

The Christ

THE STORY #9 - Pastor Gary Combs - March 29, 2026 - John 1:1-18

INTRO: Good morning church! We're continuing our series called THE STORY: How the Bible Explains Everything. This is a 12-week journey through the meta-narrative of Scripture, from creation to consummation, where we see that the Bible is not a collection of disconnected stories, but one great story of a holy God rescuing His broken world through Jesus Christ.

So far in The Story, we've traced that story from creation and the garden, through the flood, the Ark, and God's covenant with Abraham, the deliverance of the Exodus, the giving of the Law, the conquest of the land, and the rise and fall of the Davidic kingdom.

Last week, we arrived at the lowest point in the Story: the Captivity. We heard the final words of the Hebrew Bible: "Let us go up." A small remnant returned to a ruined Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple... but though the structure was restored, the glory never returned.

The prophets had spoken. The people had returned. But heaven seemed silent. For 400 years... no word from God.

But today, in this message called "The Christ," we see that the silence is shattered. Not by another prophet...but by God Himself. The Author of the Story has written Himself into the story.

And today is also Palm Sunday, the day we remember when Jesus made His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem and the crowds cried out, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Matt. 21:9). They waved palm branches and shouted for a king that would save them. Many thought they were welcoming a revolutionary who would set them free from Rome; they were actually welcoming the Revelation of God Himself.

Need: And that raises a question for us today: If God has come near... do we recognize Him? Because it's possible to: know the story... but miss the Savior; to be religious... but not have a relationship with God.

That was the tragedy of the first century. And it is still the danger of the twenty-first. What we need is not more information about God, but an introduction to God. We need a true revelation of God. We need to see and know Jesus for who He truly is and the relationship He offers to know God.

Trans: And that's exactly what the opening of John's Gospel gives us. It doesn't begin with a manger...it begins with majesty! It begins "in the beginning." And it pulls back the curtain and shows us who Jesus really is!

BODY: In the gospel of John, he presented a beautifully poetic and theologically rich prologue to show that Jesus is the eternal Word who became flesh and tabernacled among us, revealing God's glory and inaugurating the fulfillment of the Story. **We can see** that Jesus Christ is the eternal Word who came down to dwell among us, revealing God's glory as the central figure who brings God's story to its decisive turning point. **How is** Jesus revealed as the Hero in God's unfolding story? **The text gives four revelations** of Jesus as the Hero in God's story.

Text: John 1:1-18 (ESV) 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 were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. 9 The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. 15 (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") 16 For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has ever seen God; God the only Son, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

FOUR REVELATIONS OF JESUS AS THE HERO OF GOD'S STORY:

1. Jesus is revealed as the Sovereign Word.

EXP: (1-5) John begins, "In the beginning..." taking us back to Genesis. Before anything was created, Christ already existed. He was with God and He was God. Distinct from the Father, yet fully divine. As God and Creator, He is Sovereign over all.

"Beginning" (1,2-2x) (ἀρχή, *archē*) - beginning, origin. Echo of Gen. 1:1 "In the beginning..."

"Word" (1, 14 -4x) (λόγος, *logos*) - a word, embodies a conception or idea.

"All things were made" (3) (γίνομαι, *ginomai*) - to be made, finished; Christ is the Agent of creation.

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“**Life**” (4) (ζωή, *zōē*) - life. Christ as the Son of God is the Source and Sustainer of life.

“**Light**” (4,5,7,8,9 - 6x) (φῶς, *phōs*) - light; of truth. Echoes Gen. 1:3 “And God said, “Let there be light”

“**Darkness**” (5) (σκοτία, *skotia*) - the darkness due to want of light; metaphor used of ignorance.

“**Not overcome it**” (5) (καταλαμβάνω, *katalambanō*) - to seize upon, catch.

ARG: All things were created by Him, through Him, for Him, and are held together by Him.

Colossians 1:16-17 (HCSB) For everything was created by Him... all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and by Him all things hold together.

