

The Beginning - John 1:1-3

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[0 : 0 0] Hey guys, thanks for listening to our Calvary Chapel Charlotte podcast.! I will walk by faith and not by sight.

Well, good morning and exciting new beginnings, a new month, and a new book. How exciting. Praise God. And a new you, because if any man be in Christ, he's a new creation, right?

Alright, you can turn your Bibles to John chapter 1. We're starting a new book today, the book of John. Kind of. I mean, I can't let Exodus go. Sorry. I know you're like, move on.

But it just, it seems like Exodus has been so good to us. Couldn't just leave it on the last verse of chapter 40 and just walk away. So we're going to be in the first three verses of John, and then we're going to kind of end glancing back at Exodus as we look forward, right?

It's very applicable that John starts out in the beginning, and yet we are beginning a new book on a new month in a new year. So we want to see what God has to say to us in that.

[1 : 4 2] John is loaded with so much good stuff, but we're going to just jump into these three verses this week. Next week, we'll kind of look at what's John's purpose in writing the book and more of an overview of what we're going to get into as we get into John.

But kind of just looking at these first three verses and looking at where we're at in this life, in our life right now, and a New Year's message and just seeing what he has to say.

But John loads up the book with a whole lot of theology in the beginning, a whole lot of theology. And I have Webster's 1828 Dictionary, which if you use a dictionary, it's the only one to use.

It says, theology is God and discourse. Love that. God and discourse. That's what theology is. It's just the discussion of God. And John is very, very faithful to give us a great introduction and a great jump into his book.

So last week, if you remember, we finished Exodus chapter 40, finishing the book of Exodus. We saw that God, as he finished his work, as he brought together this whole picture with the tabernacle, that God is present.

[2 : 5 8] God wanted to be present where God was at work. The whole purpose, the whole point of God's work was for the presence of God. It wasn't just so he could keep his busy people busy. It wasn't so he could have something really cool on this earth for people to look at.

It wasn't because God was bored and he wanted a hobby. God is present where God is at work. Where God works is where his presence is, right? We don't come here because it's a really neat, neat place.

And I guess if you like old, interesting metal buildings built in the 50s or 60s, then come on out. But we're here because we know that God is here. And how do we know God's here?

Because God is at work. Because God is at work. Where two or three are gathered, he is there. God, we see, is present. As we ended the book of Exodus, it said that his presence was there, what?

In a visible sign of the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. And it said that all in the camp could see it. And then when that pillar of cloud by day moved, which I thought was interesting, it said the cloud moved.

[3 : 59] So God didn't get him up in the middle of the night to move. But then they would move with it. So God was present at all times for all and to guide them. His presence was the guiding force in the life of his people.

Where God's presence went, the people went. And I hope that's the guiding force in your life. I hope the reason that you're here today and wherever you're at in your life is because God's presence is the guiding force. Because you recognize God is leading me and I want to follow that.

But we have participation. Our participation and obedience in the work of God is so that we can dwell with God. We must participate. Because God's work is going forward at all times.

Like he wasn't just waiting for us. He's not like, oh, finally, 2026. Now we can get things on. No, God's work has been taking place with or without us. We are just blessed.

Thank you, Jesus, that he has not returned. That I came into existence. That you and I, that we're all here. We can enter into that work. We saw how that work points to who?

[5 : 01] It points to Jesus. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Because Moses, as much as he desired God's presence, show me your glory. When the glory filled the tabernacle, Moses couldn't go in.

Moses had to stay out. But with Jesus, Jesus invites us in. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Grace and truth are at the heart of all that God does. It's at the heart of all of his work.

So it seemed very applicable to follow the Lord's leading, to follow the guidance of his presence and say, you know what? We spent all this time looking at his work that points to Jesus in Exodus.

Let's now jump to John and look at Jesus, the work that he is doing. To see in the beginning, all that God has that he wants to start in our life.

But that beginning is something that he's always been a part of, as we're going to see today. So beginnings. Beginnings are interesting. Beginnings are inescapable and unavoidable.

[6 : 01] Has anybody here not had a beginning? No. We've all had beginnings. You can't escape them. They're unavoidable. Some of us like beginnings better than others, right?

Some of us like new things and new beginnings more. I like new things once I've done them once. You know, I like to go into it like, yeah, I know what I'm doing. If I'm going to do something new, I'm probably going to research it to the max so I can go into it and not being completely clueless.

Other people are like, you know what? I just like the freshness, the newness. We'll just figure it out as we go. All right? All created things have a beginning. Anything that has been created has a beginning.

Just some characteristics of beginnings. Beginnings are new. They come first. Beginnings are unavoidable, as we said.

And they happen continually. Everything we experience is essentially a beginning. You know? You roll over. You look at the person next to you. It's a new beginning. It's brand new.

