

# HEARING THE VOICE OF GOD

There is something every Born Again believer in this room has in common. Christ has called each of us and we heard Him and we also follow. In fact every believer of all time has that special common connection with all of us. The call of Christ and the obedient response.

Remember what Jesus said? My Sheep hear what? \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ (Hear my voice)!

So, the last Gospel has this call most clearly and beautifully explained. To begin our look at the master's Message this morning turn with me to the Gospel by John, chapter 10.

And what is the Master's Message? It is the marvelous content of the Gospels. It is the message Jesus gave to those who heard Him preach. It is what we are studying this morning. Christ's call to them as to us may be described as the Master's Message.

First in our Bibles is Matthew who records no less than **31 different gospel presentations**, which took us 4 weeks to look at.

Then the Gospel by Mark has **9 different gospel presentations**, which we looked at in 3 weeks.

Then the Gospel by Luke we saw had **23 different gospel presentations**, which took us 10 weeks to study,

Now we start the most exciting, extraordinary, and profound of all the Gospels. The final of the Four Gospels the Gospel by John, which contains **26 different gospel presentations**

This morning we will begin on what will be perhaps one of the greatest studies we have ever taken. We will look at each of Christ's presentations of the Gospel. Each way Jesus described salvation to both His Twelve and to the world. We could call this the Good News of Salvation According to Jesus. So this morning we enter the 4<sup>th</sup> and final Gospel as we pursue our ongoing study of the Master's Message. Remember now, when God wanted to give His Church a snapshot of Christ's ministry He wanted to do so from four perspectives. To see and know and understand our Blessed Savior we need all the beauty of four exposures in His four evangelists.

Why Four? Because God has inspired the perfect Book the Bible. Have you ever felt the wonder of God's Word in all its supernatural engineering? Everything about the Revelation of God's Word points at Jesus.

1. The **FOUR COLORS** of the Tabernacle,
2. The **FOUR FACES** of the Cherubim,
3. The **FOUR PROMISES** of the Coming Branch, and
4. The **FOUR THEMES** of the Gospels all point to Christ's Incarnation as God in Human Flesh!

## JESUS IN THE FOUR COLORS OF THE TABERNACLE

What were the colors that God chose for the Tabernacle in Exodus 25-40? There were FOUR!

1. **PURPLE** looks forward to Matthew, because Purple is the color of royalty, and Matthew presents Jesus as God coming as the perfect King of the Jews.
2. **SCARLET** looks forward to Mark, because Scarlet is the color of blood which is the color of sacrifice which is the ultimate expression of servant hood and Mark presents Jesus as God coming as the perfect sacrificial servant;
3. **WHITE** looks forward to Luke, because White is the color of perfection, and Luke presents Jesus as God coming in the form of the Perfect man Christ Jesus;
4. **BLUE** looks forward to John, because Blue is the color of Heaven, and John presents Jesus as God the Son come down to Earth!

## JESUS IN THE FOUR FACES OF THE CHERUBIM

It appears from close study that these four-faced creatures represented the highest forms of created life:

- ✓ Man, mentioned first, faced forward; LUKE
- ✓ The lion was considered the king of the wild beasts; MATTHEW
- ✓ The ox was king of the domesticated animals; and MARK
- ✓ The eagle was ruler<sup>1</sup> of the sky. JOHN

The four creatures formed a perfect square. "Four-square" indicates perfect symmetry. No matter from which direction one observed the creatures, a different face was seen on all of them. All four faces were visible from any angle. The closest face would always be the human one; the face on the left would be the ox; the face on the right would be the lion; and the one in the rear would be the eagle.

"Thus were their faces: and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies." (Ezekiel 1:11)

The faces were later used as symbols for the four gospel writers—Matthew as a lion; Mark as an ox, Luke as a man, and John as an eagle.

