

- Contrast how John starts his Gospel with the Synoptics
 - Genealogy, dramatic arrival on the scene, carefully researched history in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, respectively
 - “In the beginning”: Where have we heard that before? Implications are explosive. The Word is eternal just as God is. He is the creator, and only the creator can restore us.
 - John was specially close to Jesus, and yet he’s the one who chooses to emphasize his eternal existence. His revelatory role for now even eclipses his substitutionary atonement role.
 - Logos: Some erroneously detect Philonic influence in John (i.e. Jewish Gk philosopher Philo. But he’s not thinking in Greek philosophical terms. He’s re-defining them.
 - More Jewish context: The first week of the new creation:
 - ♦ 1:29, 35, 43; 2:1
 - ♦ Combined with “in the beginning” this is obvious recapitulation of the OT revelation of God.
 - He is with God, and he IS God (closest we come in the NT to an explicit declaration of the Trinity)
 - All things were made through him. John over-emphasizes the point. Everything!
 - He is the source of life, creator and sustainer. And this life is the light of men. This likely refers to men being enlightened with a rational soul, as compared to the animals, and then extended to our perception of Jesus’s divine nature.

- Main themes
 - Rejection of Christ by the world
 - But some do receive him... and become children of God
 - Light shining in the darkness
 - Life
 - Witness
 - Glory

→ Law → Grace

- Logos: the thought and the expression of that thought.
 - Calvin: the Speech (the image of the mind).
 - The one who reveals and explains God.
- The Word in Scripture:
 - The life-giving word: Ps 33:6
 - Prophetic Word: Hos 1:1
 - Light-giving Word: 119:105,130 Ps 19:8
 - The memra (Aramaic translation of “word”):
 - ♦ Ex 3:12 (Moses at the burning bush): the Targum paraphrases “I will be with you” as “my memra will be your support”
 - ♦ Ex 9:17 (at Mt. Sinai): the people are brought out to meet “the memra of God”
- John the Baptist
 - Called out by name, given at his birth (means divine herald)
 - Divine messenger, beginning of the witness theme
- The True Light was coming into the world
 - Not true vs false, but the fulfillment of human enlightenment, now perceiving Jesus as the divine Word.
 - Other replacement themes in the Gospel like this.
- The world was made through him, and yet it did not know him.
 - It’s not so much about the offense to Jesus, as the tragic state of this fallen world.
 - vv 11-13 are the TOC for the whole Gospel.
 - ♦ First half: His own did not receive him
 - ♦ Second half: Those who do, become children of God

- The Word became flesh
 - John is re-defining Greek terms and using them to refute the underlying worldview of Greek philosophy .
 - The incarnation. Captured by the formulation of the Council of Chalcedon.
 - Jesus “tabernacled” among us
 - “We have seen his glory”. Continuing the witness theme.
 - “The only son from the Father”
 - ♦ “Eternally begotten”: Expresses the uniqueness of the son as the true expression of the Father. Birth at a point in time is not in view.
 - Law → Grace
 - ♦ Not a replacement, but a fulfillment of Law in Jesus.
 - ♦ The Law is good, but it did not bring life (as we see later from Paul). Here John is simply saying that Moses brought us Law, and Jesus brings us life.

- vv 1-18 frame the prologue and show Jesus as the unique revealer/explainer of the Father
 - “No one has seen God”: Not just referring to visible manifestation. God is inherently unknowable to us.
 - The “only God (i.e. Jesus)” at the Father’s side has made him known.
 - In older language, “from the bosom of the father”: The bosom is the seat of counsel. It refers to one who knows all the secrets.