[7 : 03] You think, well, no, I've been with that person a long time. That's an old. No, that's new. That's a new beginning. Everything we experience is new. Essentially. Beginnings do not always have an ending.

They do not necessarily always lead to an ending. Many beginnings have an ending. But not all beginnings do. But all beginnings, by definition, have origination.

We're going to get into some thoughts here. So stick with me here. But all beginnings have to have origination. For us, there is nothing in our experience that does not have a beginning.

Nothing in our experience has not had a beginning. You say, well, God didn't have a beginning. True. But our experience of God did. Our conscious experience of God entering into that experience with us had a beginning.

Everything we've experienced had beginning. Had origin. Had origination. But that something that began is by necessity predated by something that exists before it.

[8 : 05] Can you think of anything that began that did not have something existing before it? No. You see, that's the problem when we remove God from beginnings.

We say, well, no. All of this came about by chance. By a big something that came from nothing. But we know that's not possible. All beginnings.

Every beginning had something before it. That's the definition of beginning. Something that derived at a beginning because there was some place for it to start. There's something that existed. When you remove God, what happens?

Well, we came from nothing. Where did the nothing come from that created the something? Well, we'll just keep pushing that back and back and back. And we just won't worry about that. But what we know is, man, if there is beginning, that means there must be an origin.

There must be something that existed before the beginning. Nothing can start from nothing. There must be something to begin with if there's to be a beginning.

[9 : 05] And Genesis 1-1 gives us that. In the beginning, God. In the beginning, God. And what did God do in the beginning? He originated.

He created. He started. So that means there's a difference between beginning and existence. Do you and I exist? Does anybody not exist here?

Just checking. Okay. The church down the street. We all exist. But we've also all had beginning. Right? But God exists. And yet he did not have beginning.

So that which exists, you and I, we had beginning. But it doesn't necessarily mean there's a beginning just because there's existence. But when something begins, when there's a start, that does mean there has to be prior existence.

You cannot have beginning. You cannot have something start without something there to start it. God had no start. God exists. God is the start, the beginning of all things.

[10 : 09] So as we jump into John chapter 1 here. John starts out very much like Genesis 1-1. He says, in the beginning was the Word.

And the Word was with God. And the Word was God. So the first thing John starts with, the first thing he begins with is beginning. He's starting this book. And like I said, next week we're going to look at the reason for John's writing.

We're going to look at the structure and why does he write it the way he does. But the first thing he says is, in the beginning was the Word. God himself has no beginning.

Because he is in the beginning. If something exists at the beginning, then it existed prior to the beginning. In Hebrews chapter 7, the writer of Hebrews is referencing Melchizedek.

You all remember Melchizedek? After Abraham went and defeated the five kings that came together. And they had defeated the whole region. Sodom and Gomorrah included. And taken Lot, his nephew.

[11 : 10] Abraham takes his servants. And God gives him victory. They defeat them all. And then as he's coming back from the victory of the kings. This priest, this man, Melchizedek comes.

And it says that he blesses him. And it says this about him. These characteristics regarding this Melchizedek. It says, For this Melchizedek, without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abides a priest continually.

We would call this a Christophany. Christophany just means a pre-incarnate appearing of Christ as a man before he came in the New Testament as Jesus.

But it is the word. Here we have the word that pre-existed, that John is talking about. In the beginning was the word. Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days.

God himself has no beginning. But God himself is the beginning. Why? Because God pre-exists all beginning. Which means by definition then, that beginning originates in God.

[12 : 20] If God pre-exists all beginning, then the origin of all beginning is God. There's no beginning outside of God. There's nothing that ever has been or will be that is outside of God, because God is before all that.

Colossians 1.17, And he is before all things. And by him, all things have beginning, consist. There is, in fact, no beginning where God is not.

There's no beginning you or I will ever experience where God is not. There is nothing that will ever come into our experience or our existence that God has not already been there.

God exists in all beginnings. In Acts 17, verse 24, we read, God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, he dwells not in temples made with hands.

The creation cannot contain the creator. Remember, that's why we said that AI will never actually overtake the world. It may get smarter than us and that it can process things faster, but it can't unplug us and we can't unplug it, right?

[13 : 32] We can't unplug God, but he can't unplug us. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing he is Lord of heaven and earth, he doesn't dwell in temples made with hands. You're not going to contain him. For in him, we're contained.

In him, we live and move and have our being. That's why all of our beginnings and all of our experience are in God. There is no beginning that God is not part of. So, well, maybe God was at the beginning of creation.

Maybe God was at the beginning of my walk with him, my salvation. Maybe God, but you know where I'm at now? Do you know the stupid turn I took and what I've started in my life?

And now I'm stuck. And God was in that beginning too. For in him, we live, we move, and we have our being in him.

