

Come, Receive/Believe In/Know Jesus!

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[0:00] now you can take your bibles and go to john's gospel so you can stop badgering me you people just kidding yes go to the gospel of john if you're visiting with us no i don't mean you're badgering me but other people have but no just kidding um if you're visiting with us you know bible there's a black bible in the chair in front of you and pull that out go to the back because uh the new testament is renumbered and find page actually page 70 but actually page 71 but find page 70 because there's no 71 i don't know why they did that anyways find page 70 you'll see john john's gospel challenge chapter one and today we're going to just do the first 13 verses of john chapter one excuse me turn these off so john chapter one the first 13 verses i'll read and we'll jump in um and and so we're starting in john's gospel and excuse me i plan on us being in john's gospel for about 60 weeks so that's kind of plan i think it's actually 61 to be exact but that bothers me there's a one so i might try and put it down to 60 that person you know what i mean anyways uh so about 60 weeks in john's gospel week number one today chapter one verses one through 13 i'm going to read in the beginning was the word and the word was with god and god was the word he was in the beginning with god all things came into being by him and apart from him nothing came into being that came in him was life and the life was the light of men and the light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overpower it a man came sent from god his name was john he came for a witness in order that he might bear witness of the light that in order that all might believe through him he was not the light but in order that he might bear witness of the light there was a true light which coming into the world shines upon every man he was in the world and the world was made through him but the world did not know him to his own he came and those were his own did not receive him but as many as received him to them he gave the right to become children of god to those who believe in his name who were not of blood nor the will of the flesh nor of the will of man but were born of god my mother likes to remind me you probably heard the story my mother likes to remind me that when i was a kid at one of my birthday parties when kids would come to the front door i would find out if they had a gift for me because i didn't want them to come to my party if she or he didn't bring me a gift i mean that's logical right right or like i'm teaching my kids when they get a gift what are you supposed to say it better be good just kidding it's just sarcasm it's funny you people are so serious relax it's okay no i did that when i was a kid probably not a good way to invite people to come to your party but think about this what if someone famous invited you to come to their house who would you want who would excuse me who would you want to invite you to come and think about anybody dead or alive i i wrote a couple down a few how about abraham lincoln

winston churchill for all you young people duane johnson maybe some famous athlete famous theologian john calvin a famous leader that's what entails this gospel it's an invitation actually from jesus to come through john the apostle and as we're embarking on this journey for the next 60 weeks in john's gospel you'll hear me say this over 60 times it'll be at least 60 times if not double that what is john's gospel all about what's the main theme it's this come receive jesus or come believe in jesus or come know jesus or come trust jesus this is what john's trying to get across to his readers come trust jesus come know jesus come receive jesus believe in jesus come he's inviting you come so miss anything don't miss that and notice how i clump these together these verbs trust is not up there you could but trust to receive jesus is to believe in jesus to believe in jesus is to know jesus who he is who the father is and all that he's done that's what it means so we come into john's gospel it's what he's going to try to convey he's going to try to communicate this is what it means to receive jesus you believe him which means you know him all that he is all that he's done and as i said just a few moments ago it's written by the apostle john john we won't doubt that some want to doubt that i think that's ridiculous it's the apostle john john the apostle wrote this hands down but understand that this gospel it's a gospel of theology it's different from the from matthew mark and

