

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
JOHN

Chapter 1

¹Gen. 1:1; [Col. 1:17; 1 John 1:1; Rev. 1:4, 8, 17; 3:14; 21:6; 22:13]
²Rev. 19:13; [Heb. 4:12; 1 John 1:1] ^c1 John 1:2; [ch. 17:5] ^dPhil. 2:6
³ver. 10; Ps. 33:6; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2
⁴ch. 5:26; 11:25; 1 John 1:2; 5:11 ^ech. 8:12; 9:5; 12:46
⁵^f[ch. 3:19]
⁶ver. 33; ch. 3:28; Mal. 3:1 /Matt. 3:1; Mark 1:4; Luke 3:2
⁷ch. 3:26; 5:33 /Acts 19:4
⁸ver. 20
⁹Isa. 49:6; 1 John 2:8
¹⁰ch. 16:3; 1 John 3:1]

The Word Became Flesh

1^aIn the beginning was ^bthe Word, and ^cthe Word was with God, and ^dthe Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³^eAll things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴^fIn him was life, ¹ and ^gthe life was the light of men. ⁵^hThe light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man ⁱsent from God, whose name was ^jJohn. ⁷He came as a ^kwitness, to bear witness about the light, ^lthat all might believe through him. ⁸^mHe was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁹ⁿThe true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet ^othe world did not know him. ¹¹He came to ^phis own, ² and ^qhis own people ³^rdid not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive

¹ Or was not any thing made. That which has been made was life in him ² Greek to his own things; that is, to his own domain, or to his own people ³ People is implied in Greek

¹¹ Matt. 21:38 ^och. 13:1 ^rch. 5:43; [ch. 3:11, 32]

1:1–18 Prologue: The Incarnate Word. In the prologue John presents Jesus as the eternal, preexistent, now incarnate Word (vv. 1, 14) and as the one-of-a-kind Son of the Father who is himself God (vv. 1, 18). God's revelation and redemption in and through Jesus are shown to form the culmination of the history of salvation, which previously included God's giving of the law through Moses (v. 17), his dwelling among his people in the tabernacle and the temple (v. 14), and the sending of the forerunner, John the Baptist (vv. 6–8, 15). The prologue also introduces many of the major themes developed later in the Gospel, such as Jesus as the life (v. 4), the light (vv. 5–9), and the truth (vv. 14, 16–17); believers as God's children (vv. 12–13); and the world's rejection of Jesus (vv. 10–11).

1:1 In the beginning was the Word echoes the opening phrase of the book of Genesis, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." John will soon identify this Word as Jesus (v. 14), but here he locates Jesus' existence in eternity past with God. The term "the Word" (Gk. *Logos*) conveys the notion of divine self-expression or speech and has a rich OT background. God's Word is effective: God speaks, and things come into being (Gen. 1:3, 9; Ps. 33:6; 107:20; Isa. 55:10–11), and by speech he relates personally to his people (e.g., Gen. 15:1). John also shows how this concept of "the Word" is superior to a Greek philosophical concept of "Word" (*logos*) as an impersonal principle of Reason that gave order to the universe. **And the Word was with God** indicates interpersonal relationship "with" God, but then **and the Word was God** affirms that this Word was also the same God who created the universe "in the beginning." Here are the building blocks that go into the doctrine of the Trinity: the one true God consists of more than one person, they relate to each other, and they have always existed. From the Patristic period (Arius, c. A.D. 256–336) until the present day (Jehovah's Witnesses), some have claimed that "the Word was God" merely identifies Jesus as a god rather than identifying Jesus as God, because the Greek word for God, *Theos*, is not preceded by a definite article. However, in Greek grammar, Colwell's Rule indicates that the translation "a god" is not required, for lack of an article does not necessarily indicate indefiniteness ("a god") but rather specifies that a given term ("God") is the predicate nominative of a definite subject ("the Word"). This means that the context must determine the meaning of *Theos*

here, and the context clearly indicates that this "God" that John is talking about ("the Word") is the one true God who created all things (see also John 1:6, 12, 13, 18 for other examples of *Theos* without a definite article but clearly meaning "God").