What is John seeking to do here then? John, I believe, by starting this book the way he does, he's seeking to establish in our minds the truth that the word, the word that was made flesh, John 1.14, and dwelt among us did not begin at the birth of Jesus.

[14 : 37] Jesus didn't begin with Jesus incarnate. John is telling us, look, we're going to spend 21 chapters with this man who lived among us, who lived with people, and grew up and was born and eventually died and then rose again.

And the temptation is to think, well, Jesus is here. This is where Jesus started. No, John is saying, no. The word that was made flesh and dwelt among us, it didn't begin at the birth of Jesus.

It pre-exists that. Through the earthly life of Jesus, we see that the word, the word that always and already existed, it was beginning something new to our experience, not to God.

This word, it already existed, and it always existed. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. Well, in the earthly life of Jesus, we're seeing something new in our experience with God, but it's not new in that God is not new.

He predates that. He pre-exists that. In Revelation 13, as we've been going through the book of Revelation, we get to a point where the people of the earth have so rejected God.

[15 : 54] Those that are left on this earth that have rejected him, the church has taken out and is preparing for what we're going to see in Revelation 19, the marriage feast of the lamb, is in their seven years, representing the seven days of the consummation in the wedding.

And those that are left, they've so hardened their hearts to this point that all they do is just blaspheme against God. And it says in Revelation 13, eight, that all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, the instead of Christ, the antichrist, the beast.

All of those, they will worship him, the ones whose names are not written in the book of life of the lamb. Those whose names aren't written in there haven't put their faith in Christ. And it tells us this about the lamb.

The book of life of the lamb, slain from the foundation of the world. So Jesus, coming to this earth to bear our sins and die in our stead, that's not something new.

That pre-existed. Jesus' incarnation. That was from the foundation of the world. That was already, before anything was ever originated, before there was creation and God's heart was redemption, mercy, sacrifice for you and for me.

[17 : 05] That is who God is before he ever created us. His heart is redemption and mercy, sacrifice and grace and forgiveness. He didn't get to this point and go, you know what?

Exodus didn't work out so well. I brought him out of Egypt and I mean, I forgave him for the golden calf and then we got into the promised land and they just wouldn't follow me. You know what? We're going to try something new. We're going to do this whole sacrificial lamb thing.

You know, that was from the foundation of the world. So when we see in Exodus chapter 12 and they put the blood on the door of the lamb and then we see in John where Jesus, the lamb of God, all that is is the full expression of God entering into our experience.

We're seeing the truth of who God is displayed for us. It's not like two separate things. The idea of Jesus, the preexisting word, the one who existed before the beginning, it's not new to God, him being the lamb of God.

And so as we look at the lamb of God in John, this isn't a new concept. And I think John is trying to show us that. He's saying, listen, we're going to look at Jesus, but Jesus isn't the start of Jesus in a sense.

[18 : 15] Jesus on this earth existed before anything originated. Who we're going to see God to be in Jesus was before anything was created. So all things begin with a word and all things end with a word.

In the beginning, God, and what did he do? He spoke and God said, in the beginning was the word and all things end with a word as well.

Revelation 22, 13, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. And what's Alpha and Omega? It's A to Z. It's the beginning and end letter of the Greek alphabet.

The beginning and end of every word. All things begin with the word and all things end with the word. In the beginning was the word. He preexisted this experience of God on the earth.

He preexisted what we just looked at in Exodus of God among his people. He preexisted all of that and he will be after all of that. That was just verse 1.

[19 : 20] Now we'll go to verse 2. The same was in the beginning. John, you just wrote that, buddy. You just said in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God and the same was in the beginning with God.

You just said he was with God. Well, the same in the Greek means this one, this particular one. This particular one was in the beginning. This particular one, Jesus, was in the beginning.

This word. In the beginning was the word. The word was with God and the word was God. In the beginning meaning that what? Then he's before all beginning. If he's there at the beginning. How many of you moms were at the birth of your children?

Probably all of you. Right? That means you predated them. Right? You were there. If you were at the beginning, it means you were there before the beginning.

In the beginning of all things was the word, meaning he was before the beginning. The word was with God. He was with God at the beginning and he was God in the beginning.

[20 : 21] It was not something that happened later. Well, you know what? I need this plan so we're gonna make Jesus God. No, no. He was God already in the beginning. The word was God. The word is with God at the beginning.

He's in God or he's in the beginning as God and he is before all beginnings. If you want, you can turn to Proverbs chapter 8. If not, I'll just read it. Proverbs 8, 22-31.

We get a picture of wisdom and again, wisdom now is being shown to us as the word. The word that predated this experience of God for us is being presented as wisdom.

So Proverbs 8, 22, wisdom is speaking as the word and saying, the Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way before his works of old I was set up from everlasting from the beginning wherever the earth was.

Saying, guys, I was there. I was there in the beginning. In fact, I was from everlasting. I had no beginning. When there were no depths I was brought forth.

