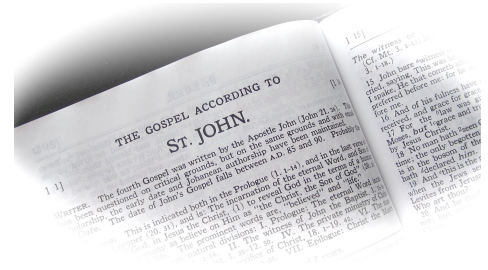


Christ in All The Scriptures

The Gospel Of John

Introduction

The head of United Nations recently said (Reported June 2016) that, “We need to adhere to the teachings of Buddha so that we can have enlightenment”. Such a statement would only come from an individual who is blinded by the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4), one who has rejected both the truth of the Word of God and Christ as the true light who alone can bring enlightenment to every man. There must be no mistake, to reject the truth and finality of the Word of God and Christ, while seeking to advance the teachings of Buddha, etc., is spiritual darkness. To either partly accept the teachings of Christ as on par with a sinful man, or totally rejecting the Lord’s teachings, is one of whom Paul wrote when he stated they have a darkened understanding (Eph. 4:18); a darkened heart (Rom. 1:21); and the result is divine judgment (Rom. 11:10).



Matthew and Mark begin their gospel record with a statement of belief, statements which to any Jew would be astounding. We Gentiles can miss the importance of that which is being stated, “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ” (Matt. 1:1) and “The gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (Mk. 1:1). They were stating, “I believe the man Jesus is the Christ” and “I believe the man Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God”. John believed the same (ch. 20:30-31) and in so writing, they left no room for debate, stating their convictions and beliefs for all to know. But what did these gossellers understand by the term, “Christ”. They would have known the word “Christ” came from the Greek “Christos” which was the equivalent to the Hebrew term “Mashiach”, which is Messiah or Messias (ch. 1:41). Among the many questions which spring to ones mind are:

- a) What was the foundation for such a conviction and belief?
- b) What did Jesus do or say which gave them such convictions?
- c) John wrote, “Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name” (ch. 20:30-31). Therefore, in what ways did he differ from Matthew or Mark in His understanding of Jesus being the Christ the Son of God?

These first verses stand as a high rock which is unchangeable against the foolishness of men:

- a) It declares the error of:
 - i) Atheism, for the “Word” made all things and “without Him was not anything made (ch. 1:3)
 - ii) Materialism, for being made matter has had a beginning (Gen. 1:1)
 - iii) Humanism, for man is not the center of the universe, God is the Ultimate reality and moral governor of the Universe (Gen. 1:1, 28; 2:16)
 - iv) Evolution, for the “Word” created all things, time, matter, space, and life (Gen. 1:1-2:1)
- b) From these three verses we are introduced to the “Word” and emphatic information about Him. In John 1:1-3 the Holy Spirit caused John to declare:
 - i) His eternal existence. To deny this is to deny the eternal existence of God and that He had a beginning, for the Word was with God from the beginning.
 - ii) His distinct personality, the “Word was with God”
 - iii) His deity, “The Word was God”
 - iv) His unchangeability, “The same was in the beginning”
 - v) His creating ability and wisdom, “All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made”

What Does The Term “The Christ” Mean?

John, unlike the other gospel writers, does not simply state his belief but very emphatically tells why he wrote his gospel (ch. 20:30-31). Throughout it he constantly presents the evidence for His convictions. However, before

Christ in All The Scriptures

The Gospel Of John

any evidence can be presented, there is the question of great importance which must be faced, “What does John mean by Jesus being the Christ?” I am not dealing with the evidences for Jesus being the Son of God in this paper. I stress “Jesus” rather than the “Lord” or “Christ” because John calls Him by His birth name more than any other gospel. Mark calls Him Jesus 13 times; Luke 88 times; Matthew 151 times; but John calls Him Jesus 247 times. It is his purpose to ever keep before us the historical man Jesus was the Christ, God’s anointed Prophet, King, and ultimately Priest.

- a) An observation is in contrast to the teachings of the New Age movement, etc. John does not present the evidence that Jesus is a Christ, or that “Christ” is a spirit that is found in the great religious leaders.
- b) John is convinced that the man Jesus is the Christ exclusively, a real living man who once walked the streets of Jerusalem, slept under the Judean sky, was a child in Egypt, and who in all probability saw the ancient pyramids.
- c) To prove that Jesus is the Christ then the readers must know what is meant by that term. If I was to say, “I am a baker, and I am going to prove it”, how would an individual know if my evidence was credible or not? They would need to know what a baker does and what is expected of the individual. By the same reasoning, if John is going to prove Jesus is the Christ, then the readers must know what is meant by that term, and if the man Jesus had those qualifications.