He has been exalted by the Father to the “highest place.”

Philippians 2:9-11 (NIV) ⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

ILL: **Jesus calms the storm** (Mark 4:35-14). These were seasoned fishermen, yet they were terrified. They wake Jesus up, and what does He do? He simply speaks: “Peace! Be still!” And there was a “great calm.” Why? Because the wind and the waves recognized the Voice of their Creator. The disciples’ reaction is telling; they asked, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?” John gives us the answer: He is the Sovereign Word. The reason the storm obeyed His voice is that it was made by His Word.

APP: If the wind and the waves still recognize the voice of their Creator, why do we struggle to trust Him with the storms in our own lives? The Sovereign Word who spoke the stars into existence and commanded the Galilean sea to be still is the same Word who is with you today. The question isn't whether your life will experience storms. The question is, ‘Who’s in your boat?’ Have you called out to Jesus as Your Lord?

2. Jesus is revealed as the Sent Word.

EXP: (6-9) Christ is the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the promised Messiah. As John was “sent” (6), so Jesus “was coming” (9). He too was sent. John was the last and greatest prophet (Matt. 11:11).

“**Sent from God**” (6) (ἀποστέλλω, *apostellō*) - to order, appointed; to send. His name was John the Baptist.

“**Witness**” (7,15 - 4x) (μαρτυρία, *marturia*) - a testifying; John represents those who prophesied Messiah.

“**True light**” (9) (ἀληθινός, *alēthinos*) - true. John was not the Light. Jesus is the “true” Light.

ARG: **What Malachi prophesied, Jesus confirmed concerning John the Baptist as His forerunner.**

Malachi 3:1, 4:5 (ESV) Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me... I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.

Matthew 11:13-14 (ESV) For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come.

Just as God sent John, so He sent forth His Son, just as He had promised at His precise time.

Galatians 4:4 (ESV) But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son...

ILL: **Road to Emmaus** (Luke 24:13-35). After Jesus rose from the dead, He walked with two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They were confused, discouraged, and didn’t understand what had happened. And Luke 24:27 tells us: “Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” In other words, Jesus showed them: every promise, every prophecy, every pattern, was pointing to Him all along.

APP: They had the Scriptures in their hands, but they missed the Savior walking right beside them. And the danger is we can do the same thing today. You can know Bible stories, attend church regularly, even believe certain truths... and still miss Jesus. It’s not what you know about Jesus, but do you know Jesus!

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3. Jesus is revealed as the Saving Word.

EXP: (10-13) Jesus was revealed as the Savior, but neither the world nor His own people recognized Him. Yet to all we received and believed in Him, He gave the right to become children of God. Not by heritage, nor by human effort, but by new birth from God.

“**World**” (9,10 - 4x) (κόσμος, *kosmos*) - the world, the universe; The created world and its inhabitants.

“**He came to his own**” (11) (ἴδιος, *idios*) - one's own, Jesus came to His own people, to the Jews.

“**Receive**” (11, 12 - 2x) (λαμβάνω, *lambanō*) - to take with the hand, lay hold of; to receive what is offered

“**Believed**” (12) (πιστεύω, *pisteuō*) - to think to be true, to be persuaded of, to credit, place confidence in

“**Gave the right**” (12) (ἐξουσία, *exousia*) - the power of authority (influence) and of right (privilege)

“**Children of God**” (12) (τέκνον, *teknon*) - offspring, children;

“**Born**” (13) (γεννάω, *gennaō*) - to be born, to be begotten. (Genetics source word).

“**Will ... of God**” (13) (θέλημα, *thelēma*) - will. of the purpose of God to bless mankind through Christ

ILL: **Peter before the Sanhedrin** (Acts 4). After healing a lame man (Acts 3) and preaching in the Temple, Peter and John were arrested. The Sanhedrin asked, “By what power or by what name have you done this?” (Acts 4:7). To which Peter answered...

