

The Gospel of John

The Johannine Prologue (1:1-18)

John 1:1-5

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

2. He was in the beginning with God;

**3. all things came into being through him,
and without him not one thing came into being.**

**What has come into being 4. in him was life,
and the life was the light of all people.**

**5. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not
overcome it.**

John 1:6-13

6. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7. He came as a witness to

testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. 8. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

9. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

10. He was in the world,

and the world came into being through him;

yet the world did not know him.

11. He came to what was his own,

and his own people did not accept him.

12. But to all who received him, who believed in his name,

he gave power to become children of God,

13. who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

John 1:14-18

14. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

15. John testified to him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'"

16. From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

17. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

18. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Christological Keys

Mark: The Messiah [the Son of God] (1:1)

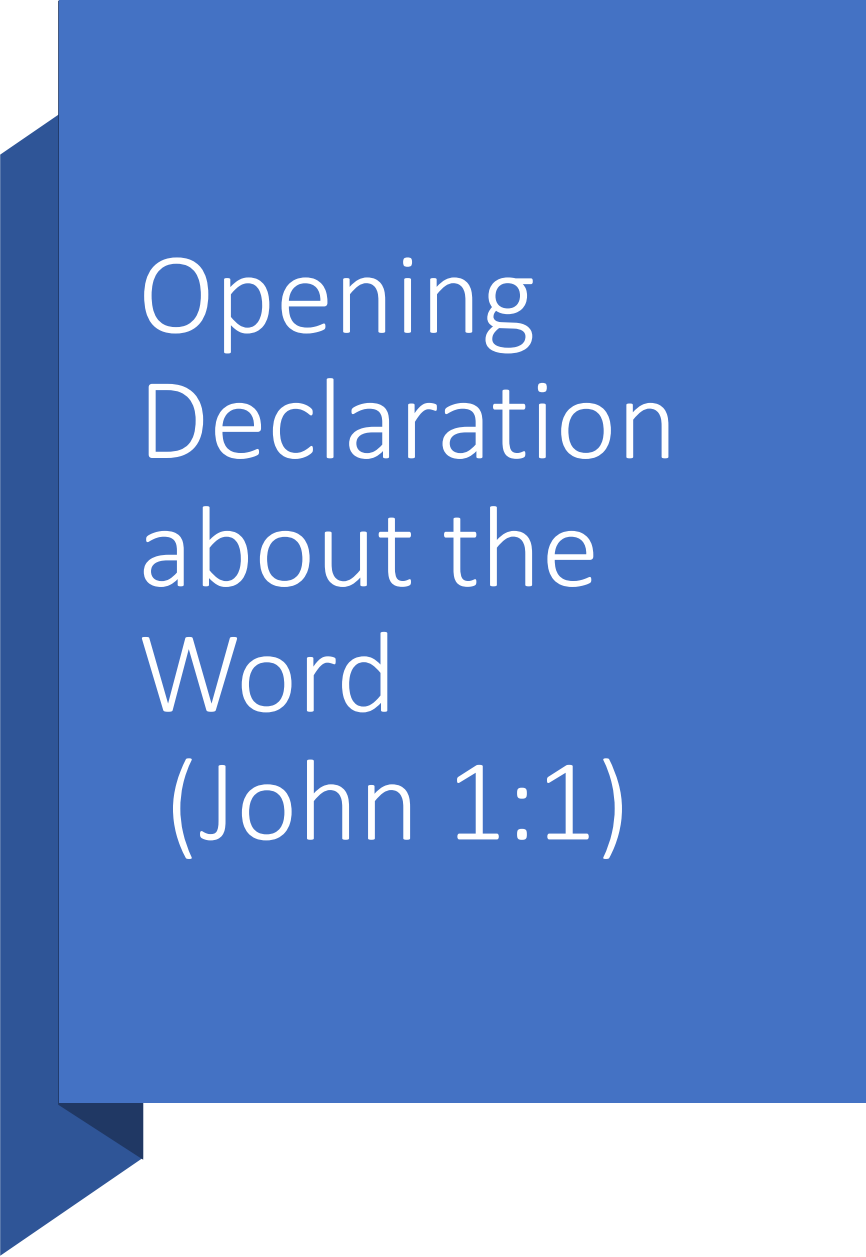
Matthew: the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham (1:1)

Luke: the Son of the Most High (1:32), the Lord's Messiah (2:26)

John: the pre-existent and incarnate Word (*logos*) (1:1-18)

Origin and Composition of the Prologue

- The high point of John's narrative and theology.
- Was it an integral part of the gospel from the outset, or is it a later addition made at a later stage of redaction?
- Did the evangelist compose the Prologue or was it an already existing composition borrowed and adapted?
- Rhythmic elements (vv. 1-5, 9, 12, 14, 16-18) and prose-like features (vv. 6-8, 15) are both Johannine in character (light, darkness, life, world, witness, belief, children of God).