## JESUS IN THE FOUR PROMISES OF THE COMING BRANCH

COMPLETION: To show how He fulfilled Old Testament prophecy, which had pictured Christ as King, Servant, Man and God. In this connection it is interesting to remember that our Old Testament Prophecies of Christ as "the Branch" correspond to the four Gospels:

1. Jeremiah 23:5 "Behold, [the] days are coming," says the LORD, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. (NKJV) Zechariah 9:9 "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He [is] just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey. (NKJV) **(This corresponds to Matthew.)**
2. Zechariah 3:8:"For, behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch." This corresponds to Mark. Isaiah 42:1 "Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One [in whom] My soul

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<sup>1</sup> John B. Taylor, Ezekiel, Tyndale OTC, p. 55.

delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. (NKJV).  
**(This corresponds to Mark.)**

3. Zechariah 6:12:"Behold the man, whose name is the Branch." **(This corresponds to Luke.)**
4. Jeremiah 23:6 "And this is His name whereby He (the Branch) shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness." This corresponds to John. Isaiah 40:9:"Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold, your God! **(This corresponds to John.)**

## JESUS IN THE FOUR THEMES OF THE EVANGELISTS

The Gospels record Christ's ministry to the four groups of people then and now in the world.

- ⇒ MATTHEW speaks to the Jews and the deeply religious of our day. The Jews who loved the Scriptures and the prophecies of God. They would only listen to one of their own.
- ⇒ MARK spoke to the Romans. These were the leaders and leadership and action impressed them. They knew nothing of Scriptures but everything of power. So to this group comes the action packed Gospel of the powerful ministry of Christ. Mark uses the word "and" 1,375 times to tie together the endless actions of Christ. Like our modern successful businessman and woman, they want a God who can powerfully meet their deepest needs.
- ⇒ LUKE was a Greek speaking to the Greeks. The Greeks loved culture, beauty and ideas. Happiness could be found in the pursuit of truth. Luke fills his book with insights, interviews, songs and details that fascinate the inquiring mind. So today the truth seekers find Jesus in Luke!
- ⇒ JOHN wrote to everyone, because everyone needs to meet God and only Jesus can reveal Him. In this book we meet an absolutely powerful God in human flesh who controls and rules the Universe He created. So the best-known verse is the best of all offer that God loves all and offers all -- His Son as their only hope!

The four Gospels<sup>2</sup> deal with the earthly life of the Saviour, but each one presents Him in an entirely different character. Special emphasis rests upon that to which all four Gospels bear a united testimony. In all alike is revealed the one unique Personality. The one Jesus is King in Matthew, Servant in Mark, Man in Luke, and God in John. The pen is a different pen; the incidents in which He is seen are different incidents; but He is always the same Christ. Matthew portrays the Lord Jesus as the Son of David, the Heir to Israel's throne, the King of the Jews and everything in his Gospel contributes to this central theme. In Mark, Christ is seen as the Servant of Jehovah the perfect Workman of God; and everything in this second Gospel brings out the characteristics of His service and the manner in which He served. Luke treats of the humanity of the Saviour, and presents Him as the perfect Man, contrasting Him from the sinful sons of men. The fourth Gospel views Him as the Heavenly One come down to earth, the eternal Son of the Father made flesh and tabernacling among men, and from start to finish this is the one dominant truth which is steadily held in view.

Each book of the Bible has a prominent and dominant theme, which is peculiar to it. Just as each member in the human body has its own particular function, so every book in the Bible has its own special purpose and mission. The theme of John's Gospel is the *Deity of the Saviour*, Here, as nowhere else in Scripture so fully, the Godhood of Christ is presented to our view. That which is outstanding in this fourth Gospel is the Divine Sonship of the Lord Jesus. In this Book we are shown that the One who was heralded by the angels to the Bethlehem shepherds, who walked this earth for thirty-three years, who was crucified at Calvary, who rose in triumph from the grave,

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<sup>2</sup> Arthur W. Pink, *Exposition of the Gospel of John*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House: 1945, pgs 7-9.

and whom forty days later departed from these scenes, was none other than the Lord of Glory. The evidence for this is overwhelming; the proofs almost without number, and the effect of contemplating them must be to bow our hearts in worship before "the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ (*Titus 2:13*).

For the Gospels are woven of Old Testament quotation, allusion, and type. The very first verse of the New Testament drives the thoughtful reader back to the Old; and the risen Christ sent His disciples to the ancient oracles for an explanation of His sufferings and glory (Lk. 24, 27, 44, 45). One of His last ministries was the opening of their understandings to understand the Old Testament. The Gospels present Christ in His three offices of Prophet, Priest, and King.

It is interesting to realize that the Gospel offer was made in the book of Acts in the same order in which the Gospels are now arranged: First to the Jews, then to the Romans and then to the Greeks, and thus to the entire world!