luke it's a gospel of theology but not just of theology but of a witness it's a true genuine history from a historical viewpoint of a witness it's not what the germans call gisikta if you look up the term gisikta in google translate it means story but how the theological liberalism how they define this term gisikta and theological liberalism gisikta is embellished story now this is not an embellished story this is not an embellishment at all this is true genuine history this is a true genuine historical account and that's why you understand it's not just theology but it's from an eyewitness john the apostle probably the youngest guy that was of the apostles when jesus was alive and you'll see also john's aim his aim is evangelistic specifically this is to jews and jewish proselytes some disagree and that's okay they can be wrong that's a joke but no really i agree with don carson don carson's commentary i highly recommend it's one of the best he says this and i agree i mean it's so apparent because there's a plethora of old testament nuances in this gospel it's it's unbelievable even here in the first 13 verses there's like old testament stuff everywhere even the first three words in the beginning what does that remind you of uh genesis right and yet as you as we embark on this journey you'll see that this is going to be good not just for jews and jewish proselytes but good for us as christians because the invitation is still to you christian to come and know jesus you'll see why i say that in just a moment so come and there's there's three questions surrounding this invitation in john's gospel come and the first reason why because of who he is who is who is jesus he's the messiah the son of god light life it's going to unfold for us it is why readers should become a jesus follower and john will unfold unfold for us many characteristics of jesus uh the ultimate revealer the self-expression of the father the ultimate self-disclosure of the father i mentioned earlier light life god in the flesh all these different identities and titles of jesus you'll see it a lot in the i am statements in john's gospel there's seven of them i am the bread of life i am the way the truth and the life so if you know jesus too if you know this jesus you'll also know the father because he's the ultimate self-disclosure of the father this is why come why because of who jesus is but also surrounding this this invitation to come receive jesus because of who he is is the second question how how how do you come by believing by receiving by trusting this is the only way one can become a jesus follower when a person believes she or he takes in everything about jesus and it's so drastic it's so mind-blowing it's so awesome and amazing that jesus calls it a new birth which results in that belief and then when there's belief you're given eternal life how excuse me why how what is it about this what is it what eternal life is knowing god and jesus christ whom he has sent we think of eternal life as a place heaven is a wonderful place filled with glory and grace i want to see my savior's face heaven is a wonderful place got to go there but yet we we think about it as a place it's not so much a place it's a person knowing jesus points not just to knowledge but but also to volition your will it's personal

it's relational it's not just up here it's not just up here it's not just up here and it's being built up as a jesus follower in faith and understanding what it means to follow christ so as we go through this gospel you'll grow in your knowledge you'll grow in your love for your savior because remember what's eternal life it's to know god and jesus christ who me is sent come know jesus you see what i mean there's a there's a method to my madness in this way so there's a the whole spectrum of jesus and come why we should come to jesus how we should come to jesus what's it all about but no doubt no doubt another theme central theme in john's gospel is the cross of course something that god planned from the start it's evidence of jewish rejection they're the ones that killed him it would be the means by which jesus returned to the father the cross initiates the eschatological age we are in the last days now friends not because of pandemic but because jesus died on the cross okay makes that clear we're in the last days not because of virus but because jesus died on the cross it started then now we're in the last days and it would be the way the cross i wish god would glorify himself his why would she glorify his son you'll see that in john's gospel but something else about the cross the cross would be the only way god cleanses his people and gives them eternal life because only the lamb of god could take away our sin the only way god can cleanse you the only way he'll give you that relationship to know him is by the cross is by you turning from sin and putting your trust in jesus alone are you here do you know jesus have you received jesus do you believe in jesus do you trust jesus you should because jesus has come he'll receive you as you receive him he'll forgive you if you come to him so this is what kind of two main things main themes you see in john's gospel who jesus is the the the the why the how the what and also the cross and so as we embark on this journey over this next 60 weeks in john's gospel we want to ask ourselves the right question the question is not how does this relate to me no it's this how does your life fit in with who jesus is and what he's done john will teach you who jesus is and why it should matter to

you it's not about you per se it's about all that Jesus is and who he is in redemptive history and if you receive him that's what this is about see we come to the Bible we say well how does this relate to me what's it's about me no how does your life fit in with what God's doing that's a different way to see it isn't it so I told you about these seven I am statements I told you about uh what how Jesus is going to unfold this about himself you're also going to notice in John's

