

Come Follow Me
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Week 4
John 1

John gives us a unique perspective on the life of the Savior. It's been asked why do we have four gospels? Why do we have four accounts of seemingly the same thing? Though the stories may be similar the accounts are all actually quite different. The personage of Jesus Christ, the mortal embodiment of God is so important for us to understand that any single writer would not be able to capture the entirety of His life. Think of the four gospels as a band; each playing a different instrument. Creating a masterpiece of art describing the life of the Savior. The scriptures describe it as a Cherubim. Ezekiel 10 gives a description of an angel with 4 faces with one body. It has the face of an Ox, a Lion, an Eagle and a Man.

Each is Unique and gives us a different view. Matthew writes to Jews; He often used the phrase "so that it may be fulfilled". He was focused on showing the Jews that this Jesus was come to fulfill all that was prophesied. He is the fulfillment of the Old Testament.

The Gospel of Mark is written for the Romans. It's short, it's fast. It is about action and doing. "And then and then" is how he whips through the events in the Savior's life.

The Gospel of Luke it appears that he is writing to the Greeks. Luke being a Gentile Physician he is a little more exact in his language, speaking of Jesus as the perfect Man, the mortal physical embodiment of God.

John however is a little unique in that he is speaking to the whole world. He speaks of the divinity of God and is the most full in his description of Jesus as a God and His mission here on Earth.

Consider it this way: Matthew focused on what Jesus said. Mark is about what Jesus did. The Gospel of Luke is about how he felt. And the Gospel of John was about who Jesus was.

John was a very important individual in the life of Jesus. He writes one of the four Gospels but also he was one of the 3 that Jesus trusted in the most. He often took Peter, James and John with Him in sacred, secluded moments that the other disciples were not a part of.

John refers to himself as "the disciple that Jesus loved" (John 13:23)

It is often that when someone starts to learn about Jesus we have them read the book of John along with the 3rd Nephi to really get an idea of who Jesus was: full of compassion and grace, mercy and love.

And though Matthew and Luke start with Jesus's mortal lineage, John goes back even farther and starts with who Jesus was before this mortal sphere.

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were **made** by 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 And the **light** shineth in **darkness**; and the darkness **comprehended** it not.

(John 1:1-5)

This last phrase is an interesting one. The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. I've often thought that this meant that the light when it shown in the darkness the darkness did not understand what was happening; it didn't comprehend the light. Or it didn't or couldn't grasp mentally the idea of light. To comprehend has two meanings. It also means to comprise or encompass. So we might read it this way: The light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness did not overcome the light. "The light" another name for Jesus was not, is not, and can not be overcome by darkness. He is the champion of our salvation.

Also in the chapter we see the first time that Jesus is announced to the world. When He came to John to be baptized it says:

28 These things were done in **Bethabara** beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 ¶ The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the **Lamb** of God, which taketh away the **sin** of the world.

30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.

” (John 1:28-30)

Geographically the importance of where this took place is significant. This place where Jesus was baptized is considered to be the lowest body of water on earth. Giving not only spiritual meaning but also literally meaning to the verse:

“He that ascended up on high, as also he descended below all things, in that he comprehended all things, that he might be in all and through all things, the light of truth; which truth shineth.” (D&C 88:6-7)

So what can we learn from all this? What can we take from this chapter in John to change our personal life for the better. I believe that the most important thing for us to learn is captured in the end of chapter one. Where it says:

“Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples;

36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the **Lamb** of God!

37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye?

They said unto him, where dwellest thou?

39 He saith unto them, Come and see.” (John 1:35-39)

The next day He found another disciple, Philip and said to him “follow me”
Later he called Peter and other of His disciples with the same invitation: “follow me”

Elder Holland explains:

“It seems clear that the essence of our duty and the fundamental requirement of our mortal life is captured in these brief phrases from any number of scenes in the Savior’s mortal ministry. He is saying to us, “Trust me, learn of me, do what I do. Then, when you walk where *I* am going,” He says, “we can talk about where *you* are going, and the problems you face and the troubles you have. If you will follow me, I will lead you out of darkness,” He promises. “I will give you answers to your prayers. I will give you rest to your souls.”

“This reliance upon the merciful nature of God is at the very center of the gospel Christ taught. I testify that the Savior’s Atonement lifts from us not only the burden of our sins but also the burden of our disappointments and sorrows, our heartaches and our despair.¹⁴ From the beginning, trust in such help was to give us both a reason and a way to improve, an incentive to lay down our burdens and take up our salvation. There can and will be plenty of difficulties in life. Nevertheless, the soul that comes unto Christ, who knows His voice and strives to do as He did, finds a strength, as the hymn says, “beyond [his] own.”¹⁵ The Savior reminds us that He has “graven [us] upon the palms of [His] hands.”¹⁶ Considering the incomprehensible cost of the Crucifixion and Atonement, I promise you He is not going to turn His back on us now. When He says to the poor in spirit, “Come unto me,” He means He knows the way out and He knows the way up. He knows it because He has walked it. He knows the way because He *is* the way.

Brothers and sisters, whatever your distress, *please* don’t give up and *please* don’t yield to fear.”

“I think also of that night when Christ rushed to the aid of His frightened disciples, walking as He did on the water to get to them, calling out, “It is I; be not afraid.” Peter exclaimed, “Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.” Christ’s answer to him was as it *always* is *every* time: “Come,” He said. Instantly, as was his nature, Peter sprang over the vessel’s side and into the troubled waters. While his eyes were fixed upon the Lord, the wind could toss his hair and the spray could drench his robes, but all was well—he was coming to Christ. It was only when his faith wavered and fear took control, only when he removed his glance from the Master to look at the

furious waves and the ominous black gulf beneath, only then did he begin to sink into the sea. In newer terror he cried out, “Lord, save me.”

Undoubtedly with some sadness, the Master over every problem and fear, He who is the solution to every discouragement and disappointment, stretched out His hand and grasped the drowning disciple with the gentle rebuke, “O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?”¹⁸

If you are lonely, please know you can find comfort. If you are discouraged, please know you can find hope. If you are poor in spirit, please know you can be strengthened. If you feel you are broken, please know you can be mended.”

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2006/04/broken-things-to-mend?lang=eng>

Just as with the children of Israel Jesus wants to have a personal relationship with you. He knows you and He wants you to know Him. If you haven't already, I pray that you will make it a goal this year to gain a personal testimony of the divinity of Christ. That you will strengthen your relationship with Him and learn how to communicate with Him through prayer and personal revelation. If you accomplish nothing else besides this this year, I testify that you would consider this the greatest year of your life! That you would have blessings and adventures far beyond anything you could ever imagine. For a life with God is a life of peace, prosperity and excitement!

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.