1:3 All things includes the whole universe, indicating that (except for God) everything that exists was created and that (except for God) nothing has existed eternally. **Made through him** follows the consistent pattern of Scripture in saying that God the Father carried out his creative works through the activity of the Son (cf. 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2). This verse disproves any suggestion that the Word (or the Son, John 1:14) was created, for the Father would have had to do this by himself, and John says that nothing was created that way, for **without him was not any thing made that was made**.

1:4–5 The references to **life**, **light**, and **darkness** continue to draw on Genesis motifs (cf. Gen. 1:3–5, 14–18, 20–31; 2:7; 3:20; cf. also Isa. 9:2; 42:6–7; 49:6; 60:1–5; Mal. 4:2; Luke 1:78–79). Against this background, Jesus as the "light" brings to this dark world true knowledge, moral purity, and the light that shows the very presence of God (cf. John 8:12; 1 John 1:5).

1:7–9 **light**. See note on vv. 4–5. **witness**. See note on 5:31–47.

1:11 John moves from **his own** things (see ESV footnote)—that is, creation—to **his own people**, the Jews. The Jewish rejection of the Messiah, despite convincing proofs of his messianic identity (esp. the "signs"), is one of the major emphases of the Gospel (see esp. 12:37–40).

1:12–13 **Receive him** implies not merely intellectual agreement with some facts about Jesus but also welcoming and submitting to him in a personal relationship. "Believed in" (Gk. *pisteuō eis*) implies personal trust. **His name** refers to all that is true about him, and therefore the totality of his person. **Born, not of blood . . . , but of God** makes clear that neither physical birth nor ethnic descent nor human effort can make people children of God, but only God's supernatural work (8:41–47; cf. 3:16). This extends the possibility of becoming God's children to Gentiles and not just Jews (11:51–52; cf. 10:16). See also 3:3–8. **To all . . . who believed . . . he gave the right** indicates that saving faith precedes becoming members of God's family through adoption as his children.

him, ^swho believed in his name, ^the gave the right ^uto become ^vchildren of God, ¹³who ^wwere born, ^xnot of blood ^ynor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And ^athe Word ^bbecame flesh and ^ddwelt among us, ^cand we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of ^dgrace and ^etruth. ¹⁵(^fJohn bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ^gHe who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.”) ¹⁶And from ^hhis fullness we have all received, ⁱgrace upon grace. ¹⁷For ^jthe law was given through Moses, ^kgrace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸^lNo one has ever seen God; ^mthe only God, ¹ who is at the Father’s side, ² ⁿhe has made him known.

The Testimony of John the Baptist

¹⁹And this is the ^otestimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, ^p“Who are you?” ²⁰^qHe confessed, and did not deny, but confessed,

¹Or the only One, who is God; some manuscripts the only Son ²Greek in the bosom of the Father

¹⁸ch. 5:37; 6:46; Ex. 33:20; Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 6:16; 1 John 4:12, 20; [ch. 12:45] ^mver. 14; See ch. 3:16 ⁿ[Matt. 11:27]; See ch. 3:32 ¹⁹ch. 3:26 ^o[ch. 8:25] ²⁰ver. 8; ch. 3:28; Acts 13:25; [Luke 3:15]

¹²See 1 John 5:13
¹John 5:1 ^u1 John 3:1; [Matt. 5:45] ^v[Gal. 3:26]; See ch. 11:52
¹³James 1:18; [ch. 3:3; 1 Pet. 1:3] ^w1 Pet. 1:23 ^xch. 3:6
¹⁴ver. 1 ^yRom. 1:3; 8:3; Gal. 4:4; Phil. 2:7, 8; Col. 1:22; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 2:14; 1 John 4:2; 2 John 7; [ch. 6:51] ^zRev. 7:15; 21:3 ^{ch.} 2:11; Luke 9:32; 2 Pet. 1:16, 17; 1 John 1:1; 4:14 ^{aa}See ver. 7 ^{ch.} [14:6]
¹⁵See ver. 7 ^{bb}ver. 27, 30; See Matt. 3:11
¹⁶Eph. 1:23; 3:19; 4:13; Col. 1:19; 2:9 ^{cc}[Matt. 25:29]
¹⁷ch. 7:19; Ex. 20:1 ^{dd}ver. 14; [Rom. 5:21]