ARG: **Quoting Psalm 118:22, Peter warned the Sanhedrin not to reject the only Name for salvation.**

Acts 4:10-12 (NKJV) let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.’ Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

APP: You can reject Jesus or receive Him, but you cannot remain neutral. For there is “no other name” by which we are saved. His Name is a Saving Word. And those who receive Him are adopted as children of God.

4. Jesus is revealed as the Supreme Word.

EXP: (14-18) “The Word became flesh and dwelt (*tabernacled*) among us... we have seen His glory” (14). The glory that once filled the tabernacle... the glory that departed in Ezekiel’s vision... has now returned in Jesus. He is: greater than John (15), greater than Moses (17), He is greater than all that has been revealed about God up until that point. He is the One who makes God known (18). He is the last Word, the final word. He is the Supreme Word revealing God to us!

“**Dwelt among us**” (14) (σκηνώω, *skēnōō*) - to dwell; to fix one's tabernacle, to pitch one's tent.

“**Glory**” (14) (δόξα, *doxa*) - splendour, brightness; magnificence, excellence, preeminence, dignity, grace

“**Only Son**” (14) (μονογενής, *monogenēs*) - one born; only born; unique, used of Christ.

“**Grace**” (14) (χάρις, *charis*) - good will, loving-kindness, favor; grace.

“**Ranks before me**” (15) (πρώτος, *prōtos*) - first. John was 6-months older, but Christ is eternal.

“**Law ... through Moses**” (17) (νόμος, *nomos*) - the law, the Torah. But “grace and truth” through Jesus!

“**No one has ever seen God**” (18) (ὁράω, *horaō*) - to see with the eyes. Moses saw His afterglow in Exodus 33, but Jesus is God in the flesh. He makes the Father known.

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ARG: Hebrews says that Jesus is the Last Word (Supreme revelation) and has a Superior Name.

Hebrews 1:1-4 (NIV) In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son... The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word... the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

ILL: In 1961, Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first human to orbit the earth. A famous quote was attributed to this atheist astronaut: "I looked and looked, but I didn't see God."

But C.S. Lewis wrote a famous response. He argued that looking for God in space is like Hamlet looking for Shakespeare in the attic of his castle. Shakespeare isn't a character hiding in the attic; he is the Author who created both the castle and Hamlet himself. Hamlet will never find Shakespeare by exploring the stage; he can only know Shakespeare if Shakespeare writes himself into the play.

APP: Church, that is exactly what John is telling us. You won't find God on your own. But you don't have to. The Author of the Story has written Himself into the script. The Supreme Word has stepped onto the stage.

For 400 years, the heavens were silent. For 600 years, the glory in the Temple was gone. People were looking at the stars and the stone buildings, asking, "Where is He?" John 1:18 gives us the final answer: "No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known."

If you want to know what the Author is like, you don't need a telescope or a degree in philosophy; you just need to look at Jesus. He is the Supreme Word—the final, fullest, and most beautiful revelation of the Father.

CONCLUSION: Today, we've seen that Jesus is:

- the Sovereign Word
- the Sent Word
- the Saving Word
- the Supreme Word

Last week, we ended with the final words of the Hebrew Bible: "Let him go up." The people were called to go up to Jerusalem...to rebuild the Temple...to seek God.

But today, we see something greater: We can't "go up" to reach God, but God has "come down" to reach us. The story of the Bible isn't about us reaching up to God, but about God coming down and writing Himself into the broken chapters of our story to bring us home to His Story!

On Palm Sunday, the crowds cried out: "Hosanna! Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!"

They welcomed Him as King... but many did not truly understand Him.

And within days, many of the same voices that cried, "Hosanna!" would cry, "Crucify Him!"

So the question for us is simple: Will we receive Him and believe in Him for who He truly is?

Because the King has come. The Word has been spoken. The glory has returned. And the Author of the Story has stepped onto the stage.

But the Story is not finished. Because the One who rode into Jerusalem on a donkey... is the same One who is coming again in on the clouds!

"We could not go up to God, so the Word became flesh and came down to us. Have you received Him?"

Let's pray.