



SOLUS CHRISTUS

Reformed Baptist Church

John 1:1 – “A Son of Thunder and the *Logos* of God”

Study Guide

A sermon by Josef Urban

Text: John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

“The Prologue to the Gospel of John was written by a son of thunder who masterfully grounds the Good News of salvation in the greatness of God the Son's identity. The *Logos* is the personal, eternal, consubstantial Wisdom of God who has preexisted from all eternity, always enjoyed intimate communion with the Father, is distinct from the Father in His personal subsistence, and bears full deity. The eternal *Logos* shares in the names, nature, attributes, titles, works, worship, and glory of God. Excluded here are the heresies of Arianism, which taught that Christ was inferior to the supreme God and Father as a created and semi-divine being, and the heresy of Sabellionism, which denies the Trinity by teaching that God is only a singular Person who changes His external modes of manifestation. Our Savior must be distinct as a Person from the Father, or else there is no basis for the incarnation and outworking of the plan of redemption in history (since it is the order of subsistence in the ontological Trinity that makes it proper for the Son to become incarnate in the economy of redemption); and He must be fully divine, or else He would be insufficient to meet the needs of our souls before God (since His merit would be limited).” -Josef Urban

Questions for sermon reflection:

1. Why begin a church plant with an exposition of the Gospel According to John?
2. What are some of the facts we know about the Apostle John? Who were his parents? Who was his original teacher? What does his nickname mean? How does he describe himself in this Gospel account? What lessons can we learn from him?
3. John calls the preincarnate Christ 'the Word.' Apart from John 1:1, what other passages of Scripture identify Jesus as 'the Word,' and what is the significance of their modifiers?
4. What is the significance of the Greek background to the *Logos*?
5. What is the significance of the Hebrew background to the *Logos*?
6. Looking at Proverbs 8, does God obtain His Wisdom from outside Himself, or is it inherent in His ineffable being? Do you think the Proverbs 8 text is describing the Son (hint: Colossians 2:3)?

7. What do the opening words of John 1:1 (“In the beginning...”) allude to and why (i.e. what does this teach us about the person of the Son)?

8. The second clause of verse one says, “...and the Word was with God.” What are the two primary truths this is indicating?

9. The third clause of verse one says, “...and the Word was God.” Is this teaching that Jesus was merely “a god,” as Jehovah Witnesses teach? Why not?

10. Explain why John 1:1 refutes: [1] Tritheism (the belief that there are three gods); [2] Arianism (the belief that the person of the Son is a created being); and [3] Sabellionism (also known as Modalism).

11. What does the Son share with the Father?

12. Reflect on why and how John 1:1 is important for your eternal salvation.

Glossary:

- **Logos.** The Greek word used in John’s Prologue of the Son of God. It literally means, “word,” but can also mean ‘reason,’ ‘logic,’ ‘speech,’ or ‘message.’
- **Ontological.** Pertaining to the being of a person or thing. Ontology is a branch of philosophy dealing with metaphysics and that deals with the study of being.

- **Consubstantial.** Of the same substance, or nature, or essence. A term normally used with regard to the doctrine of the Trinity to describe the Son's and the Spirit's coequality with the Father in glory, power, and deity.

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