1:14 The Word continues the opening words of the prologue in v. 1. **Became flesh** does not mean the Word ceased being God; rather, the Word, who was God, also took on humanity (cf. Phil. 2:6–7). This is the most amazing event in all of history: the eternal, omnipotent, omnipresent, infinitely holy Son of God took on a human nature and lived among humanity as one who was both God and man at the same time, in one person. **Dwelt among us** means more literally “pitched his tent” (Gk. *skēnoō*), an allusion to God’s dwelling among the Israelites in the tabernacle (cf. Ex. 25:8–9; 33:7). In the past, God had manifested his presence to his people in the tabernacle and the temple. Now God takes up residence among his people in the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ (cf. John 1:17). Thus, the coming of Christ fulfills the OT symbolism for God’s dwelling with man in the tabernacle and the temple. Later, through the Holy Spirit, Christ will make into a temple both the church (1 Cor. 3:16) and a Christian’s body (1 Cor. 6:19). The references to God’s **glory** refer back to OT passages narrating the manifestation of the presence and glory of God in theophanies (appearances of God), the tabernacle, or the temple (e.g., Ex. 33:22; Num. 14:10; Deut. 5:22). **the only Son from the Father.** Jesus is the “Son of God,” not in the sense of being created or born (see John 1:3), but in the sense of being a Son who is exactly like his Father in all attributes, and in the sense of having a Father-Son relationship with God the Father. The Greek word underlying “only,” *monogenēs*, means “one of a kind, unique,” as in the case of Isaac, who is called Abraham’s “one-of-a-kind” son in Heb. 11:17 (in contrast to Ishmael; cf. Gen. 22:2, 12, 16). Thus “only” is a better translation than “only begotten” (made familiar through its use in the *KJV*). On **grace and truth**, see note on John 1:16–17.

1:15 bore witness. See note on 5:31–47. **he was before me.** See note on 1:1.

1:16–17 Grace indicates God’s (unmerited) favor that brings blessing and joy. **Grace and truth** most likely recalls the Hebrew behind the phrase “steadfast love [Hb. *hesed*] and faithfulness [Hb. *emet*]” in Ex. 34:6 (cf. Ex. 33:18–19), where the expression refers to God’s covenant faithfulness to his people Israel. According to John, God’s covenant faithfulness found ultimate expression in his sending of his one-of-a-kind Son, Jesus Christ (see note on John 1:14). The contrast is not that the Mosaic law was bad and

Jesus is good. Rather, both the giving of the law and the coming of Jesus Christ mark decisive events in the history of salvation. In the law, God graciously revealed his character and righteous requirements to the nation of Israel. Jesus, however, marked the final, definitive revelation of God’s grace and truth. He was superior to Abraham (8:53), Jacob (4:12), and Moses (5:46–47; cf. 9:28).

1:18 No one has ever seen God, that is, in a full and complete way (cf. 6:46), but some people did see partial revelations of God in the OT. To see God in Christ would be far better (see 14:6). Some ancient manuscripts say “the only Son” here (see *ESV* footnote), but the earliest manuscripts say **the only God** (using the same word for “only” as 1:14, meaning “unique, one-of-a-kind”). John refers to two different persons here as “God,” as he did in v. 1. John concludes the prologue by emphasizing what he taught in v. 1: Jesus as the Word is God, and he has revealed and explained God to humanity.