[21 : 29] When there were no fountains abounding with water before the mountains were settled before the hills was I brought forth. Praise God. Before the depths of any of my despair. Before my need to have a fountain of living water well up inside of me.

Before any of the mountains that I've faced. Because, hey, I was there. I was there. Before the mountains were settled. Before the hills were brought forth. I was brought forth. Well, as yet, he had not made the earth nor the fields nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

And what are we made of? Dust. We're about the highest part of the dust of the world. The highest of his creation. When he prepared the heavens I was there.

When he set a compass upon the face of the deep. When he established the clouds above. When he strengthened the fountains of the deep. We don't even know what all that is, guys.

We have not yet plumbed the depths or the height of that. When he gave to the sea his decree that the water should not pass his commandment. When he appointed the foundations of the earth then I was by him.

[22 : 42] I was there. God the word was before the beginning at the beginning and in the beginning. Jesus in John chapter 8 has been speaking to the Jews and they're kind of struggling with this idea this young rabbi telling them what to do and Jesus turns to them and says your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day and you call yourself sons of Abraham.

You call yourself the children of Abraham. Your father rejoiced to see my day and he saw it and was glad and then said the Jews unto him wait a minute you aren't even 50 years old buddy and you've seen Abraham and Jesus said unto them truly truly I say unto you before Abraham was Exodus at the burning bush I am Lord who shall I say sent me the word the word sent you Moses I am anyone says well Jesus never declared to be himself God in the scripture well they err because they don't know their Bible nor the power of God right here Jesus said I am then took they up stones to cast at him but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple going through the midst of them and so passed by why because you're not going to contain and control the word he had his timeline and he had his plan and those who want to be a part of it they're going to be part of it those who don't they're not going to stop it the word you know we've used the word the word quite a bit well what does that mean the word the word something that's spoken something that's written well in the

Greek the word is logos logos it means a word but specifically a word uttered by a living voice it is the embodiment of a concept or idea the word something that's spoken by a living voice that embodies every concept or idea of that logos so what we call the word God himself declaring himself to be the logos the word is the means by which God a living God proclaims and embodies all concept and idea of who he is Jesus proclaims to us a living God Jesus embodies all concept and idea of who he is of who that God is Jesus is the logos the word made flesh there is no other that will embody the living God and no other who can give us all of the concepts and ideas of who God is outside of Christ you're not going to find it

Colossians 2 9 says for in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily him alone Jesus is the word that exists without beginning made flesh Jesus is the embodiment of the word that exists without beginning from ages past made flesh man you understand now who this Jesus is you think of this Jesus who walked the hills of Galilee the word that preexisted with no beginning coming as a man to walk the hills of his creation with a bunch of numbskulls showing them what guys before you ever were my heart was love and grace and forgiveness and redemption and sacrifice and if you didn't get it from creation and if you didn't get it from the prophets and if you didn't get it from exodus well I'm going to come and I'm going to show you myself Jesus is the word that exists without beginning made flesh and the word was made flesh

John 1 14 and dwelt among us so Jesus is the one and only embodiment of a pre-existing living God proclaiming in human flesh all conception and idea of who that God is Jesus did have a beginning as flesh didn't he that's what the gospels are but he had no beginning as the word Jesus has no beginning as the word though he has beginning as flesh and that my friends is the difference between what the bible proclaims Jesus to be and what religions of this world proclaim him to be the religions of the world will say yeah Jesus had a beginning as flesh sure sure we say that the bible says that God says he had no beginning as the word he has no beginning because he is God from ages past to ages future world says well we can't quite accept that we can't even accept that there's beginning we we can't say we can't accept that one who predates beginning came and dwelt among us do you understand then the responsibility that would mean that we have to this man and then to realize we crucified him we didn't just reject him and we didn't just despise him and we didn't just kill him we crucified him that is the difference between what the bible proclaims

[27 : 57] Jesus to be and what religion proclaims him to be Jesus is the word that exists without beginning made flesh the bible is the word that exists without beginning made text we don't have Jesus his body as the disciples did but is the work of his body still present isn't it look around there it is it's the work of his body the work of his spirit is still present because he sent the spirit and the work of his word is still present because though he is not audibly speaking it he wrote it down for us the bible is the word that exists without beginning the words in here the concepts the ideas of who Jesus is the logos the embodiment or concept of idea of this living voice preexisted us and preexisted this kind of makes you want to understand it and read it doesn't it kind of makes you want to wonder what's in there if this was here before creation this existed before there was origination and then god would bring this into our experience and say here it is guys here's the word made text the word that was in the beginning with