Gospel seven signs what's a sign signs point to something uh danger road work ahead you know everything's down to one lane you got a flag person you know please don't run me over type sign you'll see these signs they point to who Jesus is that he truly came from God and John loves to use these dualisms you actually see it just here and just what the fourth verse dualisms life death from above from below light dark truth lie sights blindness John loves to do this but what I want to do is uh show you how this main theme of come receive Jesus come believe in Jesus come know come trust Jesus how you see that unfold within the Gospel we're actually going to start to the back of the Gospel look at one two three different verses and come make our way back to chapter one and I'll put the verses up here for you key verses go to chapter 20 and John's Gospel John tells you why he's written this John 20:30 and 31 John 20:30 and 31 John tells you this is the reason why I'm writing this to you this is point John 20:30 many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples which are not written in this book notice 31 but these have been written you may believe that Jesus is to Christ the son of God that believing you may have life in his name notice the theme these have been written that you may believe that receive Jesus is to Christ who he is the son of God and believe you may have life in his name that's the what see the why the how the what see that there go to chapter 17 a couple pages back look at 17 verse 3 so what is this life what is this eternal life how you describe it how you define it 17 verse 3 Jesus speaking and this is eternal life that they may know you the only true God and Jesus Christ you may have sent it's it's it's it's relational it's personal it's intimate it's not just knowing facts it's responding from the heart it's volition see and then of course you have up there one verse 12 at 13 which we read just a few moments ago but as many received him to them he gave the right to become children of God to those who believe in his name you receive you believe you know you trust Jesus that's the theme these first 18 verses is called the prologue and they are key to the rest of the Gospel as you understand the prologue these first 18 verses you understand the rest of the Gospel but also as you read John's Gospel you'll understand the prologue even more so it kind of goes like this and then these first 18 verses it's interesting how these first 18 verses also answer this question how does this word who is with God is also God

[20:18] how did he break into our world or as Carson put it how do you break into the sphere of time and history these 18 verses answers that how the son of God became the Jesus of history who glorified the Father in himself so now I've got to give you an overview of John's Gospel kind of overview of just in general so we have this uh theme come receive Jesus why who exactly is Jesus who is he come receive come receive Jesus why who exactly is this Jesus number one he's the God revealer chapter 1 verse 1 in John's Gospel in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God word in its basic form we communicate through words I'm talking to you I'm using words and there's two ways of communication one is what I'm saying to you and the other is what you're hearing I have to use words to talk to you use words to communicate words to say things to each other word so now this is just the basic form of this what this word means word but now think about this in terms of Old Testament in the Old Testament God communicated creation into existence by his word word he upholds all things by his word he communicates with his people through his word Genesis 1 darkness is over the surface of the deep spirit of God hovered and what does it say and God said word word Psalm 33 just a couple weeks ago by the word of the Lord the heavens were made but if I say it talks about that Proverbs wisdom is personified wisdom was a part of creating the world wisdom is words knowledge knowledge so the word here the word is God's final complete message and so that means God's word is his self-expression and he expressed himself in creation he expressed himself in revelation and he expressed himself in salvation because God's our creator our revealer revealer and savior which perfectly sums up the word or the son he's the creator he's the revealer and he's our savior you see notice he even says and the word was with God this highlights this the word being personified and and with God insinuates intimacy so now it's not just some stoic type word thing now we see the word enjoyed a close personal relationship with God thus showing he was separate from God from the Father we'll see more of that in a little bit so this word is personal relational intimate and he's the ultimate self-disclosure of God

the ultimate self-expression of god or the ultimate god revealer one writer puts it like this he reflects god's mind perfectly and reveals him to humans what's god's mind like the word so he's the god revealer notice number two he's the eternal originator in the beginning reminds of genesis chapter 1 verse 1 in the beginning god created the heavens and the earth in the beginning was the word he already was in existence before anything was he was not created that's why he's called the eternal word the eternal originator of everything notice says in the beginning was the word and the word was with god and yet he says and god was the word so here you see he was separate from god but is also god god so we have two distinct persons who both are in essence in their nature god one writer puts it like this quote the word was with god god's eternal fellow the word was god god's own self end quote here you see the beginnings of the great doctrine of the trinity and for all you geeks out there this is for you this is not translated as a god it's argued by jehovah's witnesses because god here god was the word has no article it's called being an arthuress and yet there's other nouns that are an arthuress but they're not meant to be translated like a so the idea is a distinction but also a oneness god but understand this too you know i told you the first 18 verses are key to the rest of the gospel right verse one is key to everything else understand this jesus words and deeds are god's words and deeds god's words and deeds are jesus words and deeds they're run the same john's trying to get you to understand this this is why you should receive jesus because of who he is the god revealer the eternal originator of everything actually we'll go into that in just a moment he's the creator he says in verse two he was in the beginning with god repeats what he said in verse one he was in the beginning distinct separate and yet god god the god revealer the eternal originator known as the third one as we've been talking about this already he's the universe creator all things came into being by him apart from nothing came that came the word is the agent through whom god made the universe that is everything that exists the word created everything so god spoke jesus did it in the power of the spirit you see all three and john's trying to help you to see that then he puts in a negative

