



Come and See... Deeper Study Notes

In the beginning (John 1:1-18)

- This week, take time to reread John 1:1-18 slowly. Allow the way John speaks about Jesus to affirm these as truths in your heart and invite the Holy Spirit to give you a greater sense of awe as to who Jesus is as we 'come and see...' (If you're doing this in a group, why not share those aspects that stand out to you and also any further questions it raises in your mind.)
- In our pluralistic world, are there ways you are tempted to diminish the uniqueness of the revelation of Jesus Christ? How can we avoid this without being intolerant?
- John 1:1 is a key passage that the Jehovah's Witnesses translate differently so that it says Jesus is not God but 'a god'. If you're interested in finding out more, see here: <https://carm.org/jehovahs-witnesses/using-the-new-world-translation-john-1-1>
Remember in any encounter with a different viewpoint, 'Let your conversation be gracious and attractive so that you will have the right response for everyone' (Col 4:6)...'but respond with gentleness and respect...' (1 Pet 3:15c).

Deeper Study Questions

- Why is the fact that 'God is always Jesus-like' important for the way we read the Old Testament?
- What kind of questions does that raise for you looking back at God's action in Old Testament through the 'revealed lens' of Jesus' life being fully God?
- Thinking on v3-5, when John describes the Word as the origin of creation, why does he stress so strongly that 'without him nothing was made that has been made'?
- Developing that thought, if Jesus created everything, both physical and spiritual, how should this understanding of Jesus affect the way we think about the environment?
- V14 is a truly monumental statement. Considering the first part of the verse, John describes the Word not as 'a man', or 'a body', but as 'flesh'. Robert Brown tells us the Greek word for flesh, *sarx*, stands for the whole person, referring to human existence in its frailty and vulnerability. Christianity is the only world religion that has a God like this. What does this identification mean for us in our everyday lives?
- V14b is a personal testimony to seeing God's glory. This part has echoes of the Exodus story when God revealed himself at Mount Sinai and in the tabernacle in the wilderness (cf. Exodus 19:16-20; 33:18; 40:34). As God lived among his Old Testament people and they saw his glory, so the Word lives among his people now and they see his glory too. Bruce Milne comments, just to secure this link further, that the word used for 'dwell' here is the same one used for 'tent' in Hebrew, and this commonly refers to the revealed glory of God (e.g., Exodus 24:16; 40:34-35; 1 Kings 8:11-11:21). It's why the Message feels comfortable paraphrasing this part: *The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighbourhood.*

Seeing these deeper links, can you imagine what it was like for those first followers when they truly grasped the awesome nature of who Jesus was and what was happening? How does it make you feel seeing these deeper links?