

John – Week 1 – The Word, The Word – Bible Study Helps

Title: The Word: The Living Word and the Written Word

Sermon Summary: This sermon introduces the Gospel of John by exploring the profound connection between Jesus Christ as "the Word of God" and the Bible as "the Word of God." The sermon emphasizes that these two cannot be separated—Jesus is the living Word, and Scripture is the written Word. John's Gospel uniquely presents Jesus as God incarnate, beginning with the powerful declaration "In the beginning was the Word." The message challenges believers to recognize that attacks on Scripture are attacks on Christ Himself, and that loving Jesus means loving His Word. The sermon establishes that the Bible is not merely inspired but is interchangeable with Christ in its purity, holiness, perfection, and truth. It calls Christians to immerse themselves in Scripture daily, recognizing that the Word of God is "quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword," capable of transforming lives and revealing the heart's true condition.

Key Points:

- John's Gospel presents Jesus Christ as God in human form, distinct from the other Gospels which portray Him as King (Matthew), Servant (Mark), and Man (Luke)
- Jesus Christ is called "the Word of God" (John 1:1, 1 John 5:7, Revelation 19:13)
- The Bible is also called "the Word of God" (Ephesians 6:17, 2 Timothy 2:9, Hebrews 4:12)
- The living Word (Jesus) and written Word (Scripture) are interchangeable and inseparable in their nature and authority
- Both Jesus and Scripture share identical attributes: pure, holy, perfect, and truth
- John was the "beloved disciple" who had the closest relationship with Jesus and was the only disciple present at the crucifixion
- John's Gospel records seven miracles that represent salvation and its results
- The Word of God discerns thoughts and intents of the heart and is powerful enough to change lives
- Denying the deity of Christ or the inerrancy of Scripture is attacking the Word of God
- Daily engagement with Scripture through reading, listening, or memorizing is essential for spiritual growth and victory over sin

Scripture Reference:

- John 1:1-14 (primary focus: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God")
- John 20:30-31 (key verse stating the purpose of John's Gospel)

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- 1 John 5:7 (Trinity and the Word)
- Revelation 19:11-13 (Jesus as the Word of God returning)
- Ephesians 6:17 (sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God)
- Hebrews 4:12-13 (Word of God quick and powerful)
- 1 Peter 1:22-23 (born again by the Word of God)
- 2 Timothy 3:15 (holy scriptures)
- Proverbs 30:5 (Word of God is pure and perfect)

Stories:

- John leaning on Jesus' breast at the Last Supper, asking "Lord, who is it?" rather than "Is it I?" showing his close relationship with Christ
- John being the only disciple present at the crucifixion and being entrusted with caring for Mary
- John outrunning Peter to the empty tomb (noting with humor that John made sure to record this detail)
- John recognizing Jesus on the seashore after the resurrection
- Reference to Paul Harvey's "If I Were the Devil" commentary about keeping society exactly as it is, applied to the devil's strategy of keeping Christians away from the Bible
- Illustration of John's Gospel being "a pool of water that a baby could play in, and that an elephant could take a bath in"—simple enough for a child yet deep enough for the most experienced scholar

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Discipleship Questions

How does understanding Jesus as 'the Word' change the way you approach reading and studying the Bible in your daily life?

In what ways have you experienced the Word of God as 'quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword' piercing your own heart and thoughts?

Why do you think John chose to begin his Gospel with 'In the beginning was the Word' rather than with Jesus' birth or baptism like the other Gospel writers?

What does it mean practically that the living Word (Jesus) and the written Word (the Bible) are interchangeable and cannot be separated?

How does recognizing that attacks on the accuracy of Scripture are attacks on Jesus Himself affect your commitment to defending biblical truth?

John was called 'the disciple whom Jesus loved' and had the closest relationship with Christ—what practices in your life demonstrate your love for Jesus and His Word?

If the Word of God can read your thoughts and discern the intents of your heart, how should this reality impact the way you come before God in prayer and confession?

What strategies has the enemy used in your life to keep you away from consistent time in the Word of God, and how can you overcome them?

How does the truth that Jesus will return as 'the Word of God' with a sword coming from His mouth shape your understanding of His power and authority?

In what specific ways can you make the Word of God more central in your home, relationships, and daily routine this week?

Small Group Guide: "The Word, The Word"

Based on John 1:1-14

Opening Prayer

Begin your group time by asking God to open hearts and minds to understand the connection between Jesus Christ (the Living Word) and the Bible (the Written Word).

Ice Breaker (5-10 minutes)

Question: What's one book (besides the Bible) that has significantly impacted your life? What made it so powerful?