1:19–12:50 The Signs of the Messiah. The first half of John’s Gospel features Jesus’ demonstration of his messianic identity by way of several selected “signs” (cf. 20:30–31), such as the changing of water into wine (2:1–11), many signs in Jerusalem (2:23; cf. 7:31; 9:16; 11:47), the healing of the official’s son (4:46–54), the healing of the invalid (5:1–15), the feeding of the multitude (6:1–15), the healing of the man born blind (9:1–41), and the raising of Lazarus (11:1–44; cf. 12:18). (Regarding John’s use of the word “signs,” see Introduction: Literary Features.) This section ends with a reference to the Jewish nation’s rejection of the Messiah (12:36b–37).

1:19–2:11 John the Baptist’s Witness and the First Week of Jesus’ Ministry. This introductory section of John’s Gospel narrates the course of the first week of Jesus’ ministry. He is hailed by John the Baptist as “God’s lamb” (1:29, 36), is followed by his first disciples (1:37–51), and performs his first “sign” (see Introduction: Literary Features), turning water into wine at the wedding at Cana (2:1–11).

1:19 testimony. See note on 5:31–47. **The Jews** is an expression used 68 times in the Greek text of John, sometimes in a neutral (2:6) or positive (4:22) sense, but often to refer to hostile Jewish opponents of Jesus among the Jewish leaders and the ordinary people who followed them. The phrase does not usually mean all the Jews, for Jesus and John the Baptist were also Jews, as was the author, John. John wants Jewish readers in his own time to realize that opposition to Jesus by many Jewish leaders goes back to the very beginning of Jesus’ ministry, but that did not deter many other Jews from following him anyway. In many places in John, “the Jews” seems to be a shorthand expression for “the Jews who opposed Jesus.” **Jerusalem.** See Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus, pp. 1878–1879.

1:20–21 John denies being the Christ (cf. v. 8, 15; 3:28), Elijah, or the Prophet. **the Christ.** See note on 1:41. **Elijah**, who never died (2 Kings 2:11), was expected to return in the end times (Mal. 4:5) to “restore all things” (Matt. 17:11; cf. Luke 1:17). Though the Baptist resembled Elijah in his rugged lifestyle (Matt. 3:4; cf. 2 Kings 1:8), he denied that he himself was Elijah (though Jesus, understanding more about this than John, saw John

The First Week of Jesus’ Ministry

Day 1	John the Baptist’s witness concerning Jesus	1:19–28
Day 2	John the Baptist’s encounter with Jesus	1:29–34
Day 3	John the Baptist’s referral of disciples to Jesus	1:35–39
Day 4	Andrew’s introduction of his brother Peter to Jesus	1:40–42
Day 5	The recruitment of Philip and Nathanael	1:43–51
Day 6		
Day 7	The wedding at Cana	2:1–11

21¹[Matt. 11:14; 16:14]
²See Deut. 18:15, 18
 23³Cited from Isa. 40:3;
 See Matt. 3:3
 25⁴Matt. 3:6; Mark 1:4;
 Luke 3:3, 7
 26⁵Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:7, 8;
 Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5; 13:25
 27⁶ver. 15, 30
 29⁷ver. 36; Ex. 12:3; Isa.
 53:7; Acts 8:32; 1 Pet.
 1:19; [Gen. 22:8; Rev. 5:6]
⁸1 John 3:5; [Heb. 10:4,
 11] ⁹[ch. 3:16, 17; 4:42;
 12:47; 1 John 2:2; 4:14]
 30¹⁰ver. 15, 27
 31¹¹Luke 1:17, 76, 77
 32¹²See ver. 7 ¹³Matt. 3:16;
 Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22
¹⁴[Isa. 11:2; Acts 10:38]
 33¹⁵ver. 6; Luke 3:2 ¹⁶[ch.
 3:5] ¹⁷Matt. 3:11; Mark
 1:8; Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5
 36¹⁸See ver. 29

"I am not the Christ."²¹ And they asked him, "What then? 'Are you Elijah?'" He said, "I am not."²² "Are you 'the Prophet?'" And he answered, "No."²³ So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"²⁴ He said, "I am 'the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight' the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said."

