

Sermon June 3rd – John Chapter One
“The Magnificent Seven”

Share with the person beside you.

If you wanted to tell someone how much you loved them what would you say or do?

Put it on Facebook?

Get a plane to write it in the sky?

Hire a singing telegram?

In the book of first Kings and also in the book of Ezekiel we read that after Israel turned her back on God His glory departed from the temple.

In Jesus that glory returns to God’s people.

John tells us in the epistle of first John that Jesus is God’s glory.

He is the one they heard, they saw, and they touched when he came into the world.

Jesus is the word who existed from eternity and through whom all things exist.

He is the life who gives life to all things. He is the light which overcomes all darkness. In him the glory of God returns to dwell with humankind.

He is the concrete expression of God’s love for us.

Some reject him. Others accept him as the Messiah and become the children of God.

John the Baptist testifies that this same Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Through this Jesus a new way is opened for us to have access to the Father’s love, grace and mercy.

Both John’s would have us know that this one called Jesus IS the Christ.

He is the divine son of God who offers eternal life to all who believe in him.

The apostle John begins his gospel account in chapter one with seven names that he attributed to Jesus.

They are names that perfectly describe who Jesus is and what he came to do.

The first name he gives to Jesus is "The Word"

There was a time in the distant past when Jews did not speak Hebrew. Like Latin today Hebrew was a language known only to scholars.

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew and read in the synagogues in Hebrew. It was then translated into Aramaic for the congregation.

Like God's name the people believed God's actions to be too holy to be spoken of directly.

So when the Hebrew text said, for example, "God spoke to Moses" the translation read "The Word of the Lord came to Moses."

The Greeks also had a use for this creative power. They used the term Logos.

The Greek use of this term for "The Word" began in 560 BC, strangely enough in Ephesus, the place John lived after Jesus' resurrection.

A philosopher named Heraclitus taught that the world was controlled and ordered by a force he called The Logos or "The Word". The reason of God.

He taught that the word is the source that pervades everything and puts order into the world.

John tells us that Jesus is that Logos. He is the creative word, the incarnate word and the eternal word through whom all things were made and through whom everything is held together.

The second name he gives to Jesus is "The Light".

There are four essentials for human life: Light, Air, Water and food. John describes Jesus as all four.

In John 8:12 he is the Light.

In John 3:8, 20-22 he is the breath of life. In John 4: 10, 13-14 and 7: 37-39 he is the water of life.

In John 6:35 following he is the bread of life.

Just as the first creation began with “Let there be light”, the new creation begins with the entrance of light into the sinner’s heart to drive out the darkness.

Next John gospel refers to Jesus as “The Son of God” (John 1:15-28, 49)

John records what the Baptist had to say about Jesus as the Son of God.

As we look at the world around us we can deduce that there is a God but from nature we cannot know what he is like.

Nor can we know what he thinks about us. Jesus as the Son of God reveals Gods thoughts and intention toward us.

And wonder upon wonder we discover in Jesus that his thoughts towards us a constantly good and loving.

The fourth name given to Jesus is “Lamb of God.”

In John 1:29-34 we hear the other John refer to Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Just as the angel of death passed over the homes of those with lambs blood on their doors, so too those who are covered by the shed blood of Jesus are saved from the wrath of God against sin.

The fifth name John gives to Jesus in this first chapter is “Messiah” (John 1:35-42).

The word Messiah refers to the King who would come to deliver his people and establish his eternal kingdom.

The disciples invited others to come and see this one who they came to understand was that foretold Messiah.

In the Old Testament there were two ideas about who Messiah was. He was a suffering servant and he was a splendid king.

Jesus is both of these. Servant and King.

In his life and death and resurrection we see that for Jesus the cross was to come before the crown.

The sixth name that John gives to Jesus is the King of Israel.

It is what Nathanael called Jesus when Phillip told him they had found the Messiah.

The people were looking for a Messiah who would rule them with Justice and equity.

Finally John names him "The Son of Man."

This term comes from Daniel chapter seven and refers to God himself as he comes to rule over all things.

We read in verse 14 of Daniel 7 about this Son of Man:

"He was given authority, honour, and sovereignty over all the nations of the world, so that people of every race and nation and language would obey him. His rule is eternal—it will never end. His kingdom will never be destroyed."

This one who is the Son of Man will be the one who bridges the gap between God and his creation. We read about it in verse 51 of John 1.

51 Then he said, "I tell you the truth, you will all see heaven open and the angels of God going up and down on the Son of Man, the one who is the stairway between heaven and earth."

So my friends. My question to you is....Why are you sitting here in church this morning?

What possibly possessed you to climb out of your warm bed and come to church yet again?

When Jesus turned and confronted John the Baptist's two disciples as they began following him, they were startled by his question and its directness.

"What are you looking for?"

As his reputation spread, there were the throngs that crowded around him with various diseases and ailments. They were looking for healing.

As his popularity spread, there were the religious authorities who began to question his theology and orthodoxy. They were looking for a fight.

As his miracles increased, there were the crowds of hangers-on, just there for the show. They were looking for entertainment.

As his wisdom spread, there were seekers like the rich young ruler who tried to second-guess his meanings. They were looking for an easy way into heaven.

As his fame circulated, and his famine-quenching powers became the talk of the town, there were lots of people with needs and wants who followed in his wake. They were looking for the loaves and fishes.

When Jesus went off by himself to the mountains and was lost in prayer, his own disciples came and interrupted him, declaring, "Everyone is looking for you!"

What are you looking for?

If you're looking for the one who has the answers, he is the one. Respond to the call he issues to follow him today.

He is the Magnificent Seven all rolled into one divine person:

The Word.

The Light.

The Son of God.

The Lamb of God.

The Messiah.

The King of Israel.

The Son of Man.

He is all that and more.