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

1. Jesus Christ is Called "The Word"

- John 1:1, 14 - "In the beginning was the Word...and the Word was made flesh"
- 1 John 5:7 - The Trinity includes "the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost"
- Revelation 19:13 - Jesus returns and "his name is called the Word of God"

2. The Bible is Called "The Word of God"

- Ephesians 6:17 - "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God"
- Hebrews 4:12 - "the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword"
- 2 Timothy 2:9 - "the word of God is not bound"

3. The Living Word and Written Word Are Interchangeable

- Both are called: Pure, Holy, Perfect, and Truth
 - They cannot be separated from each other
 - To attack one is to attack the other
 - To love Jesus is to love His Word; to love His Word is to love Jesus
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Discussion Questions

Understanding the Message (15-20 minutes)

1. Before this sermon, had you ever considered that both Jesus and the Bible are called "the Word of God"? How does this connection change the way you view Scripture?
2. Read John 1:1-3, 14 together. What does it mean that "the Word was made flesh"? Why is this truth so important to our faith?
3. The sermon mentioned that John's Gospel was likely written last and presents Jesus as God. Why would it be important for John to start his Gospel with "In the beginning was the Word"?
4. Read Hebrews 4:12-13. The passage shifts from talking about "the word of God" to "his sight" and "the eyes of him." How does this illustrate the interchangeability of the Living Word and Written Word?

Personal Reflection (15-20 minutes)

5. The sermon said, "This book will keep you from sin or sin will keep you from this book." Have you found this to be true in your own life? Share an example if you're comfortable.
6. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your current relationship with God's Word? What factors have contributed to that rating?
7. The sermon emphasized that the Word of God (both Jesus and the Bible) is:
 - Quick and powerful (Hebrews 4:12)
 - A discerner of thoughts and intents (Hebrews 4:12)
 - Pure (Psalm 19:8; 1 John 3:3)
 - Perfect (Psalm 19:7; Matthew 5:48)

Which of these characteristics do you need to experience more in your life right now?

8. The sermon challenged us to get the Word "in us" through reading, writing, listening, or memorizing. Which method resonates most with you? Which have you never tried?

Application and Action (15-20 minutes)

9. Read 1 Peter 1:23 - "Being born again...by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." How does understanding that we were saved BY the Word of God affect our daily approach to Scripture?
10. The sermon mentioned that John records seven miracles in his Gospel, representing salvation and its results:
 - Water to wine (transformation)
 - Healing the nobleman's son (faith alone)
 - Healing the paralyzed man (grace, no works)

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- Feeding the multitude (responsibility to feed the world)
- Walking on water (stability and peace)
- Healing the blind man (clear sight)
- Raising Lazarus (new life)

Which of these "results of salvation" do you most need to experience or grow in right now?

11. **If someone asked you, "Why do you believe the Bible is the Word of God without error?" how would you respond? Practice answering this with someone in your group.**
 12. **The sermon said, "If you love Him, you would love His words." Is there any disconnect between your love for Jesus and your engagement with Scripture? What's causing that gap?**
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Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge: Choose ONE

Option 1: Daily Immersion

- Read John chapter 1 every day this week (it only takes 5-7 minutes)
- Listen to it on audio at least once
- Journal one new insight each day

Option 2: Write It Out

- Hand-copy John chapter 1 this week
- As you write, pray through each verse
- Note any words or phrases that stand out

Option 3: Memorization

- Memorize John 1:1-5 this week
- Use the "listen 7 times" method mentioned in the sermon
- Recite it to someone by next week

Option 4: Word Saturation

- Put Scripture verses around your home (sticky notes, signs, etc.)
- Set Bible verses as phone wallpaper and reminders
- Share one verse per day on social media or with a friend

Group Accountability

- Share which option you're choosing with at least one other person in the group
 - Exchange contact information to check in mid-week
 - Be prepared to share your experience next time you meet
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Closing Reflection Questions

Before you pray together, go around and have each person answer:

1. What is one thing God spoke to you about today?
 2. What is one specific action you will take this week in response?
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Closing Prayer Points

Pray together about:

- **Confession:** Any ways we've neglected God's Word or treated it casually
 - **Gratitude:** Thank God that He gave us both the Living Word (Jesus) and the Written Word (Bible)
 - **Commitment:** Ask God to increase our love for His Word and help us be consistent
 - **Power:** Pray that the Word would be "quick and powerful" in our lives this week
 - **Evangelism:** Pray for opportunities to share the Word with others (John-Romans, gospel tracts, etc.)
 - **Transformation:** Ask God to use His Word to change us from the inside out
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For Next Week

- Read John chapter 1 in preparation for the next sermon
 - Be ready to share how your chosen application went
 - Bring your Bible and be prepared to dig deeper into "In the beginning"
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Additional Resources

Recommended Actions:

- Get a John-Romans booklet to carry with you
- Download a Bible app with audio features (Blue Letter Bible was mentioned)
- Consider joining the church's Bible Institute for deeper study
- Start a Bible reading plan (Read the Bible in a Year)

Memory Verse for the Series: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* - John 1:1

"This book will keep you from sin or sin will keep you from this book."