²⁴(Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.)²⁵ They asked him, "'Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?'"²⁶ John answered them, "'I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know,²⁷ even 'he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.'"²⁸ These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Behold, the Lamb of God

²⁹The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, 'the Lamb of God, who 'takes away the sin 'of the world!'³⁰ This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.'³¹ I myself did not know him, but 'for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.'"³² And John 'bore witness: 'I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and 'it remained on him.³³ I myself did not know him, but 'he who sent me to baptize 'with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, 'this is he who baptizes 'with the Holy Spirit.'³⁴ And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

³⁵The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples,³⁶ and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, 'the Lamb of God!'"³⁷ The two disciples heard him

¹Or *crying out, 'In the wilderness make straight*

as fulfilling the prophecy about Elijah; cf. Matt. 11:14). The coming of the **Prophet** was predicted by Moses in Deut. 18:15, 18 (cf. Acts 3:22; 7:37) and was expected in Jesus' day (John 6:14; 7:40). John denied being this Prophet as well (though he was a prophet; see Matt. 11:11–14; John 10:40–41).

1:23 John is the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, in keeping with the prophet Isaiah's words (Isa. 40:3; cf. Matt. 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4). By preaching a word of repentance and divine judgment, this messenger of God was to prepare the way for the **Lord God** of the OT (Yahweh himself) to come to his people through the wilderness.

1:24 Pharisees. A relatively small but highly influential group of Jews who emphasized meticulous observance of God's law (as understood both from the OT laws and from their accumulated extrabiblical traditions) as the means by which one attains righteousness before God and retains his favor. Many Pharisees opposed Jesus (see Matt. 23:1–36, where Jesus condemns their hypocrisy), but some followed him (John 3:1–5; 7:50; 19:38–40; cf. Acts 23:6; Phil. 3:5). See note on Matt. 3:7.

1:27 sandal. Leather sandals with ties are pictured in ancient art representing Judeans from various eras. Some archaeological examples of sandals are known from this period (e.g., from the Cave of Letters in the Judean desert).

1:28 John was baptizing. Cf. Luke 3:3. John's baptism was an outward sign of cleansing reflecting inward repentance from sins (see Matt. 3:6; cf. later Christian baptisms at Matt. 28:19; Rom. 6:3; 1 Pet. 3:21). The **Bethany across the Jordan** (cf. John 10:40) is different from the village near Jerusalem where Lazarus was raised (cf. 11:1, 18); this Bethany is designated as "across" (i.e., east of) the Jordan River (cf. 3:26; 10:40).

1:29 Cf. v. 36. Regarding the **next day**, see note on 2:1. **Jesus**, by his sacrifice, fulfills the symbolism of the Passover lamb and other OT sacrifices (Lev. 1:1–5:19; 1 Cor. 5:7; Eph. 5:2; Heb. 10:1–14). Deliverance through the blood of a lamb prefigured the coming of Jesus as the **Lamb of God** to obtain final salvation for God's people through his death, which in turn redeemed them from death, sin, and Satan (Col. 1:13–14; Heb. 2:14–15). See also Isa. 53:7 and other OT passages about sacrifices for sins (Gen. 22:8; Lev. 14:25; 16:15–22). This lamb imagery will later culminate in John's vision of Jesus as the apocalyptic warrior Lamb who will bring judgment and universal victory (Rev. 5:6–13; 7:17; 21:22–23; 22:1–3). **Takes away the sin of the world** refers to Jesus' sacrificial, substitutionary death and his appeasement of

the divine wrath by way of atonement for sin (his propitiation; cf. Rom. 3:25; Heb. 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 4:10; and notes on 1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18).

1:31 I myself did not know him. John probably means that he did not know that Jesus was the Messiah until he saw the sign mentioned in vv. 32–33.

1:32–34 The Spirit did not merely **descend** on Jesus, he **remained on him** (cf. 3:34), a sign of Jesus' divine anointing. In the OT, the Spirit came upon people to enable them to accomplish certain God-given tasks. But Isaiah predicted that the Messiah would be full of the Spirit at all times (Isa. 11:2; 61:1; cf. Luke 4:18). Jesus is God himself, the second person of the Trinity, with an eternal relation of sonship to God the Father (cf. John 5:18; 17:5; Gal. 4:4). See note on John 5:31–47.