God was God the bible is the one and only embodiment! of a living God proclaiming in written form all conception and idea of who God is it's the only book that proclaims in written form all conception of who God is you're not going to find it anywhere else you're not going to read it anywhere else there are many good books to read that talk about this but they cannot replace it and at any time if they contradict it it's out just as we've been reading revelation there will come one who the Bible had beginning as the written word but it had no beginning as the pre-existing word and all things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made saw that again Colossians 1:17 he's before all things and by him all things consist

All things were made by him the word made in the Greek is interesting it means to become that which was not that which is all things became by him all things that were not they did become by him and without him was not anything meaning the whole the whole of anything that ever became it became because of him not anything became that had become apart from him the word is the cause to all that became after it it is the beginning it is the cause we are the result we're the effect the whole of all things that began they originate with the word that did not begin everything that began everything that there is originated with the word but the word did not begin so wait a minute wait a minute there's sin there's death there's sorrow there's sickness there's suffering there's rebellion there's bitterness there's hatred in this world that originated in

God there's nothing that is not outside of him God did not cause man to sin but God created a man that yes could sin and who he knew would sin why because there's a part of God that cannot be known apart from suffering if God created us without suffering there would be a part of who he is in eternity past the lamb slain from before the foundation of the world the God who said I will go to whatever length it takes to give my own self for you and not just one that loves me cares for me I would give myself for one who hates me and despises me and kills me well that means there has to be people who hate him and despise him and kill him and until that happens we don't really know the depth and love of God it's not because he wants us to suffer because he wants us to know him and the depths of who he is and what does he do?

give us suffering for eternity as his children no he says guys it's but a vapor it's but a little moment this lifetime and then you're with me and there's no more suffering and then you get to reap the fruit of that wonderful harvest that I worked during those years the word is the cause to all that became and yet however like the word like like its creation the word also chose to become the word that had no origin chose to enter into life with its creation and to become John 1:14 and the word was made the same word became flesh became something that was not becoming what if something new God would become a man God would take upon flesh that he would become man you see the word always existed!

[33 : 04] nobody until the gospel of John essentially until the gospels experienced this that God would enter in and become something he became for us something so much more than just a man 1 Corinthians 1:30 but of him are you in Christ Jesus who of God is become unto us is made unto us wisdom!

righteousness sanctification and redemption that fits that definition great! Become that which was not becoming that which is I was not wisdom righteousness sanctification and redemption but Christ became something I could not be for me so that I might now be that in 2 Corinthians chapter 5 we see these words again a little different we see the word made appear twice but they have two different meanings the first for he has made him to be sin for us Jesus became sin the word there means fashion or form in other words the reason God fashioned and formed himself as a man was to take upon himself my sin not that he turned into sin but he fashioned and formed himself as a man to take upon himself my sin who knew no sin that he might be made that's that word become that we might be made that which was not becoming that which is the righteousness of God we were not the righteousness of God but because he became our sin he turns around and says hey now

I'm going to create something new again I'm going to create something new that you could never be apart from me so the word the word that is in all beginnings is also the originator of all that we become he starts it he completes it 1 John 3 2 beloved now are we the sons of God and it does not yet appear all that we shall become but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him we shall become like him for we shall see him as he is doesn't I don't know all that I'm going to become but it's already in God's heart because he is the originator whatever he started in me being confident of this very thing Philippians 1 6 that he which began has been a beginning of a work that you couldn't do on your own that God had to originate the word is the cause for all our results even these results

Romans 8 28 we know all things work together for good to them that love God and them who are called according to his purpose God can take all things even the things that you look at and you go this couldn't so much time into this this is where you wanted it he says oh I can bring a good result from that why because the word is outside of that the word is not in is the word is not experiencing beginnings the word is in every beginning the word is the cause for our results we can always trust the results of God's word no matter how difficult or impossible our situation we can trust that they result from the same God who originated this and who originated this and originated what's in here we can trust the results no matter how difficult or impossible the preexistent word is at every beginning already speaking with the voice of a living

God he's at every beginning he preexists every beginning the preexistent word is already speaking with a living voice the living word of God every beginning we enter into God's word is already there to speak a living voice by a living God into our situation no matter how dead it looks God's voice can speak life into it the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life beginnings in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God John what are you trying to tell us God is before all beginnings God is in all beginnings and all of our beginnings consist in God and we're going to look through this book and we're going to see Jesus at so many different points and we're going to want to continually come back and keep this in mind that everything Jesus experienced and everything Jesus went through as a man he pre-existed that as the word and now that

[37 : 53] God was the cause for all the results that followed God's word was the originator for all that his people became and God's word was the pre-existing voice already speaking into Israel's existence God's word originated it back in Exodus chapter three the Lord said was with what a word with his voice outside of this situation speaking into the situation saying surely I have seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt and I have heard their cry by reason of their task masters for I know their sorrows and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out bring them word speaking into their situation of bondage of suffering

