

Prologue and John's Witness

Preliminary

- Recall that the purpose of John's gospel is:
 - Believe that Jesus is the Messiah and the son of God
 - By believing have life in his name
- These themes will all make an appearance in the prologue
- The prologue is a summary of Jesus life and work

The Beginning

- To what is John alluding in vs. 1?
 - The creation story
- Why would it be perfectly natural to talk about words (or a word, or the word) in the context of the creation story?
 - God created through words
 - “And God said” precedes just about every creative event in Genesis 1
 - It would be a somewhat creative though appropriate take to say “without words nothing was made that was made”
- What is the new thing John is telling us?
 - The Word was a person
 - This person was in the beginning with God
 - This person by nature is God, though he is distinct from the Father

Light and Darkness

- The Word gave life
 - Still in the creation story
 - God gave life to all, but a special life to humanity
 - Life is equated with light, which is the first of God's creation
- Light vs. darkness is a continual theme in John
 - John's not big on grey areas: you're either in the light or in the darkness
- Do you feel like death is the ultimate winner in the universe?
 - It can certainly feel that way
 - Everything dies
 - Death is the result of sin, and sin dominates life
- John says the light shines on (that is, life), and darkness has not overcome it
- John is taking themes from the creation story and giving them new meaning

Rejecting/Accepting the Light

- No one can see/be in the light apart from Jesus
- He was God, he created the world, and he chose a people
 - But when he came into the world, it did not know him and his chosen people did not receive him
- But there are some who did believe (cf. Rom. 9:24-31, John 4)
 - Those were given the right to become God's children
- What points is John making by his statements about how one does not become a child of God (vs. 13)?
 - Not by being an ethnic Jew
 - Not because your parents wanted it
 - (Perhaps) Not because you willed it apart from God
- As in 1 John, God's children are born of him
 - Contrast with Paul, where God's children are adopted
- Who is doing all the work in this section?

Word Became Flesh

- What have we learned about the Word already?
 - He is God
 - He created all things
 - He is the giver of life
- That being became flesh
- He dwelt among us
 - Or “tabernacled” or “pitched his tent”
- What is said about the tabernacle/temple and God’s glory?
 - It was overpowering (Ex. 40, 1 Ki. 8)
- What is said elsewhere about Jesus’ glory?
 - It was nothing remarkable (Is. 53:2)

Grace and Truth

- What do you make about the pairing of “grace and truth” that came through Jesus?
 - It’s very easy to have either one without the other
 - It takes a fine balance to bring both, much less be full of both
 - It is contrasted with the Law
 - Being full of grace and truth was not a recipe for enormous popularity

Revealing the Father

- What is striking about the claim that Jesus has made the Father known?
 - Israel has been dealing directly with the Father for hundreds of years
 - But there is something vastly different about the knowledge of the Father that is brought by Jesus
 - Eternal life is to know the Father (17:3)

John's Testimony

- What is John's claim about himself?
 - He is the voice crying to make straight the way of the Lord
- Why is this claim important?
 - This is a quotation from Isaiah (Is. 40:3)
 - The context of the quotation is a return of God to his people to vindicate them
 - John is claiming that he is ushering in that reality
- What is John's purpose in his testimony?
 - That all who heard might believe that Jesus is the one described in 1-18