## JOHN EXPLAINS JESUS BY THE SEVEN TITLES IN CHAPTER ONE

What are the seven titles, and their significance as recorded in John chapter one? Jesus is recorded as being: **The Word (John 1:1–3, 14)**, **The Light (John 1:4–13)**, **God the Son (John 1:15–28, 49)**, **God the Lamb (John 1:29–34)**, **The Messiah (John 1:35–42)**, **The King (John 1:43–49)**, and **the Son of Man (John 1:50–51)** or the "living link" between heaven and earth. Christ is God's "ladder" between heaven and earth. "No man cometh to the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6). The Jewish people knew that "Son of man" was a name for their Messiah (John 12:34). By this seven-titled "calling card" Jesus reveals to them and to us that God is here!

In a gospel written to the whole world, John presents us with the Divine Jesus. He is the Son of God - his Divinity -- the Divine nature of God is very clearly seen. We have already seen John's incredible introduction of Jesus as the Word, the Dwelling Presence and the Glory of God. John reveals Jesus as God's unique ("only begotten," KJV) Son, and refers to God as His Father more than any other book of the Bible. The Old Testament refers to God as Father only 12 times, John 120 times! But there is one major theme that runs throughout John's Gospel: Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and if you commit yourself to Him, He will give you eternal life (John 20:31). In this first chapter, John recorded<sup>3</sup> seven names and titles of Jesus that identify Him as eternal God.

1. **The Word (John 1:1–3, 14):** Much as our words reveal to others our hearts and minds, so Jesus Christ is God's "Word" to reveal His heart and mind to us. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). A word is composed of letters, and Jesus Christ is "Alpha and Omega" (Rev. 1:11), the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. According to Hebrews 1:1–3, Jesus Christ is God's *last* Word to mankind, for He is the climax of divine revelation. As we see ***Jesus Christ is the eternal Word (vv. 1–2)***. He existed in the beginning, not because He had a beginning as a creature, but because He is eternal. He *is* God and He was *with* God. "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). And ***Jesus Christ is the incarnate Word (v. 14)***. He was not a phantom or a spirit when He ministered on earth, nor was His body a mere illusion. John and the other disciples each had a personal experience that convinced them of the reality of the body of Jesus (1 John 1:1–2). In his Gospel, John points out that Jesus was weary (John 4:6) and thirsty (John 4:7). He groaned within (John 11:33) and openly wept (John 11:35). On the cross, He thirsted (John 19:28), died (John 19:30), and bled (John 19:34). After

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<sup>3</sup> Drawn from comments written by Wiersbe, Warren W., *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books) 1997.

His resurrection, He proved to Thomas and the other disciples that He still had a real body (John 20:24–29), howbeit, a glorified body.

