



JOHN 1:1-18

INTRODUCTION

Ask members in your group about a “fresh start” or “new beginning” time in their lives. What prompted it, and how successful were they at maintaining it?

If someone became a Christian later in life, ask them if they feel comfortable sharing how their life was changed by Jesus in a “before/after” sense.

BIBLE

Read through John 1:1-18.

This passage is like the overture of a symphony. All of the themes of the rest of John’s Gospel are contained in these opening verses. John is setting us up for the bigger story.

- 1. List the important words in the text that are repeated. What is this saying about what might be important in John’s Gospel?*
- 2. The opening verses are a deliberate echo of Genesis 1 and the creation story. John 1 is a NEW creation story. What words and ideas from Genesis 1 are found in this passage?*

3. *There are double meanings to some of the words. Explain what “light” and “dark” can mean in this passage. What might we expect to see happen in John’s Gospel, given what 1:5 tells us?*
4. *V14 is a critically important verse. After telling us about the Word and who the Word is, we get the astonishing piece of information that the Word became human. This is called the Incarnation – God becomes man. And then God dwells with us! How might this connect with our previous series Together, and God’s decision to live in the midst of humans?*
5. *In the sermon on Sunday Kanishka Raffel, the Archbishop of Sydney was quoted as saying this about his first take on John’s Gospel:*

I was struck at first by its historicity. It’s located in a specific time and place. Buddhist scripture isn’t really like that, it doesn’t give you any idea of where or when.

Think about a non-Christian friend you have. What challenges would you have in explaining to them that the Gospel accounts are eye witness accounts and therefore FACT and not merely MYTH or OPINION.

Does it matter that the Gospels are history? Why?

6. *On Sunday we had five baptisms. Each person baptised spoke about the goodness of God in their lives, and how Jesus had changed them and given them life in a way they did not have life before. How would you explain to someone how Jesus gives life in a superior and different way to normal human existence?*
7. *Vv10-12 speak about the “concentric circles of “the world”, “his own” and “all who received him”. The scandal of these verses is that the Creator is not recognised by his creatures, and the Saviour is not received by those he had saved. Those who do receive him are “born again” or “born of God”. What does it mean to be “born again” or “born of God”. Why is our first birth not good enough to enable us to be children of God?*

PRAY

Pray for those in your life who do not know Jesus, but who are on your hearts. Ask God to shine the light of the Word of God (Jesus) into their lives through the Word of God (the Bible), by the Spirit of God.