jesus everything has the same origin but we know don't we that within our created world we can split that up a little bit into two things in verse 5 that in the creation it hones in on something slightly more specific is the existence of life that is slightly it is slightly more specific you know a rock and water is different from creating something that is living from creating life verse 4 we read in him was life in the word in Jesus was life the word

Jesus Christ embodies what life is physical and spiritual life Jesus embodies it all it is found in him life in its fullest sense all of life rooted in Jesus the eternal word all of life found in him if you want to know what life is about which philosophers have questioned for centuries and will continue to do so until they get a hold of this because here we have the answer in this verse you want to know what life is about again it is found in Jesus you look at Jesus to know what life is about because it is found in him we are told that the life again what is that life how does that how does that what do we know about that life we read on the life was the light of all mankind here what do we have here we have we have come full circle we started with in the beginning here we have echoes back to Genesis once again the beginning of the Bible when God makes everything brings it into being the first word we read that God says to create he says into the darkness let there be light and there was light we have an understanding of light coming into darkness don't we just the simple nature of how things work if you if you're in the dark and you have a torch you shine it in the middle of the night it is the light that wins out the light always wins out of the darkness when you put the torch the darkness doesn't win out physical light from the sun is the first thing that God created it's what we need to sustain our life light sustains physical life we need sunlight so do plants and animals which we need to be sustained physically we need light for our physical life so the rubber where does the rubber really hit the road this is what it is this is where the rubber hits the road it's it in the same way that you and I are dependent on the sun to keep shining for our physical needs to be sustained

[19 : 25] Jesus is the spiritual light that we need for our spiritual life the work of creation you might read the energy oh yeah the work of creation I know all about that that's finished but you see it hasn't because the light the spiritual light of Jesus the eternal word who has life in himself continues to shine today and wherever he shines spiritual life to be wherever he shines he's still making he's still creating what is he making he's creating and making a people for himself by shining in their hearts and when he shines in someone's hearts they become a new what?

a new creation life starts where his light shines you're a follower of Jesus the work of creation has begun in you in the way you are a new creation but it continues in you every day if you're a new creation that doesn't stop notice how verse 5 is in the present tense the light shines not did shine or will shine but it shines in the darkness and the darkness does not overcome it every day as you put your old self to death Jesus is recreating you he's shining in the dark areas of your heart and he's illuminating them when he shines in the areas of your heart when he illuminates them that darkness is gone in a world that is spiritual ignorant blind fallen sinful dominated by certain and darkness Jesus' light is shining and life is shining life is shining spiritual life is beginning with people that are you in he shines in you to save you from the spiritual darkness that goes on in there when you tell yourself

I'm not good enough God the whole point that's the whole point knowing it that's the point is that we're all a mess but the word of God came to shine to create in you something so beautiful that you would be marbled at for what God has done in you he can light you up today he can light you up today afresh or for the first time to have the light and the life of the living God Jesus Christ who made you living inside of you this is the word of God this is who the word is just going to do everything we've said about the word this morning so I'm just going to list it the eternal word list that before we close he was before everything else before the universe he was with God in perfect happy blissful relationship he is God Jesus is the word and if you want to know what God is like you look at Jesus he made everything everything points to what he's like and he is like and where his light shines life happens consider all that and then and then consider that this is the baby that Mary holds this is the one who she created in her arms who has done all this and will do all this she holds the one she holds the one who has life within himself and whose light will shine and bring about a new creation she holds him in her arms she herself is alive because she was made through this baby who she holds she cradles her in her arms she nurses him he cries she changes his napping when he needs a feed she provides for him when he gets cold and she curls him with a blanket he's totally dependent on his mother and yet this is the one who when he shines darkness will be in her darkness he's her God you know we're only scratching the surface this morning we're only scratching the surface when it comes to the truth about Jesus which is always there but which we need to make visible to colour in the beauty of who Jesus is when he shines this is only part of the rainbow this is only part of the rainbow let's encourage can I encourage you let's encourage one another to make sure that over this month as I've said we stop and pause and consider the significance of this morning let me pray

Almighty God Lord Jesus Christ it is amazing to consider who you are it blows our imagination we can't comprehend the magnificence of who you are there's parts of it that we accept and we have faith in but even still it is a for our human faculties just even to understand it stretches us to our limits and it drives our praise because we are so in awe of you that you are all this magnificent pre-existent God who everything was made and yet you came and took on a human nature a human form subjected yourself to all the affliction and horror and brutality of our world you became one of us and we are astonished and so we praise you for what you do for what you have done and we pray that you would continue to fixate to draw our attention to you today tomorrow over this season we ask that you would help us to praise and worship you in the midst of all the business draw us to you

Lord Jesus we pray we ask this in the name of Christ Amen to the things we are we are leaving the Lord Jesus He died he died he was he he Fuck