God's word is what it was already there already there and already speaking and the Lord said I have surely seen this this is past tense for me guys I'm already ready for this and God's heart as we saw in Exodus was to bring his people on this journey to deliverance and God sent what a deliverer that deliverer came how according to God's word God sent a deliverer he saw his people needed a deliverer he prepared them for a deliverer he called a deliverer and then he sent that deliverer all according to God's word God's word brought deliverance but who did it bring deliverance for only those who needed it God's word will bring deliverance for all those who need it I don't need deliverance I'm good you of this life giving voice we see this voice the word that was from the beginning so I don't need that but wait you live and move and consist and have your being because of this there is nothing beyond this now you understand why

Jesus said you must be born again you see there must be a work that's done in our lives by the word so that we can exist with the word existence apart from the word is no existence in this life or in the one to come it is a continuation of the things that are supposed to end in this life the suffering the pain and the sorrow is to result in joy is to result in a harvest wherein dwells righteousness and new heavens and new earth but man if we reject that life giving voice that life giving word then God brought deliverance for those in need of a deliverer and then God sent that deliverer and he sent him right into the heart of the enemy and all of those plagues we looked at and all the frogs coming up and all that stuff was what because

God hated Egypt and he hated Pharaoh no because God's heart before creation ever was before Pharaoh ever rebelled against him God's heart was what one of long suffering and of grace and of love who did he spend most of his time on through that first part of Exodus Pharaoh got God's word the most got the most press time he got the most time with God Pharaoh Pharaoh Pharaoh and yet he knew he was going to reject him he said that doesn't matter it's not about who receives or rejects me it's about who I am and then we get to chapter 12 we see there that God's word brought deliverance by way of blood and by way of a lamb Exodus 12:3 speak unto all the congregation of Israel saying in the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb according to the house of their fathers a lamb for a house and they shall take of the blood and they shall strike on the two side post and on the upper door post of the!

wherein they shall eat it the word originated a place of safety for all those who would come under blood and who would enter the house in Exodus 12 it was the word that brought deliverance and those who would enter in and come under blood what did they take part in inside that house life of communion of fellowship and what were they prepared to do the whole time they in that house taking part of life fellowship and communion they were ready to go they were ready to go when the deliverer said let's go and Israel leaves Egypt they travel through the wilderness and they show up all of a sudden at the Red Sea and everyone's thinking vacation finally wonderful we're out of Egypt we're done with bondage here we are it's like a resort come on let's go and then we see what they felt set up the schemes of the enemy the enemy comes and he pushes them right up against the Red Sea and they have nowhere to go but little did they know that the schemes of the enemy they were simply a setup for

[43 : 11] God's deliverance that's all the enemy is doing in our lives the things that look like man look what Satan is doing we need to get beyond this view of this world and we need to see like the word sees and goes now wait a minute the word that preexisted all of this wonder how God's going to use this for deliverance God's word declared that deliverance was not just for the future it was not just something to be hope for eventually it was for today and it was for now and Moses said to the people fear not stand still and see the salvation of the Lord which he will show you today for the Egyptians whom you have seen today you shall see them again no more forever God's deliverance isn't for some future date it's for today why because God's word exists before today God's word is a voice that speaks deliverance in our lives that hasn't changed our situations don't change who God is well this one's really bad

Lord how are you going to do this he's like I created all of this to display my glory they go through the Red Sea and they think this is awesome the enemy is defeated there's no more pressure there's no more desperation we've made it surely it's good times now the enemy has been defeated I'm no longer in bondage praise God been born again I'm sure my life will be smooth sailing from now on because I'm one of the Lord I'm his child and they come to a source of water and what do they find that their source of life is contaminated yeah the enemy has been defeated but their source of life is still contaminated and when they came to Marah meaning bitter they could not drink of the waters of Marah for they were bitter therefore they called it Marah they murmured and said who shall give us drink and Moses cried to the Lord and the Lord answered and he showed him a tree and we had cast into the waters the tree the waters were made sweet and there he made for them a statute and an ordinance and there he proved them and

God introduced a tree according to his word and when the people obeyed God's word the bitter was made sweet once that tree was introduced everything changed and yet nothing changed so they threw the little branch in and it didn't look like the cross but that's the convenient but they threw the branch in and everything changed nothing changed right how do you know it changed drink it you drink it you first from all outward appearances nothing had changed everything was the same but you know it's the same for us when we do bring the cross into our experience and the bitter turn sweet but everything kind of looks the same God Colossians 2 13 to 14 and you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh has he quickened together with him having forgiven you all trespasses my relationships are still a mess and

I still feel guilt and shame but he has quickened you you were dead in your sins he has quickened you he's forgiven you he's blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against you it was contrary to you but he took it out of the way and he nailed it to the cross and he made those!

