

John 1

In the very beginning the Living Expression was already there.

And the Living Expression was with God, yet fully God.

² They were together—*face-to-face*, in the very beginning.

³ And through his creative inspiration
this Living Expression made all things,
for nothing has existence apart from him!

⁴ Life came into being because of him,
for his life is light for all humanity.

⁵ And this Living Expression is the Light that bursts through gloom—
the Light that darkness could not diminish!

⁶ Then suddenly a man appeared who was sent from God,
a messenger named John.

⁷ For he came to be a witness, to point the way to the Light of Life,
and to help everyone believe.

⁸ John was not that Light but he came to show who is.
For he was merely a messenger to speak the truth about the Light.

⁹ For the Light of Truth was about to come into the world
and shine upon everyone.

¹⁰ He entered into the very world he created,
yet the world was unaware.

¹¹ He came to the very people he created—
to those who should have recognized him,
but they did not receive him.

¹² But those who embraced him and took hold of his name
were given authority to become
the children of God!

¹³ He was not born by the joining of human parents
or from natural means, or by a man's desire,
but he was born of God.

¹⁴ And so the Living Expression
became a man and lived among us!
And we gazed upon the splendor of his glory,
the glory of the One and Only
who came from the Father overflowing
with tender mercy and truth!

¹⁵ John taught the truth about him
when he announced to the people,
"He's the One! Set your hearts on him!
I told you he would come after me,
even though he ranks far above me,
for he existed before I was even born."

¹⁶ And now out of his fullness we are fulfilled!
And from him we receive grace heaped upon more grace!

¹⁷ Moses gave us the Law, but Jesus, the Anointed One,
unveils truth wrapped in tender mercy.

¹⁸ No one has ever gazed upon the fullness of God's splendor
except the uniquely beloved Son,
who is cherished by the Father
and held close to his heart.

Now he has unfolded to us
the full explanation of who God truly is!

The Ministry of John the Baptizer

¹⁹ There were some of the Jewish leaders who sent an entourage of priests and temple servants from Jerusalem to interrogate John. They asked him, “Who are you?”

²⁰ John answered them directly, saying, “I am not the Messiah!”

²¹ “Then who are you?” they asked. “Are you Elijah?”

“No,” John replied.

So they pressed him further, “Are you the prophet Moses said was coming, the one we’re expecting?” “No,” he replied.

²² “Then who are you?” they demanded. “We need an answer for those who sent us. Tell us something about yourself—anything!”

²³ So, John answered them, “*I am fulfilling Isaiah’s prophecy: ‘I am an urgent, thundering voice shouting in the desert—clear the way and prepare your hearts for the coming of the Lord Yahweh!’*”

²⁴ Then some members of the religious sect known as the Pharisees questioned John, ²⁵ “Why do you baptize the people since you admit you’re not the Christ, Elijah, or the Prophet?”

^{26–27} John answered them, “I baptize in this river, but the One who will take my place is to be more honored than I, but even when he stands among you, you will not recognize or embrace him! I am not worthy enough to stoop down in front of him and untie his sandals!” ²⁸ This all took place at Bethany, where John was baptizing at the place of the crossing of the Jordan River.

The Lamb of God

²⁹ The very next day John saw Jesus coming to him to be baptized, and John cried out, “Look! There he is—God’s Lamb! He will take away the sins of the world!” ³⁰ I told you that a Mighty One would come who is far greater than I am, because he existed long before I was born! ³¹ My baptism was for the preparation of his appearing to Israel, even though I’ve yet to experience him.”

³² Then, as John baptized Jesus he spoke these words: “I see the Spirit of God appear like a dove descending from the heavenly realm and landing upon him—and it rested upon him from that moment forward! ³³ And even though I’ve yet to experience him, when I was commissioned to baptize with water God spoke these words to me, ‘One day you will see the Spirit descend and remain upon a man. He will be the One I have sent to baptize with the Holy Spirit.’ ³⁴ And now I have seen with discernment. I can tell you for sure that this man is the Son of God.”

Jesus’ First Followers

^{35–36} The very next day John was there again with two of his disciples as Jesus was walking right past them. John, gazing upon him, pointed to Jesus and said, “Look! There’s God’s Lamb!” ³⁷ And as soon as John’s two disciples heard this, they immediately left John and began to follow a short distance behind Jesus.

³⁸ Then Jesus turned around and saw they were following him and asked, “What do you want?” They responded, “Rabbi (which means, Master Teacher), where are you staying?” ³⁹ Jesus answered, “Come and discover for yourselves.” So they went with him and saw where he was staying, and since it was late in the afternoon, they spent the rest of the day with Jesus.

^{40–41} One of the two disciples who heard John’s words and began to follow Jesus was a man named Andrew. He went and found his brother, Simon, and told him, “We have found the Anointed One!” (Which is translated, the Christ.) ⁴² Then Andrew brought Simon to meet him. When Jesus gazed upon Andrew’s brother, he prophesied to him, “**You are Simon and your father’s name is John. But from now on you will be called Cephas**” (which means, Peter the Rock).

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to go to the region of Galilee. There he found Philip and said to him, **“Come and follow me.”** ⁴⁴ (Now Philip, Andrew, and Peter were all from the same village of Bethsaida.) ⁴⁵ Then Philip went to look for his friend, Nathanael, and told him, “We’ve found him! We’ve found the One we’ve been waiting for! It’s Jesus, son of Joseph from Nazareth, the Anointed One! He’s the One that Moses and the prophets prophesied would come!”

⁴⁶ Nathanael sneered, “Nazareth! What good thing could ever come from Nazareth?” Philip answered, “Come and let’s find out!”

⁴⁷ When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said, **“Now here comes a true son of Israel—an honest man with no hidden motive!”**

⁴⁸ *Nathanael was stunned* and said, “But you’ve never met me—how do you know anything about me?”

Jesus answered, **“Nathanael, right before Philip came to you I saw you sitting under the shade of a fig tree.”**

⁴⁹ Nathanael blurted out, “Teacher, you are truly the Son of God and the King of Israel!”

⁵⁰ Jesus answered, **“Do you believe simply because I told you I saw you sitting under a fig tree? You will experience even more impressive things than that! ⁵¹ I prophesy to you eternal truth: From now on you will see an open heaven and gaze upon the Son of Man like a stairway reaching into the sky with the messengers of God climbing up and down upon him!”** ¹

¹ Brian Simmons, trans., [The Passion Translation](#) (BroadStreet Publishing, 2017), Jn 1:1–51.