1:36 Lamb of God. See note on v. 29.

Jesus Is God: Specific Examples Where Greek *Theos* ("God") Is Applied to Jesus

John 1:1	In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was <i>God</i> .
John 1:18	No one has ever seen God; the only <i>God</i> , who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.
John 20:28	Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my <i>God</i> !"
Rom. 9:5	To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is <i>God</i> over all, blessed forever. Amen.
Titus 2:13	... waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great <i>God</i> and Savior Jesus Christ ...
Heb. 1:8	But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O <i>God</i> , is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom."
2 Pet. 1:1	To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our <i>God</i> and Savior Jesus Christ ...

say this, and they followed Jesus.³⁸ Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, ³⁹“What are you seeking?” And they said to him, ⁴⁰“‘Rabbi’” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?”³⁹ He said to them, “Come and you will see.” So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus² was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. ⁴¹He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, “We have found ^mthe Messiah” (which means Christ). ⁴²He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “So you are Simon the son of ⁿJohn? You shall be called ^cCephas” (which means ^pPeter³).

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

⁴³The next day Jesus decided ^tto go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” ⁴⁴Now ^sPhilip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵Philip found ^tNathanael and said to him, “We have found him of whom ^uMoses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus ^vof Nazareth, ^wthe son of Joseph.” ⁴⁶Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” ⁴⁷Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said to him, “Behold, ^yan Israelite indeed, ^zin whom there is no deceit!” ⁴⁸Nathanael said to him, “How ^ado you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” ⁴⁹Nathanael answered him, ^b“‘Rabbi, ^cyou are the Son of God! You are the ^dKing of Israel!” ⁵⁰Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” ⁵¹And he said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, ^eyou will see ^eheaven opened, and ^fthe angels of God ascending and descending on ^gthe Son of Man.”

The Wedding at Cana

2 On ^hthe third day there was a wedding at ⁱCana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ²Jesus also was invited to the wedding with ^jhis disciples. ³When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” ⁴And Jesus said to her,

¹That is, about 4 P.M. ²Greek *him* ³*Cephas* and *Peter* are from the word for *rock* in Aramaic and Greek, respectively ⁴The Greek for *you* is plural; twice in this verse

³⁸ch. 18:4, 7; 20:15 ⁴ver. 49; ch. 3:2, 26; 6:25; [ch. 20:16; Mark 10:51]

⁴⁰For ver. 40-42, [Matt. 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:2-11]

⁴¹ch. 4:25

⁴²ch. 21:15-17 ¹1 Cor. 1:12; 3:22 ²Matt. 16:18

⁴³[ver. 35; ch. 2:1] ⁴[ver. 28]

⁴⁴ch. 12:21

⁴⁵ch. 21:2 ⁵See Luke 16:16; 24:27 ⁶See Matt. 2:23 ⁷ch. 6:42; Luke 3:23

⁴⁶[ch. 7:41, 52]

⁴⁷Ps. 73:1; Rom. 9:4, 6 ²Ps. 32:2; [Zeph. 3:13; Rev. 14:5]

⁴⁸ch. 2:24, 25

⁴⁹See ver. 38 ¹[ch. 6:69; 11:27; 20:28] ²ch. 12:13; Zeph. 3:15; Matt. 27:11, 42; [Zech. 9:9]

⁵¹Ezek. 1:1; Matt. 3:16; Luke 3:21 ¹[Gen. 28:12] ²See Dan. 7:13

Chapter 2

¹[ch. 1:29, 35, 43] ¹ch. 4:46; 21:2

²ch. 1:40-49

1:38 “Rabbi” (which means Teacher) is one of seven Hebrew/Aramaic terms translated by John for his readers.

1:40 One of the two . . . was Andrew. The name of the other disciple is not stated. Most likely, he was John the son of Zebedee (see Introduction: Author and Title).