sweet and he brings! into the wilderness then of sin and sin doesn't mean sin like we think it does in our language but it fits perfectly because they sinned there and Israel all of a sudden has great need they're hungry they're thirsty and they allowed their present need to eclipse the memory of God's past deliverance he said oh it doesn't matter what he did in the past what about now yeah but a year the present need is eclipsing the memory of God's past faithfulness God's past deliverance is promise of future deliverance has God delivered you in the past then he will in the future because he is the same because he is outside of our existence and our experience the word preexisted every need and God's word was sufficient for every need it preexists all need and so it's sufficient for all needs to introduce strife into their relationship with

[47 : 43] God and that is what the waters of Meribah means strife where is provision found where did they find that provision well they found it when the Lord said to Moses Moses there's a rock over there and I'm going to stand there I'm going to stand there and you're going to come in my presence and you're going to strike that rock Jesus said your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead and the living bread which came down from heaven if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever and then in 1 Corinthians 10 it tells us they did all drink from that spiritual rock and the rock that followed them that rock was Christ it was God's presence he is the bread of life he is the!

water and they struck the rock in God's presence and the Lord's solution to their need the Lord's solution to their provision was what? Move forward in faith based on the word that was spoken can you do that?

Can you move forward in faith based on the word that was spoken when the situation looks the same but seek you first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you God I've been seeking first your kingdom and your righteousness I'm still waiting for the all things you know I'm still waiting for the add it seems like subtract right now Lord the Lord's solution to need is to press forward in faith based on his word and then the enemy attacks and the enemy will always attack after blessing and when we're at rest the enemy attacks and how do they defeat the enemy because of one who's on the mountain interceding and because of Joshua who leads them forward in victory guys it's the same way we defeat the enemy not because of our skill it's because there's one who intercedes and there's one that leads us forward in victory and they get to the mountain and Israel now finally they come to the mountain and they encounter the word of God at the mount of God and in the third month when the children of Israel had gone forth out of the land of Egypt the same day they came into the wilderness of Sinai and there

Israel understood that God was doing all that he was doing for the purpose of bringing them to himself wasn't just to make their life better it wasn't just to! All of this he said now I'm going to give you my word and when you receive my word then you will receive my presence deliverance comes by the word deliverance is maintained by the word God brings them into his work to bring him into his presence but God's work must be according to what his word his works according to his word and what happens Israel does what they fail Moses is on the mountain receiving the word and Israel does not obey according to the word and they fail and they make that golden calf you know that miraculous golden calf that Aaron threw in the fire and out it came you know what a business but

God's word then is what it speaks new beginning into their failure because Moses intercedes and God says I will forgive God's word is a word of grace and it speaks that word into our failures God's word of grace brings the people then into the work of God's grace as they are allowed to set up the tabernacle this beautiful picture of Jesus picture of God's grace that he will dwell among them by his presence and he will allow them to come and receive a covering and atonement because of the altar and he reared up the court round about the tabernacle and the!

[51 : 43] set God's unchanging work reflects an unchanging God who speaks an unchanging word and that looks a lot like who?

It looks a lot like Jesus Jesus our faithful high priest the unchanging word of God reflected in God's work and he brings us into it remarkably brings us into it it looks like Jesus who said in John 10 10 I am come that they might have life they might have it more abundantly looks like Jesus who Hebrews tells us in Hebrews 2 15 that he delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage he delivered us all our lifetimes were subject to bondage he delivered the Israelites out of Egypt all their lifetime subject to bondage as he brought them on this journey to deliverance and God's heart for us is the same as it was for Israel God's heart is deliverance how do you know that's true how do you know God's heart for you today is the same as what it was for Israel because it's declared by a word that preexisted

Israel's beginning and preexisted our beginning that's how we know it's true the word of God is the means by which a living God proclaims and embodies all conception idea of who he is that word spoke in Israel's day and speaking in our day the word is the preexisting voice that speaks into all the beginnings of his people for by him were all things created as we read that are in heaven that are in earth visible and invisible whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers all things were created by him and for him all things were created all of creation was what to display Jesus this is all to display Jesus and John is saying guys he then took all of that and contained it in a man in a man who lived and walked among us and died who doesn't want to know him the word exists apart from us but we do not exist apart from the word all things were created by him and for him and he before all things and by him all things consist we do not exist apart from the word that's why it's so heartbreaking to

God and us when people reject that word because you know they're rejecting what they're rejecting an existence from start to finish from alpha and omega from beginning and end the word remains unchanged and it remains unchanged in its word to us today at the beginning of a new year and of a new month and whatever new beginning God has that you're going to experience beginnings today everything's a beginning we can know that the alpha and omega speaks the same word to us and those are not thoughts that he's thinking towards you now because of your situation now those are thoughts that before you were ever originated before you were ever created those were the thoughts that he's thought towards you see now I'm going to create this person oh I have thoughts of peace not of evil

