



## Portrait of Christ

*Sketches in the Gospel of John*

Inductive Discovery Lesson 1  
**John 1:1-18**

### Jesus: The Word

An artist often begins a portrait by making several sketches. He carefully studies the face of his subject from different perspectives and in different light. Each sketch captures some characteristic, some distinguishing feature that will blend into the finished portrait. One artist was known to make hundreds of sketches and spend many hours studying his subject before painting her portrait. Why such devotion? He was portraying the woman he loved!

The Apostle John was a fisherman by trade, yet he painted a magnificent “portrait” of Jesus. He sketches Christ’s nature in simple strokes, using everyday things like water, bread, and light. But a simple glance will not do. John plumbs the depths of his memory, reliving events of Jesus’ earthly ministry so future generations could know the One to whom he was so devoted. Again and again, John compels us to *see* Jesus—to look into His face—and to *believe in* Him.

**“...but these have been written that you may believe that  
Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God;  
and that believing  
you may have life in His name.”  
John 20:31**

**Working Text for John 1:1-18**  
New International Version (NIV)

**1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was with God in the beginning. **3** Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. **4** In him was life, and that life was the light of men. **5** The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

**6** There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. **7** He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. **8** He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

**9** The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. **10** He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. **11** He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. **12** Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— **13** children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

**14** The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. **15** John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'" **16** From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. **17** For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. **18** No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.





## Key Words and Phrases

Write the definition of the following words and phrases. Use a regular dictionary or a Bible concordance with Greek Dictionary if you have one.

“in the beginning” (vs. 1) \_\_\_\_\_

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“the **Word**” (vs. 1) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

“life” (vs. 4) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

“the **Light**” (vs.4-5) \_\_\_\_\_

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## **INTERPRETATION — *What does it mean?***

**Look for a spiritual lesson.** Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: “Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid?” **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

## **APPLICATION — *How does it apply to me?***

We don’t study the Bible just to gather information—we want to spiritually grow. Our heart needs to be open to change. The only way to move truth off the pages of your Bible and into your life is to ***put it into action.***

To apply a spiritual lesson, we must examine ourselves and take deliberate steps to do something with what we have learned. Ask yourself: Is this a new insight for me, or does it reinforce what I already know? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What changes does it require? Think of how the lesson relates to you and what specific course of action you will take. **Write your application in the form of a question to make it personal.**

### **John 1:1-5**

Lesson: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Application: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_?

### **John 1:6-13**

Lesson: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Application: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_?

### **John 1:14-18**

Lesson: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Application: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_?

## **Summary**

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the chapter is about. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Give a simple title to the chapter to help you remember what it says.  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Take A Closer Look

**In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.  
John 1:1**

### ***Memorize God's Word***

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize from and re-write the verse here.

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### ***Meditate on God's Word***

While you memorize this verse, let it work into your heart and mind. Scripture meditation is like a good cup of tea—the longer it steeps, the richer the flavor. So give yourself permission to slowly savor God's Word! Use the questions below (like a tea bag) to keep dipping into this verse.

(Challenge alert: You won't always see an obvious answer directly from the verse, but give it some thought and share what comes to mind.)

**Look up.** What does this verse show you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, or His promises.)

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**Look around.** What does this teach you about life or people in general?

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**Look within.** What does this teach you about yourself?

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**Look ahead.** Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

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**Look alive!** Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

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## ***Make God's Word Your Prayer***

As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.

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## **God's Word Bearing Fruit**

For you personally, what has been the most important lesson from this chapter?  
How will you put what you have learned into practice?

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## **Something to Think About . . .**

Much as our words reveal to others our hearts and minds,  
so Jesus Christ is God's Word to reveal His heart and mind to us.

Warren Wiersbe

**Message Notes:**

A large rectangular area with a light gray background and horizontal lines, resembling a notepad or message template. The area is framed by a thick, irregular, dark gray border that looks like torn paper.