A blue geometric shape, resembling a stylized book cover or a folded piece of paper, is positioned on the left side of the slide. It has a dark blue shadow on its left and bottom edges, giving it a three-dimensional appearance.

Opening Declaration about the Word (John 1:1)

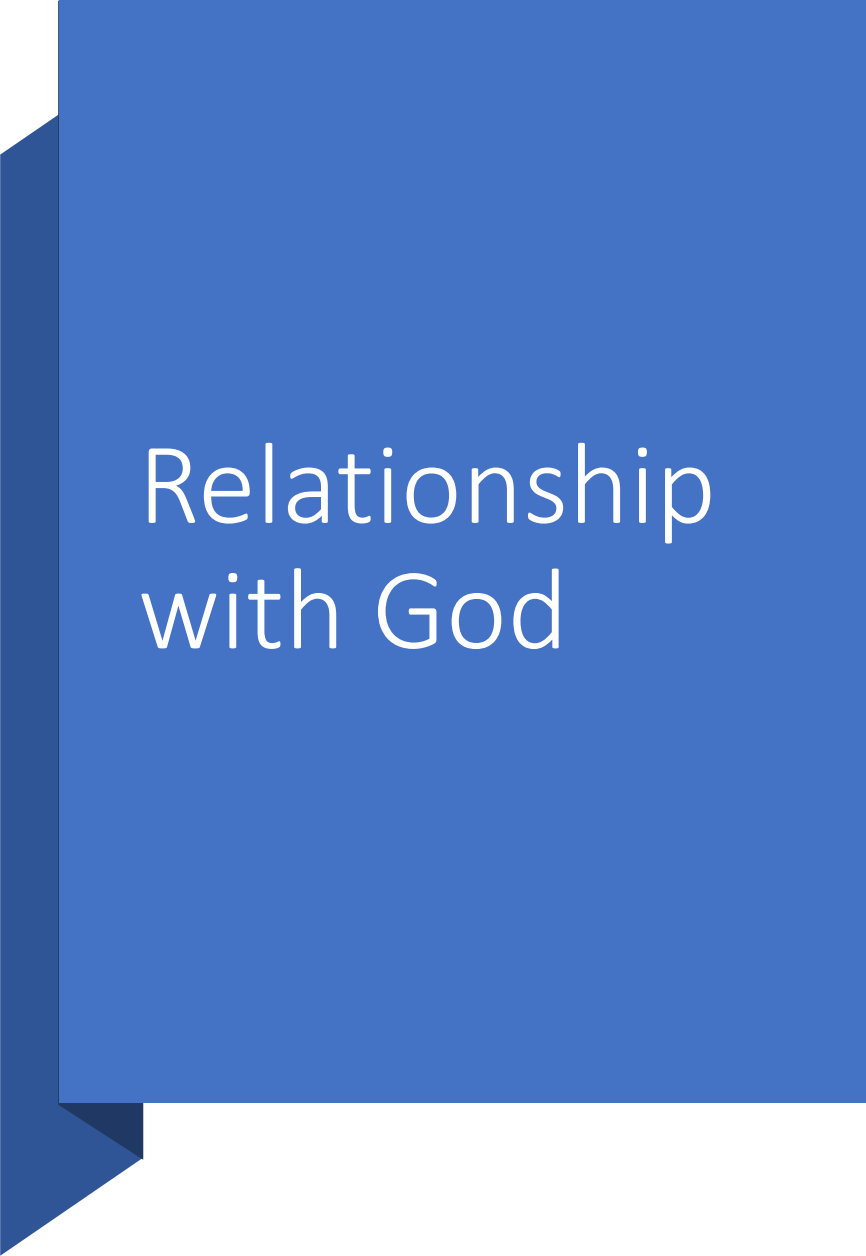
In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.

The Pre-existence of the Word

- The Logos existed 'in the beginning' (*en archê*) with God - cf. Gen. 1:1 LXX.
- The Logos 'is' from eternity (*eimi*; cf. 1:1-2), but other figures 'come into existence' (*ginomai*); cf. 1:6: there was (from the verb *ginomai*) a man sent from God whose name was John'.
- John 8:58: 'Before Abraham was (from the verb *ginomai*), I AM (*egô eimi*)'. See also 17:5.