1:41 The terms **Messiah** (Hb.) and **Christ** (Gk.) both mean “anointed” (usually by God). In the NT and early Judaism, “Messiah” is a summary term that gathers up many strands of OT expectations about a coming “anointed one” who would lead and teach and save God’s people, especially the great King and Savior in the line of David whom the OT promised (see, e.g., 2 Sam. 7:5-16; Ps. 110:1-4; Isa. 9:6-7).

1:42 Cephas is an Aramaic word meaning “rock” (cf. Matt. 16:16-18; cf. also note on John 1:38). In Bible times, God frequently changed people’s names to indicate their special calling, as was the case with Abram (Abraham) and Jacob (Israel); see Gen. 17:5; 32:28.

1:43 Galilee. See note on Mark 1:9.

1:44 Bethsaida. See note on Luke 9:10.

1:45 Nathanael is also mentioned in 21:2. “Nathanael” may be the personal name of Bartholomew (Bar-Tholomaios, “son of Tholomaios”), who is linked with Philip in all three Synoptic lists of apostles (Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:14). **The Law and . . . the prophets** commonly referred to the Jewish Scriptures (i.e., the OT) in their entirety (e.g., Matt. 5:17; 7:12).

1:46 Nazareth. Not mentioned in the OT, Nazareth was a small town of no more than 2,000 people in Jesus’ day. See note on Luke 1:26.

1:48 I saw you. Jesus here displays supernatural knowledge, thus identifying himself as the Messiah. **fig tree.** See note on Mark 11:13-14.

1:49 Son of God designates Jesus as the Messiah predicted in the OT (2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 2:7; see note on John 1:14). **King of Israel** likewise is an OT designation for the Messiah (e.g., Zeph. 3:15). The two terms are also found side by side in Matt. 27:42-43.

1:51 Truly, truly, I say to you is a solemn affirmation stressing the authori-

tative nature and importance of Jesus’ pronouncements. The expression is found 25 times in this Gospel. The two references to “you” here are plural. **See heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending** recalls the story of Jacob in Genesis 28 (see esp. v. 12). Jesus will be a greater way of access to God than the heavenly ladder on which angels traveled between God and Jacob (Gen. 28:12; cf. Heb. 10:19-20), and wherever Jesus is, that place will become the “New Bethel” where God is revealed. Jesus is not merely “a son of man” (an ordinary male human being), but he repeatedly (over 80 times in the Gospels) calls himself **the Son of Man**, suggesting the greatest, most notable son of man of all time. “The Son of Man” is thus a messianic title that refers back to the mysterious, human-divine figure of “one like a son of man” in Dan. 7:13-14, one who would be given rule over all the nations of the earth forever (cf. Matt. 26:64). The Son of Man will be “lifted up” by being crucified (see note on John 3:14), will provide divine revelation (6:27), and will act with end-time authority (5:27; 9:39).

2:1 This is the **third day**—that is, two days after Jesus’ encounter with Nathanael (1:43-51). This continues the narration of Jesus’ activities spanning an entire week (see the references to “the next day” in 1:29, 35, 43). **Cana in Galilee.** Archaeological attention has focused on the excavation site of Khirbet Kana, 8.3 miles (13 km) north of Nazareth, as the most likely locale for the Roman town of Cana. Excavation of this site has revealed substantial quantities of Roman potsherds, thus confirming Roman-era occupation; it also features a prime location on the Roman road from Ptolemais to Magdala.

2:3 The wedding party’s running out of wine may be seen as symbolizing the spiritual barrenness of first-century Judaism, especially against an OT background that viewed wine (but never drunkenness) as a sign of joy and God’s blessing (Ps. 104:15; Prov. 3:10; cf. Matt. 26:29).

2:4 Jesus’ address for his mother, **Woman**, is an expression of polite distance, as is his question to her. **My hour has not yet come.** In John, Jesus’ “hour” is the time of his crucifixion, at which time his saving work is accomplished in his atoning death (see 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1; also note on 7:30). At this point in his ministry, because of people’s misconceptions about the