A simplified distinction between “Christ” and “Son of God”

- a) “Christ” is mainly an official title relating to Kingship, priesthood, and prophethood. This understanding is gained from the way the word translated “Messiah” (which means anointed) is used in the Old Testament and those who were “anointed”.
 - i) Persons in official positions who were anointed:
 1. In the duration of the old economy, there were three officials who were anointed: kings (1 Sam. 10:1); prophets (1 Sam. 24:6); 1 Kgs. 19:16); and priests (Ex. 28:41). Having observed this, then John’s gospel can be read while looking for the evidences of Christ the supreme prophet, priest, and King. He was not a priest until He went back to Heaven, although He performed a priestly function when He offered Himself without spot to God (Heb. 9:14).
- b) The scriptures substantiate the anointing of Jesus by God, indicating He was God’s Anointed. The writer to the Hebrews informs the readers that God has anointed Him (the Lord) with the oil of gladness (Heb. 1:9) which is the fulfilling of the ancient scripture (Psa. 45:7). The Lord claimed to be anointed by the Spirit prophetically (Isa. 61:1) and in actuality (Lk. 4:18), a truth Peter later proclaims (Acts 4:27; 10:38). I submit that this happened at His baptism.
- c) Jesus claimed to be the Christ (the Anointed) (ch. 4:25-26; Mk. 14:61-64). The Holy Spirit endorsed Him as such by having recorded the words of Martha (ch. 11:27); Peter (Matt. 16:16; Acts 2:36); Paul (Acts 17:3; 18:5); and Apollos (Acts 18:28).

Who Was Jesus In John?

- 1) The titles, descriptive terms, and intimations given to the Lord in John are far more than any other book of the scriptures. A review of them will reveal what he was, who He was, His deity, etc.
- 2) The manifestation of the Lord in John is quite remarkable in that He is presented more as the King than in Matthew, more as the Servant than in Mark, and more as the perfect man than in Luke!
- 3) One of the foremost features of Christ in John is His works or activities, which is how he begins his gospel (ch. 1:3), and in the last verse of the book they are mentioned again when it states, “There are also many other things which Jesus “did” (ch. 21:25). The word “did” indicates His works. It is an observation which, if carefully considered, it is seen that the word “works” is mentioned five times in Matthew; twice in Mark; twice in Luke; and twenty-seven times in John. In reviewing them there is demonstrated the:

Christ in All The Scriptures The Gospel Of John

- a) Reliability of His works. They were perfectly complete in that which they were performed for. The water was not only changed to wine but the best of wine (ch. 2:10); Lazarus was not only dead but decaying, but he was given fullness of life (ch. 11:43-44). He who brought to completeness creation, fulfilled to perfection the works He performed.
 - b) The ideal results of His works were to confirm that He was the Christ and had come from God (ch. 11:42; 14:11).
- 4) A casual reading of the first chapter will find the Lord is spoken of as: the “Word” (ch. 1:1; 14); “only begotten Son” (ch. 1:18); “Rabbi” (ch. 1:38, 49); Messiah”, “King of Israel” (ch. 1:49); “True Light” (ch. 1:9); “Son of God” (ch. 1:49); “Son of Man” (ch. 1:51). As we read the balance of the book we would observe the Lord is presented as the “Savior of the world” (ch. 4:42); the “True Bread” (ch. 6:32); the “Good shepherd” (ch. 10:11, 14); the “True Light” (ch. 1:9); the “Light of the world” (ch. 8:12; 9:5); “the Way, the Truth, and the Life” (ch. 14:6); the “True Vine” (ch. 15:1). It will be seen that these distinguishing terms cover His relationship to God; man; His sacrifice; the political; and the sacrificial.
 - 5) He alone draws attention to the love between Father and Son before the foundation of the world (ch. 17:24) and also the glory (ch. 17:5). Being the Son of God, that is deity without diminishment. There is no reference to His birth; temptations; agony in the garden; nor His forsaken cry.
 - 6) In a consideration of the Lord as a Servant, it will be found that this aspect of the Lord is brought before us directly in seven books of the scriptures. Those being: Isaiah; Zechariah; Mark; Luke; John; Galatians; and John. While John does not call the Lord a “servant”, he does speak of Him as being “sent”, and in this level the Lord is seen more as the Servant of Jehovah than He is in Mark.
 - 7) The titles, descriptive terms, and intimations given to the Lord in John are far more than any other book of the scriptures. A review of them will reveal what He was, who He was, His deity, etc.
 - 8) Who was Jesus in John?
 - a) The “Jesus” John writes about is revealed to his readers from several perspectives, and while these are not all of them, they are a few. They are titles which relate to the Lord:
 - i) Relating to Israel:
 1. King of Israel (ch. 1:49)
 2. The Bridegroom (ch. 3:29)
 - ii) In the sacrificial realm:
 1. The Saviour of the world (ch. 4:42)
 2. The Lamb of God (ch. 1:29)
 - iii) In the spiritual realm:
 1. A Prophet (ch. 4:19; 7:40)
 2. Rabbi (ch. 1:38, 49)
 3. Messias (ch. 1:41; 4:25)
 - iv) His relationship spiritually to humanity:
 1. The Light of the world / true Light (ch. 8:12; 1:9)
 2. The True Bread (ch. 6:32)
 3. The True Light (ch. 1:9)
 4. The True Vine (ch. 15:1)
 5. The Way the truth and the Life (ch. 14:6)