5-Day Devotional:

The Word - Living and Written

Day 1: In the Beginning Was the Word

Reading: John 1:1-14

Devotional: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." These opening words of John's Gospel shatter our understanding of ordinary communication. The Word isn't merely sounds or letters—it's a Person, Jesus Christ Himself. Before time existed, He was. Before creation spoke its first song, He was speaking all things into existence. When you open your Bible today, you're not just reading ancient text; you're encountering the living God who became flesh to dwell among us. The same Word that created galaxies wants to recreate your heart. How does knowing that Jesus is the eternal Word of God change how you approach Scripture? Let this truth pierce deeper than intellectual knowledge—the Word you read is the God you worship.

Reflection Question: How can you better honor both the living Word (Jesus) and the written Word (Scripture) in your daily life?

Day 2: The Power of God's Word

Reading: Hebrews 4:12-13; Ephesians 6:10-17

Devotional: God's Word is "quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword." This isn't poetic exaggeration—it's spiritual reality. When you feel powerless against temptation, remember you hold the most powerful weapon in the universe. The Word pierces to your innermost being, discerning thoughts and intentions, exposing what needs healing. It's simultaneously your diagnostic tool and your cure, your mirror and your cleanser. When Paul instructs us to take "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," he's arming us for real spiritual warfare. The devil fears this book because it destroys his lies with truth. Every verse you memorize, every passage you meditate on, every scripture you speak becomes a weapon against darkness. Are you equipped for battle, or have you left your sword on the shelf?

Reflection Question: What specific area of spiritual battle do you face where you need to wield God's Word more effectively?

Day 3: Born Again by the Word

Reading: 1 Peter 1:22-25; James 1:18-25

Devotional: You were "born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." Your spiritual birth certificate bears the signature of Scripture. The same Word that saves continues to sanctify. It's incorruptible—meaning it cannot decay, cannot fail, cannot lose its power. While everything around you fades and fails, God's Word remains. This is why daily time in Scripture isn't religious duty—it's spiritual nourishment for the life God birthed in you. James reminds us not to merely hear the Word but to be doers, looking into the perfect law of liberty and continuing in it. The Word that gave you new life wants to transform every aspect of that life. Are you feeding the new creation God made you to be, or are you starving spiritually?

Reflection Question: What practical step can you take this week to move from hearing God's Word to doing it?

Day 4: Jesus Christ Is God

Reading: John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-20; Revelation 19:11-16

Devotional: John's Gospel declares with unshakable clarity: Jesus Christ is God. Not a god, not god-like, but fully God. "The Word was God... All things were made by him." This isn't negotiable truth—it's the foundation of salvation. When Jesus returns, His name will be "The Word of God," and out of His mouth will go a sharp sword to strike the nations. The One you worship created everything that exists. The One whose words you read spoke galaxies into being. Any teaching that diminishes Christ's deity is satanic deception. The Jehovah's Witnesses' "a god," the Mormon's created Jesus, the liberal's "good teacher"—all are false Christs who cannot save. Only God Himself could pay the infinite price for sin. When you bow before Jesus, you bow before Almighty God who loved you enough to become flesh.

Reflection Question: How does understanding Jesus as fully God deepen your worship and trust in Him?

Day 5: Inseparable - The Living Word and Written Word

Reading: Psalm 19:7-11; John 14:6-11; 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Devotional: God brilliantly chose to call both His Son and His Book "the Word of God." They are inseparable. You cannot love Jesus while neglecting Scripture, nor can you truly know Scripture without encountering Jesus. Both are called pure, holy, perfect, and truth. When the Bible reads you—convicting, correcting, encouraging—it's Jesus speaking to your soul. When you ignore the written Word, you distance yourself from the living Word. This is why the devil's primary strategy is keeping you from this Book. "This book will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from this book." Your relationship with your Bible directly reflects your relationship with Jesus. Hide His Word in your heart. Memorize it. Meditate on it. Obey it. Let it cover your walls, fill your conversations, and guide your decisions. The Word—both living and written—is your life.

Reflection Question: What changes do you need to make to ensure God's Word has its rightful place in your daily life?

Closing Challenge: This week, commit to reading through the Gospel of John while we study it together. Consider writing out verses that speak to you. Listen to Scripture audio during your commute. Put verses on your walls. Let the Word of God—Jesus Christ and the Bible—become inseparable from your daily existence. The beloved disciple John never got over the wonder that the Word became flesh. Neither should we.