apart from nothing came into being that came into being just to be clear you guys understand what i'm saying here he was not created he always has been he created everything the god revealer eternal originator the universe creator and then number four he's the life light giver look at verse four in him was life and the life was the light of men now what's john talking about here i don't think he's talking about salvation the context is talking about creation so john is speaking about the life of creation not salvation in him was life and the life was the light of men because of this life that is bound up in the word the human race began and the darkness was dispelled now you'll notice john is going to begin to do this dualism between light and darkness right here in verse four and five because look at verse five and the light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overpower it we'll talk about that in a moment go back to creation genesis chapter one and god said there to be light and there was light and then god separated the light from the darkness right he did that so now john's taking that concept to help you understand this is what the word does he brought in the human race but then as a darkness did not dispel the light so it does not do that in salvation either darkness you'll see in this gospel represents evil and light represents not only the revelation of creation but also salvation even god himself what does jesus say in john chapter eight i am the light of the world the light shines in the darkness and the darkness uh numeric standard says comprehend it a better translation i would say is did not master it or did not overcome it darkness does not overcome the light and notice you see that in creation but you also see that in salvation when the light comes in darkness cannot overpower jesus right evil cannot overpower jesus can it see what john's trying to do here he's trying to teach you not just about creation but then about salvation and how powerful this jesus is he's the life and the light giver that's how powerful he is john shifts his readers to salvation as darkness did not overcome light so fallen humanity will not overcome the word fallen humanity cannot overcome this word who is light who is life you can't overcome jesus you can't overpower him that's why you should receive him so what would i say god revealer eternal originator universe creator uh light life giver here's a fifth one the human illuminator look at verse nine there was a true light which coming into the world enlightens every man here may be a better translation quote the true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world what's he mean by this let's take it apart true and that the word is real true genuine remember he's the ultimate self-disclosure of god and when he says world here we have to understand

john has at least at least five different meanings of the word world five uh it can mean the universe it can mean humans in general it can mean just the general public like a lot of people it can mean