2. **The Light (John 1:4–13):** *Life* is a key theme in John’s Gospel; it is used thirty-six times. What are the essentials for human life? There are at least four: light (if the sun went out, everything would die), air, water, and food. Jesus is all of these! He is the **Light of life and the Light of the world** (John 8:12). He is the **“Sun of righteousness”** (Mal. 4:2). By His Holy Spirit, He gives us the **“breath of life”** (John 3:8; 20:22), as well as the Water of life (John 4:10, 13–14; 7:37–39). Finally, Jesus is the **Living Bread of Life** that came down from heaven (John 6:35ff). He not only has life and gives life, but He *is* life (John 14:6). John 1:12–13 gives us the marvelous promise of God that anyone who receives Christ will be born again and enter the family of God! John says more about this new birth in John 3, but he points out here that it is a spiritual birth from God, not a physical birth that depends on human nature. The Light is still shining! Have you *personally* received the Light and become a child of God?
3. **The Son of God (John 1:15–28, 49):** John the Baptist is one of the most important persons in the New Testament. He is mentioned at least eighty-nine times. John had the special privilege of introducing Jesus to the nation of Israel. He also had the difficult task of preparing the nation to receive their Messiah. He called them to repent of their sins and to prove that repentance by being baptized and then living changed lives. John summarized what John the Baptist had to say about Jesus Christ (John 1:15–18). First, *He is eternal* (John 1:15). John the Baptist was actually born six months before Jesus (Luke 1:36); so in this statement he is referring to our Lord’s preexistence, not His birth date. Jesus existed before John the Baptist was ever conceived. Jesus Christ has *fullness of grace and truth* (John 1:16–17). Finally, *Jesus Christ reveals God to us* (John 1:18). The word *Son* is used for the first time in John’s Gospel as a title for Jesus Christ (John 1:18). The phrase “only-begotten” means “unique, the only one of its kind.” It does not suggest that there was a time when the Son was not, and then the Father brought Him into being. Jesus Christ is eternal God; He has always existed. At least nine times in John’s Gospel, Jesus is called “the Son of God” (John 1:34, 49; 3:18; 5:25; 10:36; 11:4, 27; 19:7; 20:31). You will recall that John had as his purpose in writing to convince us that Jesus is the Son of God (John 20:31). At least nineteen times, Jesus is referred to as “the Son.” He is not only the Son of God, but He is God the Son. Even the demons admitted this (Mark 3:11; Luke 4:41). John the Baptist is one of six persons named in the Gospel of John who gave witness that Jesus is God. The others are Nathaniel (John 1:49), Peter (John 6:69), the blind man who was healed (John 9:35–38), Martha (John 11:27), and Thomas (John 20:28). If you add our Lord Himself (John 5:25; 10:36), then you have seven clear witnesses.
4. **Lamb of God (John 1:29–34)** This is the second day of the week that the Apostle John recorded, and no doubt some of the same committee members were present to hear John the Baptist’s message. This time, he called Jesus “the Lamb of God,” a title he would repeat the next day (John 1:35–36). In one sense, the message of the Bible can be summed up in this title. The question in the Old Testament is, “Where is the lamb?” (Gen. 22:7) In the four Gospels, the emphasis is “Behold the Lamb of God!” Here He is! After you have trusted Him, you sing with the heavenly choir, “Worthy is the Lamb!” (Rev. 5:12) The people of Israel were familiar with lambs for the sacrifices. At Passover, each family had to have a lamb; and during the year, two lambs a day were sacrificed at the temple altar, plus all the other lambs brought for personal sacrifices. Men brought those lambs to men, but here is God’s Lamb, given by God to men! Those lambs could not take away sin, but the Lamb of God can take away sin. Those lambs were for Israel alone, but this Lamb would shed His blood for the whole world!
5. **The Messiah (John 1:35–42):** “We have found the Messiah!” was the witness Andrew gave to Simon. *Messiah* is a Hebrew word that means “anointed,” and the Greek equivalent is “Christ.” To the Jews, it was the same as “Son of God” (see Matt. 26:63–64; Mark 14:61–62; Luke

22:67–70). In the Old Testament, prophets, priests, and kings were anointed and thereby set apart for special service. Kings were especially called “God’s anointed” (1 Sam. 26:11; Ps. 89:20); so, when the Jews spoke about their Messiah, they were thinking of the king who would come to deliver them and establish the kingdom. There was some confusion among the Jewish teachers as to what the Messiah would do. Some saw Him as a suffering sacrifice (as in Isa. 53), while others saw a splendid king (as in Isa. 9 and 11). Jesus had to explain even to His own followers that the cross had to come before the crown, that He must suffer before He could enter into His glory (Luke 24:13–35). Whether or not Jesus was indeed the Messiah was a crucial problem that challenged the Jews in that day (John 7:26, 40–44; 9:22; 10:24).

6. **The King of Israel (John 1:43–49):** “King of Israel” would be a title similar to “Messiah, anointed One,” for the kings were always God’s anointed (see Ps. 2, especially vv. 2, 6–7). At one point in His ministry, the crowds wanted to make Jesus King, but He refused them (John 6:15ff). He did present Himself as King (John 12:10ff), and He affirmed to Pilate that He was born a King (John 18:33–37).
7. **The Son of Man (John 1:50–51):** “Son of man” was one of our Lord’s favorite titles for Himself; it is used eighty-three times in the Gospels and at least thirteen times in John. The title speaks of both the deity and humanity of Jesus. The vision in Daniel 7:13 presents the “Son of man” in a definite messianic setting; and Jesus used the title in the same way (Matt. 26:64). As Son of man, Jesus is the “living link” between heaven and earth. Christ is God’s “ladder” between heaven and earth. “No man cometh to the Father, but by Me” (John 14:6). Often in this Gospel, you will find Jesus reminding people that He came down from heaven. The Jewish people knew that “Son of man” was a name for their Messiah (John 12:34). God is here!