Christ in All The Scriptures

The Gospel Of John

- v) His deity:
 - 1. The Word (ch. 1:1; 14)
 - 2. God (ch. 1:1)
 - 3. The Only Begotten Son (ch. 1:18)
 - 4. The Son of God (ch. 1:49)
- vi) His humanity:
 - 1. Son of Man (ch. 1:51; 3:13)
- vii) His abilities:
 - 1. Resurrection, and the Life (ch. 11:25)

The Repeated Words Of The Prologue

Even in the most casual reading of the first three verses it cannot help but be noticed the stupendous contrasting connection between the three major clauses and that which follows. Sadly we have gotten so used to the statements, they may well have lost their significance. Who can convey the depths of the contrast between He who is spoken of as being:

- a) "In the beginning" (ch. 1:1) contrasted with "was made flesh" (better become ch. 1:14)
- b) "With God" (ch. 1:1) contrasted with "dwelt among us" (ch. 1:14) or
- c) He who "was God" (ch. 1:1) contrasted with "became flesh", that is a human being (ch. 1:14).

Another observation is the repetition of the words "Word", "God", "was", and "Beginning"

1) "Beginning"

- a) The word "was" is in the imperfect tense which according to Westcott indicates a continuous state, thus, "In the beginning was (always was) the Word"; "the word was (always was) with God"; The Word (was and never was anything or anyone else) was God"; "Was" indicates a constant timelessness where the fact stated is unchangeable and timeless. How lofty this truth is, before the world ever came into existence the Word was the unveiling of the purposes of God:
 - i) He was there when we were chosen (Eph. 1:4)
 - ii) He was there when God promised salvation (Titus 1:1-2)
 - iii) He was there sharing the Father's glory (ch. 17:5)
 - iv) He was there enjoying the Fathers love (ch. 17:24)
 - v) He was there as the chosen of God to provide salvation (1 Pet. 1:20).
- b) To me, when that "beginning" was is irrelevant because at that point of time the Word was, and was with God and was God. Man can say the earth and universe is billions of years old, it does not matter how old or young it is before it was ever formed, before the stars and planetary universe was formed, the Word was there as the source of all life and being.

2) Word

- a) No matter how one tries, the word "Logos" cannot be fully expressed by English terms. There was at the time of writing the Greek and Hebrew understanding of the word "Logos". To the Greek mind the word meant the ultimate intelligence, which because of the spoken word or action indicated a thinker behind it. In this context it indicates the Word as the ultimate Intelligence and the Thinker who is the Source of everything made.
- b) To the Hebrew mind it reminded them of the oft used Old Testament expression, "the Word of God" or "of the Lord", which when used indicated:
 - i) The revelation of the mind and will of God. "And as they were going down to the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul, Bid the servant pass on before us, (and he passed on,) but stand thou still a while, that I may shew thee the word of God. Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and

Christ in All The Scriptures The Gospel Of John

- poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the LORD hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?" (1 Sam. 9:27; 10:1)
- ii) The execution of the will of God. "And it came to pass the same night, that the word of God came to Nathan, saying, Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in" (1 Chron. 17:3, 4)
 - iii) The workings of God. "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth" (Psa. 33:6)
 - iv) The finality of revelation. "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psa. 119:89)
 - v) These are what the Lord is as the Word: the revelation of the Father (ch. 14:9) and God (ch. 1:18); the executor of all judgment (ch. 5:27); the only Workman who never needed to be ashamed (2 Tim. 2:15); and God's final voice to man (Heb. 1:1).

The word "Word" indicates a communication. That is the outward communicating, manifestation of the heart, and the unveiling of that which a person essentially is. The Lord said, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" and "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Matt. 15:19; Jer. 17:9). The heart represents the whole person. "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh" (Lk. 6:45). When the Lord is revealed as the Word, He is the manifestation of the heart of God; the person of God in His entirety; in power, knowledge, truth, grace, love, and compassion.

The clause, "The Same was in the beginning", by using the expression "the Same" there is indicated unchangeability. It is a profound truth, the One who was with God and was God is the very same One who was ever with God.

Conclusion

Each sign, discourse, and activity of the Lord is much more than data to fill a page to tell us about the Lord. These things were written that man might believe Jesus is the Christ, that glorious fact, and believing, that is putting their trust in Him they would have life. As the eternal "Word", the exclusive and only perfect revealer of God and the Father, He stands without peer, never to be superseded, and the acceptance or rejection of Him as such eternally is the criteria for everlasting life and the knowing of God and Christ.

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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