



International Bible Study Commentary

Verse-by-Verse Bible Lessons Thru the Bible

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

The Difference in Jesus and the Difference Jesus Makes

But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God (John 1:12).

The gospel of John will teach us more about Jesus as we study. John tells us who Jesus is, and we will better understand who Jesus is as we read, think, and pray. Because of Jesus and the kind of people Jesus will make us, the longer we live the more we will learn and the more we will love God.

In Genesis 1, we learn that God spoke the world into existence. In John 1:1 and 3, we learn that the Word was with God, the Word was God, and all things came into being through the Word. We exist and remain in existence because of the Word of God. The entire created universe exists and remains in existence because of the Word of God. In John 1:14, we learn “And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father’s only Son, full of grace and truth.” Jesus came into the world fully human and fully God. Jesus walked and talked to make the true God known and to make THE difference in our lives.

How do we know God and the characteristics of God that mean the most to us? In John 1:18, we learn, “It is God the only Son who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made Him known.” As an eyewitness, John saw and recorded how Jesus walked and talked. As we study John’s gospel we see and come to know God and the nature and characteristics of God. We see Jesus and understand many truths about the true God. As we study the Gospel of John, we will learn by experience the meaning of John 1:9, that Jesus is “the true light, which enlightens everyone.” In John 1, we learn that the Father and the Son (Jesus Christ) are one true God in two Persons. As we study and learn more from Jesus in John’s gospel, we will learn about the Holy Spirit who is the third Person in the one true God. The Bible reveals the fact that the one true God we trust and worship is three Persons who work perfectly together in us and in the world in different ways.

In his first chapter, John tells us three truths about Jesus that may mean more to us personally than many other truths. In John 1:14, 16, and 17, we learn that Jesus is “full of grace and truth,” that “we can receive from Jesus grace upon grace,” and “grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” In his gospel, John will show and tell what these truths mean in the life of Jesus.

Someone may ask “What difference does all this make?” Jesus makes the difference. Jesus makes THE difference in our lives because He is full of grace and truth. All who believe in Jesus as the Bible reveals Jesus have received

from His fullness “grace upon grace;” this means we receive ever increasing outpourings of God’s grace into our lives. Those who trust in Jesus have received the grace (mercy and unmerited favor) of the forgiveness of all our sins, the grace of cleansing from all our sins, the grace of Jesus sending the Holy Spirit (our Comforter, Guide, Helper, Power, and Advocate) to live and remain within us, and the gracious gift of eternal life in the presence of our holy and loving God forever—a new life that begins the moment we receive Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord. We can learn more about the grace of God as we read the Bible, but we will never be able to completely describe or explain every grace that we have received and will receive from Jesus day-by-day as we await His return.

In addition to receiving grace and the many gifts of grace from Jesus, we receive truth from Jesus, for Jesus is “**full** of grace and truth” (John 1:14). As we study John’s gospel, we will see that Jesus has told us the truth. Jesus declared that He is the Truth. The followers of Jesus can live with the grace and power of Jesus trusting the truth of Jesus, experiencing the love of Jesus for them, and knowing the reality of Jesus in the world as it is today. To understand the truth deeply, we must read the Gospel of John prayerfully and with the intention of living according to all the truth as quickly as we learn the truth.

In John 1:17, we learn, “The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” Everyone except Jesus has broken the law of God given

through Moses: the law of love that commands us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, and to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. No matter what we do, we cannot unbreak a broken law or remove our guilt and shame, but Jesus can remove our guilt and make us new creatures who can live before God the Father and Jesus as those who have never broken a law of God. In Jesus Christ, grace and truth came into our world to make us acceptable to God and acceptable to ourselves by forgiving us, cleansing us, and filling us with the Holy Spirit.

We will only live (and want to live) with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit now and forever, if we become children of God. Jesus came to make sinners into children of God, into new people, into people fit for God to indwell. How does He make this difference in us? John explained briefly in John 1:12 (we will learn more about this and how we do this as we learn more about Jesus from John): “To all who received Him, who believed in His name, he gave power to become children of God.” As you study the Gospel of John, you will receive grace upon grace, love upon love, truth upon truth, reason upon reason, and the fullness of God's grace to believe in Jesus as the Bible reveals Jesus. God wills that when you receive Jesus and believe in the name of Jesus that Jesus will give you the power to become a child of God. As a child of God, you will be able to show and tell others: “The Difference in Jesus and the Difference Jesus Makes.” — L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

[Begin a study of the Gospel of John](#), with verse-by-verse commentaries, Bible Lessons, Study Questions, Study Hints, Applications, Crossword Puzzles, True and False Tests, and Word Search Puzzles, and Prayers. — L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

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