

GOD FROM GOD

Part 31 of Foundations 260. John 1:1.

Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. September 28, 2025.

THE CORNERSTONE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

At the heart of the Christian faith is this bold claim:

- Jesus is the Word made flesh.
- He is the eternal God who took on blood and bone; true God, true man.

From the beginning, people have tried to deny or distort this truth.

- The religious leaders in Jesus's day attacked him for claiming to be God.
- Arius, a fourth-century priest in the church of Alexandria, Egypt.

Arius claimed Jesus was a created, small “g” God.

- He was popular and persuasive. He even had a slogan about the Word, “There was a time when it was not.”
- Arianism split the church and threatened the Roman Empire, so Constantine demanded that the bishops convene an ecumenical council.
- The Council of Nicaea met in AD 325 and produced the first version of the Nicene Creed (final version in 381).

The Arian controversy can be countered by careful study of John 1.

JOHN 1:1 AND THE WORD MADE FLESH

John 1:1-18 (CSB) 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 All things were created through him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men. 5 That light shines in the darkness, and yet the darkness did not overcome it.

6 There was a man sent from God whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify about the light, so that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light. 9 The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was created through him, and yet the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name, 13 who were born, not of natural descent, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but of God.

14 The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed his glory, the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. 15 (John testified concerning him and exclaimed, “This was the one of whom I said, ‘The one coming after me ranks ahead of me, because he existed before me.’ ”) 16 Indeed, we have all received grace upon grace from his fullness, 17 for the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has ever seen God. The one and only Son, who is himself God and is at the Father’s side —he has revealed him.

WHY THE WORD?

John wrote his Gospel for Jewish-background believers in Ephesus.

- They were familiar with the Old Testament’s teaching about the Word of God. It:
 - Made a covenant with Abraham, Genesis 15:1
 - Gave Israel the Ten Commandments, Deuteronomy 5:5; Exodus 24:3-5
 - Spoke to and through his prophets, 1 Samuel 3:1; Isaiah 1:10
 - Enlightened those who listened, Psalm 17:4; 119:1-5
 - Created the universe, Psalm 33:6

Jesus embodied that word (verse 14). He is God’s powerful presence.

JOHN 1:1, TWO TRUTHS ABOUT THE WORD

His Eternal Existence: “In the beginning...”

- Reflects Genesis 1:1. God was before time and space. Eternal.
- Therefore, the Word was before time and space. Eternal. See John 17:5; Colossians 1:16-17.
- The Nicene Creed: Jesus, the Word made flesh, is “the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages... begotten, not made.”
- He is not a creature. He is the eternal Son.

His Divine Essence: “...and the Word was with God, the Word was God.”

- “With God” means that the Word pours out from God, sharing in His very life. This is the eternal communion of God the Father and God the Son.
- See John 3:16; Nicene Creed: “begotten, not made.” The Word is the Creator, God himself, the eternal Son stepping into the world for us.
- Nicene Creed: “... And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten from the Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made; of the same essence as the Father (con-substantial). Through him all things were made.”

GOOD THEOLOGY HAS GOOD RESULTS

John 1:1 teaches us that God is:

- Worthy of Praise: For His self-giving love in coming to us.
- Knowable: We can know God through the person of Jesus.
- Empathetic: God truly understands us; he became one of us.
- Reconciling: Jesus was truly God in human form; his sacrifice on the cross was infinitely sufficient to atone for sins once and for all.

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Review

- Review Peter's September 28th teaching and study guide. For more study resources, visit www.famousgod.com/small-groups.
- What were the main insights of Peter's teaching?
- What questions do you have about the passage or Peter's teaching?
- What were the main applications or takeaways for your life?

Discuss

- What two truths about Jesus does John 1:1 reveal? How do these relate to the Nicene Creed's affirmation of "begotten, not made" and "consubstantial with the Father"? You can read the Nicene Creed here: www.anglicancommunion.org/media/109020/Nicene-Creed.pdf
- The sermon emphasized that correct beliefs about Jesus' divinity have positive consequences. How have your own beliefs about Jesus shaped your experience of God's grace and salvation?
- Thomas recognized Jesus as "My Lord and my God" after seeing the risen Christ (John 20:28). How can this confession guide your worship and daily life?
- What practical steps can we take to be good theologians, especially in embracing the truth about Jesus?

Prayer Focus

- Pray for more insights and understanding of the Person and work of Jesus.
- Pray for the Cornerstone Church to keep the true Jesus at the forefront.