

## “Who is Jesus?” – series, part 1

John 1:1-18 - “Jesus: Word of God, light of the world.”

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- **NEW FOR OLD REPLACEMENT (pic)**

This is what some insurance companies offer these days. If you smash your car, they’ll replace it with a new one. If your house burns down, they’ll replace it with a new one.

If you could “replace” one thing in you life, what would it be right now?

A new car for an old car.

A new kitchen for an old one.

A new relationship for one that’s not working?

A new job for the old one?

A new pair of shoes?

A new knee? A new set of teeth? A new back? A new head of hair?!

Imagine replacing one thing. New for old. The Bible is all about “New for Old” replacement.

- **In the Bible, we have an Old Testament and a New Testament.**

Another name for them is “**Old Covenant**” and “**New Covenant**”.

The NEW testament replaces the OLD testament.

The Old testament is still good. Nothing wrong with it. It’s actually very important. But the NEW testament was given to us to COMPLETE the OLD testament.

And the biggest thing that happens in the NEW Testament is **Jesus**. So I want us to think about this today: What does **Jesus bring** in the NEW testament?

Let me illustrate it like this: Imagine someone gave you an orange, and you had NO IDEA what it was. And so you just held it. This beautiful orange. And one day you’re really hungry and really thirsty. And you’re holding this orange, but you don’t know what it is. And then someone comes along and opens it up for you, and shows you that you can eat it. Suddenly your needs are met. You were hungry and thirsty and the orange has solved all your problems.

But the orange was always there. You just didn’t KNOW it. You didn’t have a complete picture of what it could do. It wasn’t *opened* to you. It wasn’t *revealed*.

Jesus opens up the Old Covenant and personally hands it to us. He peels the orange and personally brings us the **power** of God, the **light** of God and the **grace** of God.

- **POWER**
- **LIGHT**
- **GRACE**

So let’s have a closer look at those things:

## 1. The Power of God

So how does Jesus bring us the power of God?

- **Genesis 1:1-3 (READ on screen)**

“In the beginning, God **said**”

Creation began with the Word of God. God’s word is powerful. It’s God’s Word that creates. God’s power is revealed in his Word. Now look with me at...

- **John 1:1-3 (READ on screen)**

The WORD is “He” (verse 2)

HE was with God in the beginning. HE was responsible for ALL of creation. And who is this Word? In verse 14 we’re told that the Word is Jesus. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

JESUS is the WORD of God, in flesh.

Jesus is the POWER of God in flesh.

Jesus’ birth isn’t just the birth of an special baby. Jesus’ birth is the power of God, the Word of God, the creator **himself, becoming flesh**.

So, for example, when Jesus stands up in the boat with the disciples during the storm, and speaks, and tells the storm to stop, it listens. Why? Because HE created it. His Word is powerful. And his Word rules creation.

## 2. Second, Jesus is God’s light.

- **READ Genesis 1:3 (on screen)**

“Let there be light”.

God’s first Word was “light”. It was the first thing God created. Why? Because it put an end to darkness.

- **READ John 1:4-5 (on screen)**

“In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.”

Jesus is the **light**. And you’ll notice it says that he’s the light of all mankind. And his light is **life**. Jesus is our light. Our end to darkness. He is **our** life. Our end to death.

- **Switching on the light (picture of light bulb)**

Imagine that you live in a house that ‘s very dark, and for **years** you stumble around every night because it is so dark. Tripping over things. Falling down stairs. You can’t read a book because it’s so dark. You can’t see what food you’re eating. You can’t see if your socks match in the morning...

And then one night, someone comes over and turns on the light switch. It was there all the time. But now they’ve shown you how to turn on the light and see. And you stop tripping over. You stop falling. You can see things clearly.

This is what Jesus does for us. He turns on the light that was always there. He clearly reveals God, so we can clearly see who He is and clearly see his plans for us.

And God’s light is our LIFE.

- **Illustration:** light and life. (pics of plants)

What do these plants have in common?

- **Maiden hair fern**
- **Begonias**
- **Mint**
- **Swedish Ivy**
- **Moss**

All of them can survive in very LITTLE light. But they cannot survive with NO light.  
No light = no life.

And in the spiritual world, Jesus is the light, and life, of the world. Without him, there is no real life. Without Jesus, we die. But WITH Jesus, we can live forever with God.

So what does Jesus bring as **the light**? From verse 10:

***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 did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God*

When Jesus was born, the world did not recognize him as the light and life of the world. But for those of us who DO recognize Jesus – as God, as Creator, as the light of the world, he gives us the “right” to become children of God. Think about what that means...

When we accept Jesus as the light of our life, as God over our life, he calls us **his children**. Think about **that!** The only person you call your “child” **is** your child. You might say that someone is “like my own child”. But you only say someone IS your child if... they ARE your child. When we accept Jesus for who he is, as our God and creator, our light and life, He calls us **his children**. Not “like children”. But ACTUALLY HIS OWN CHILDREN. And that means we become INHERITORS of his kingdom.

Now the big question. Why?

And this is what distinguishes Jesus from every other religious figure. Every other faith.

Every other belief system:

Not only does Jesus say that he IS God himself, in the flesh, that he IS the creator...

Not only does Jesus say that he came into the world to SAVE us and have a relationship with us... He does it because of...

### 3. GRACE

What is grace? Grace is **undeserved kindness**.

For example: And this happened to us once... we were going to a movie, about to buy tickets, and someone says to us: “Do you want two tickets? We bought too many. You can have them for free.” That’s grace. Undeserved kindness. We didn’t know them, and we’d done nothing to deserve this free gift.

Or imagine that you treat someone really badly. You gossip about them, tell lies about them, and are really mean to them. But in response, they treat you really nicely, and they’re really generous to you. That is totally undeserved kindness.

Grace is important, because people sometimes think of God as someone who treats us the way we **deserve**:

God will make sure we all get what we deserve. Bad people DESERVE to go to hell. Good people DESERVE to go to heaven. Murderers – hell. Charity workers – Heaven.

### **But that's NOT how God works!**

"Grace" means that we get what we **DON'T** deserve. None of us **DESERVE** God's kindness. We've **all** broken his laws. We've **all** treated him badly at different times in our lives. But Grace means that **Jesus saves** people like us who DON'T deserve it. Verse 16:

**16** *Out of his fullness we have **all** received grace*

If you were to replace ONE thing in your life, new for old, what would it be?

How about this:

That idea in our heads that **we get what we deserve**. That **everyone** should get what they deserve. What if we replace that OLD way of thinking with a NEW way – the way of Grace. That by trusting Jesus, we can get what we **don't** deserve – salvation. Eternal life with God.

And then we take that idea of Grace, that God has shown us, and we show it to other people. That we don't give people what they **deserve**. But we show them **undeserved kindness**. **Unreserved** kindness. **Unmerited** kindness. **Unending** kindness. The old way – you get what you deserve, is replaced with the new way – Grace.

Let's pray.

**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 all mankind. **5** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome[a] it.

**6** There was a man sent from God whose name was John. **7** He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all 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 everyone 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 did receive 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 Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

**15** (John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'") **16** Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. **17** For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. **18** No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.