sinful rebellious humanity it can mean the realm of evil the world system what does he mean by the word world context drives a meaning and it seems here in verse nine it means the created order that is humans who are in rebellion against their maker so the true light that gives light to every man he was coming into the world what is coming into the world means like him to the world that's the incarnation he comes into the world he takes on flesh we'll talk about that in verse 14 the light came into the world enlightens he enlightens every man what does the light mean what does that mean when he says enlighten enlighten makes visible bring to light you know when you're there in the dark you got to go to the bathroom and you don't want to step on a lego my kids no legos on the floor those hurt when you step on them you just want to scream bloody murder oh my so you turn on the light so you don't step on a lego or a cockroach ooh so makes visible uh it brings to light okay so now the light came into the world and he illuminates every person and divides the human race that's what he means he says enlightens every man he means makes visible he brings to light every person in other words every person is put in a position where you have to make a choice he divides the human race those who hate the light reject him or it the light others receive the light that's what john's saying so he's the human illuminator jesus came into the world and makes visible the truth of people's hearts that's why when you read the word it will make known your heart it will reveal and illuminate who you really are and that's what jesus does he will open up your life and open up your heart and illuminate who you really are you can't hide from jesus what's your heart today have you received jesus do you know jesus do you trust jesus see that's what he does the word illuminates who you really are now john the apostle deals with this next question is this word for real and all of a sudden he breaks into this in verse 6 a man came sent from god his name was john so this light of men he broke into human history and he was witnessed by this guy john which by the way john means yahweh is gracious and notice he was sent by god with a task verse 7 he came for a witness or unto a witness in order that he might bear witness of the light so is this word for real yes he was a witness to bear witness as a witness he would testify of the light you know think of a court situation a witness speaks what he has seen heard or experienced that's why we read from 1st john chapter 1 uh john says what we have seen with our eyes we touched with our hands our hands have handled concerning the word of life we heard we saw we touched him we're not just making this stuff up this is not just as not a this is not an embellished story this is for real and under god's providence this is all true and real john is going to keep emphasizing that without his gospel i'm a witness to this he's a witness to this he testifies of this we're not making this stuff up this is for real and notice he says the next part there in verse 7 that all might believe through him all of us are indirectly dependent upon john the baptist is who he's talking about who gave his proclamation of the light's identity and purpose because what would he do he would say behold the lamb of god who takes away the sin of the world and notice he says verse 8 he was not the light john the baptist was in a light just to make it everyone's not understanding this he only was called to take to the task of testifying bearing witness of the light of the word now last part john pushes you to this point how should we respond verses 10 through 13 and and as he says ask this question how should we respond to him notice what john does he tells us two ways not to respond and then one way to respond notice the two ways not to respond the world did not know and his own did not receive you see that look at verse 10 he was in the world in his special coming the incarnation the world was made through him and we're talking about sinful rebellious humanity he made this world it was made by the word but the world did not know him that word knows the same word that's used in john chapter 17 verse 3 that you might know you the only true god in jesus christ him has sent same word the world did not know he lived among them the ones he created but they did not know perceive understand personally have intimate knowledge of him they did not know their creator don't respond that way even worse verse 11 to his own he came he's talking about the jewish nation from whom comes salvation to his own he came and those who were his own did not receive him notice the verbs no there in verse 10 receive in verse 11 which is nothing new israel israel was rebellious in the old testament weren't they and this was actually prophesied [40:33] because his own would reject him and then crucify him john's saying don't respond this way john's saying don't respond this way notice notice those who receive the word this is how we should respond receive him receive the word receive the light receive jesus verse 12 but as many as received him to them he gave the right to become children of god to those who believe in his name there will be those who receive him those who embrace him those who believe him because god always has a remnant receiving him is believing in his name and his name which means the character of a person which denotes allegiance trust confession when you receive jesus you're

embracing jesus when you embrace jesus you're believing jesus when you believe in jesus you trust jesus you know jesus respond that way knowing jesus involves more than just mere knowledge it points to volition the will of the person is affected a person willingly comes to jesus to embrace him to receive him to believe in him and notice when you respond that way when you believe in him what does john say to them he gave the right to become children of god a gift of god's sovereign grace granted to you that these will enjoy the privilege of becoming god's children the covenant people of god they belong to god in an intimate meaningful relational way his children he became a child of god god that's the result of receiving him and notice verse 13 who were not of blood not of the will of flesh not of the will of man he's talking about this birth it doesn't happen by means of a descent or race especially if you're jewish not by sexual desire not by human decision not by the will of a husband you could have translate will of man as a husband that way understand in no way do followers of jesus derive this new birth from themselves it doesn't happen inside you of you no john's trying to tell you that he says end of verse 13 but have been born of god immediately introducing this new birth which is an act of god in the heart of the individual the only reason why a person would receive believe know jesus is because a new birth took place in their heart so again this question that comes up the question that does not how does this relate to me it's how does your life fit in with who jesus is and what and what he's done how does your life fit into that this is what god's done this is who jesus is this is what he's done how do you how do you fit into that not how does god fit into your life how do you fit into god's life and what he's done how will you respond you see to receive jesus is to believe in jesus to believe in jesus to know jesus because all that he is all that he's done respond know him receive him love him embrace him trust him see john's calling you that can we pray and ask for god's spirit to work in us spirit of god we need you to work in us even more deeply believe in you jesus to more deeply trust you and receive you and know you and embrace you and we pray that as we embark on this journey in john's gospel give us grace to respond in this way to you i want to encourage you if you would please just take a minute or so we have this moment of silence for you to fill your mind with truth fill your mind with who jesus is and maybe ask pray jesus help me to keep receiving you help me to know you more receive you more trust you more so take these few moments that we have between you and the lord to fill your mind with this truth to let your mind dwell on these things would you take these few moments please and do that you