I'm going to give you a future and hope what he did not say is oh I'm that you're always hopeful about the future no no no but he said listen this is what's behind everything that's happening in your life every beginning you've experienced in every situation that originated in your life he says hey I know the thoughts that I think towards you listen Israel made a golden calf God brought a people out to make him a nation he's fulfilling his promise to Abraham and they set to give you a future and a hope that word speaks that unchanging truth in our beginnings today that word speaks that unchanging truth in the beginning of your year the beginning of your week beginning of your month that word speaks the same truth today we will never experience a beginning where God is not always there we can trust the results of

[56 : 25] God's word in our lives even when we can't see in the moment that it's having the effect we want it to we can trust God's word we can trust the results we can know that God's deliverance has been accomplished it's not something I'm hoping is going to happen or waiting to happen it's been accomplished slain before the foundation of the world in Revelation 21 when this world which had a beginning is being remade and there's a new beginning where we will get to be he that sits on the throne said behold I make all things new I'm going to give you a beginning of a heaven and earth where dwells righteousness and he said unto me unto John who wrote this book and he wrote the book Revelation he said right these words are true and they are faithful and he said unto me it's done it is done guys deliverance has been accomplished in your life God is just waiting for you to take part in it he's just waiting for you to throw in that branch into that bitter situation but it hasn't changed it's okay

God can make a sweet John 1 3 and all things became by him and without him nothing became that was become all things became by him all things were made by him without him was not anything made that was made what do you need God to become today for you what do you need God to become so that you might become it is not in question of who God is we looked at this last week as Abraham is taking Isaac to the mountain and Isaac says my father here am I I see the wood and I see the fire but where is the lamb for the sacrifice he said my son God will provide himself a lamb for the burnt offering so they go on together and then Isaac submits himself willingly to the father who binds him and lays him on the altar and Abraham raises the knife and he hears that voice the voice that was speaking from eternity past he says Abraham he said here am I he said don't lay your hand upon him for now

I know that you fear God because you did not withhold your son your only son was he just trying to make Abraham squirm a little and suffer no he said Abraham I want you to know the depth of my heart thickened by his horns and he went and he took the ram and he offered him up for a burnt offering instead of his son and Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah Jireh as it is said to this day in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen Jehovah means the existing one it means the becoming one the one who is was and is to come Jireh just means to be seen in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen what do you need to see God become for you today as you enter this new year what unchanging word do you need God to speak what new beginning do you need him to speak into an existence you speak into existence this deliverance you know like

Israel and Egypt we have impossible situations in our lives but God's power is displayed through our impossibilities and God brings us into impossibilities so he might deliver us from them we're never going to see Jericho fall if we're not standing there needing it to fall the sea is not going to part if Pharaoh is not behind us pressing us forward right I'm never going to receive redemption until I recognize I'm a sinner like Israel and Egypt we have impossible situations that we need God's word of deliverance but his word is already speaking God's power is displayed in our impossibilities and what do you need God to begin working deliverance in what thing have you said I not even bothered praying about that God I've given up on that because it's impossible

I've been in bondage for centuries in Egypt you can't deliver me remember guys the word is the means by which a living God proclaims and embodies all concept and idea of who he is the word is that means don't hold don't hold it at arm's length because you can't see how it's going to work bring it in we're just going to take a few minutes now I want to give you guys a few minutes what impossibility do you need God to begin working deliverance in we've just finished Exodus our journey to deliverance and we're about to go into John in the beginning it's a new beginning what is it that God needs to do in your life that you've given up on what blessing do you know he has for you but you've not yet seen it happen what bitter thing can only he make sweet father

[62 : 01] I pray that you would speak to each heart now Lord three short verses Lord but it was a lot because Lord the heavens of heavens cannot contain you you do not dwell in men's hands Lord you contain us and how silly to think that our lives are not contained by you how silly to think there's something that's outside of your existence because it's so difficult right now in our existence Lord forgive us Lord forgive us Lord for not bringing you into every impossible situation Lord your word has spoken it is speaking and it will speak it's now for us Lord to let it come and speak to us Lord I pray for my brothers and sisters that they would open their hearts and their ears and that Lord they would allow you to bring up those impossible things that maybe they buried down those hopes and dreams and fears that they expected just to carry to the grave with them that

Lord like Israel you would deliver that Lord like Israel we would allow! you to bring us you would allow us to bring you into this journey you know beginnings are inescapable but God's past faithfulness in all of our past beginnings is his promise of future faithfulness in all of our future beginnings Jesus is before all beginnings Jesus is in all beginnings and Jesus will be after all beginnings because he is the beginning my heart for you is as you enter this new year that and you see Jesus that's why we do this so we can see Jesus and now may the

Lord bless you and keep you the Lord make his face to shine! upon you be gracious unto you the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace God bless you enjoy some fellowship and your new beginnings