

## John's Exclamation

John 1:1-18

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**A** NEW beginning. Isn't this what all want in our lives? A new beginning from our wayward ways, from our ignorance, from our foolishness, from our sins. A new beginning is what John exclaims to us in his prologue. With the coming of our Lord from heaven to earth, God begins a new and final age in his redemptive plan. He had been working throughout history to redeem his people since after the Fall of our first parents in the Garden, out of a totally depraved world through the Flood, out of an idol-worshipping family living in a land of utter idolatry as he called Abram, and despite showing themselves to be a stiff-necked and stubborn people, who almost immediately after seeing God's great Exodus worshipped the golden calf.

But now John says God is beginning anew! All that has gone before was incomplete until the Lord stepped on earth in human form! God ends the old order of things by transforming into their glorious fulfillment. Just like a caterpillar's life is preparatory for its transformation into the beautiful creature we call a butterfly so too all that God has done and spoken before the coming of Christ is preparatory. The old is transformed into the new.

The new comes from the old. The beloved Apostle shows that God has brought a new beginning in redemptive history.

### **A New Creation (vv. 1–5, 9–13)**

John exclaims first that God has brought *a new creation*. Did you recognize the similarities between Genesis 1 and John 1? “In the beginning God” (Gen. 1:1); **In the beginning was the Word** (v. 1). “God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1); **All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made** (v. 3); **He was in the world, and the world was made through him** (v. 10). “Then God said, ‘Let there be light;’ and there was light” (Gen. 1:3); **The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it** (v. 5); **The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world** (v. 9). “Then God said, ‘Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures’ (Gen. 1:20); **In him was life, and the life was the light of men** (v. 4). “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image according to Our likeness’ (Gen. 1:26a); **But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God** (v. 12).

By drawing from Genesis 1 John wants to show us how in Christ this new beginning is even more glorious with *Christ as the head of this new*

*creation.* As we read in Genesis 1:3 God created all things by his word: “Then God said.” So it was by means of, through, God’s word that he created. Now theologians have tried to grasp this for centuries, but somehow beyond our comprehension that “word” which God spoke to create was Jesus Christ, the Word who was in the beginning, who was God, and who was with God. Even more basic than the fact that John 1:1–3 says that Christ is God, and that Christ is the Creator is the affirmation that Christ is the Head of a new creation, a new beginning.

*Christ is also the light of this new creation.* Genesis 1:2 says, “The earth was without form and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep.” The darkness of the first creation was because there was no created light as of yet; but the darkness of this new beginning is the darkness of sin, depravity, and wickedness. The entire *kosmos*, the universe, the “world” is simply put, “darkness.” But Christ is the light who is shining into the darkness. And notice our text says, “but the darkness did not overcome it.” The Greek word speaks of seizing by force, grabbing, overcoming militarily. But the sovereignty of Christ, the light, is shown as despite the darkness’ desire to stamp out the light, Christ is not thwarted.

And he is *the source of life in this the new creation*. In Genesis 1:11 we read, “Then God said, ‘let the waters abound with every living creature.’” In the first creation God gave natural, earthly, physical life. But in this new beginning he gives eternal, heavenly, spiritual life. And the source of this eternal life, we are told, is Christ: **In him was life**.

### **A New Revelation (vv. 14, 16–18)**

What makes this new creation so much better than the first is, as John exclaims, that it is *a new revelation of grace*. The Jews had the Law of Moses and the entire Law was written to prepare and to proclaim our Lord’s coming. The pinnacle of the Law was the Temple. And John proclaims that *Jesus is the new revelation of all that the temple was about* as the place where God dwelt among his people. The same eternal *Logos* who created all things now has **became flesh and dwelt among us** among sinful humanity (v. 14). That term **dwelt** can also be translated “tabernacled.” The “Word became flesh and tabernacled among us” just as the Lord said the first tabernacle and later temple was intended to show Israel (Ex. 24:15–16; 25:8–9; 40:34).

And as the place of God’s presence among sinners, our Lord Jesus Christ is *the new revelation of perfect grace*: **and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth** (v. 14).

This comes right from Exodus 34:6 where the Lord proclaimed his name as “abounding in goodness and truth.” They are two terms that speak of the Lord’s covenant keeping. Jesus is the fullness of the covenant keeping of God. Look at verse 16: **For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.** The abundance of grace is piled up in Christ. The inexhaustible resources of grace we find in Christ alone. And as verse 17 says, in contrast to the preparatory grace of the Old Covenant the New Covenant is full of grace: **For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.**

As the place of God’s presence among sinners as the inexhaustible fountain of grace, Jesus is *the new revelation of all that God is*: **No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known** (v. 18).

God has begun a new creation in Jesus Christ. John tells us at the end of his Gospel that the purpose of this is “that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name” (20:31). And if anyone of us hides ourselves in Christ, we are a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). Amen.