The Word as the Agent of Creation

- 1:3: 'All things came into being through him' (cf. Col. 1:16: 'for in him everything was created in heaven and on earth'; cf. Heb. 1:2).
- Genesis allusion: 'And God *said*, "Let there be light", and there was light' (1:3).
- The 'ten *words* of creation' (Gen. 1-2).
- Wisdom traditions also describe Wisdom as the agent of creation (Prov. 8:22-31: 'the master worker'; Wisdom of Solomon 7:21: 'the fashioner of all things')



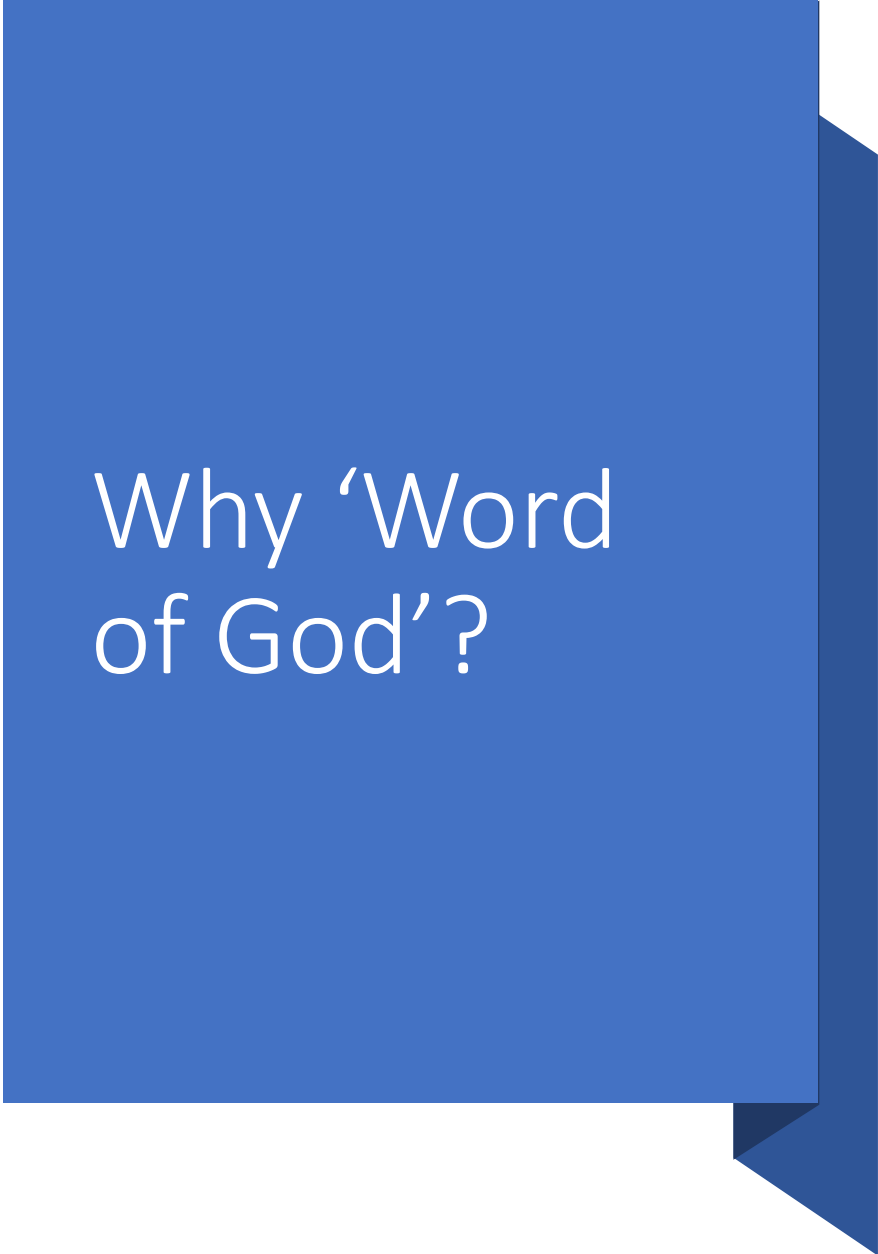
Relationship with God

‘The Word was with God, and the Word was God’.

These two clauses distinguish the Word from God (‘was with God’) and yet identifies the Word with God (‘was God’). All that the Word is, God is.

Jewish Scriptures: God's word is an expression of his will and power to create (cf. Ps. 33:6: 'By the word of the Lord the heavens were made') and save (cf. Psalm 107:20: 'he sent out his word and healed them and saved them from destruction').

God's vehicle of self-revelation to the world
(through the patriarchs, through the prophets).



Why 'Word
of God'?

The Word Becomes Flesh

‘And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have beheld his glory’ (1:14)

The Word of God is made flesh within a historical framework.

Unbroken line between the past and the present: the Word dwelt or ‘tabernacled’ in our midst.

Cf. Exod. 40:34: God’s tabernacle is filled with glory.

Jesus is the embodiment of God’s glory.

The Newness of the Revelation

Only Jesus has ever seen God (1:18) and only he has made him truly known.

Unique relationship with God ('who is in the Father's heart')

He reveals God in a direct and personal manner: he reveals life (1:4), light (1:4-5), grace (1:14), truth (1:14), glory (1:14), God (1:18)