

TITLES OF JESUS IN JOHN CHAPTER 1

The theme of John's Gospel is that Jesus is the Son of God (Jn.20:30-31), and in the first chapter he proves his claim. The names and titles He bears, the works He performs, and the witnesses who knew Him personally and declare who He is, all demonstrate that Jesus is God. Jesus said "all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18). Could anyone less than deity (God) have all power in heaven and on earth?

1 He is the **Word** (Jn.1:1-3, 14) — connected with **FLESH**

How was the Word "made flesh"? By the miracle of the virgin birth (Is.7:14; Mt.1:18-25; Lk.1:26-38). He took on Himself sinless human nature, and so He can identify with us in every aspect of life. "The Word" was not an abstract concept of philosophy, or merely Hebrew wisdom, but a real Person who could be seen, touched, and heard. As our words reveal our mind and heart, so Christ reveals the mind and heart of God to man. Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (Jn.14:9).

2 He is the **Light** (Jn.1:4-13) — connected with **LIFE**

Light is essential to life. If the sun went out everything dies. Jesus is the light and life of the world (Jn.8:12). God is light (1Jn.1:5) while Satan is the "power of darkness" (Lk.22:53). A literal translation of John 1:5 reads, "And the light keeps on shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it or understood it." Why did the nation of Israel reject Jesus Christ? They rejected the light that Jesus was for them. Jesus is the true light, that is, the original of which every other light is a copy. The Jews were content with the copies. They had Moses and the Law, the Temple and the sacrifices. These copies pointed to the true Light who is Jesus Christ. John shows us a conflict between light (God, eternal life) and darkness (Satan, eternal death). Salvation is pictured as the entrance of light into the dark heart of the sinner (Jn.3:19-21; 8:12; 12:46; 2Co.4:3-6).

3 He is the **Son of God** (Jn.1:15-18, 30-34, 49) — connected with **MESSIAH**

One of the purposes of John's Gospel is to demonstrate that Jesus is the Son of God (Jn.20:31). He referred to Him as the "Son of God" 19 times. Jesus is not only the Son of God, but He is God the Son. The sinner who will not believe that Jesus is the God's Son cannot be saved (Jn.8:24). It was this claim that caused the Jews to persecute Jesus (Jn.10:30-36).

4 He is the **Messiah** (Jn.1:19-28, 35-42)

"Messiah" is the Hebrew word meaning "anointed" and in Greek the equivalent is "Christ". To the Jews this is the same as "Son of God" (Mt.26:63-64; Mk.14:61-62; Lk.22:67-70). The OT prophets, priests, and kings were anointed (1Sa.26:11; Ps.89:20). So when they spoke of their Messiah, they were thinking of the King who would deliver them and establish the kingdom. They did have confusion because the Messiah is seen as suffering (Is.53:1-12), and as a splendid King (Is.9:1-21; 11:1-16). The Jews were expecting their Messiah to appear, and this is why they questioned John (Jn.1:19-28). Even the Samaritans were looking for Him (Jn.4:25, 42). Any Jew who said that Jesus was the Christ was thrown out of the synagogue (Jn.9:22).

5 He is the **Lamb of God** (Jn.1:29, 35-36)

The people of Israel were familiar with lambs for the sacrifices. At Passover, each family had to have their own lamb. During the year two lambs a day were sacrificed at the Temple altar. These lambs were for the nation of Israel alone, and merely covered sin (Hb.10:1-4). But Jesus, as the Lamb of God, would shed His blood for the whole world! As the Lamb of God, Jesus is the unique One.

6 He is the **King of Israel** (Jn.1:43-49)

The king of Israel would be similar to "Messiah" for all kings were anointed (Ps.2:1-7). Israel's people were tired of Roman rule and wanted a king. Because Christ fed them, they wanted to make Him King (Jn.6:15), but He left the crowd. He offered Himself as their King (Jn.12:12-19) but the chief priests said, "We have no king but Caesar!" (Jn.19:15)

7 He is the **Son of Man** (Jn.1:50-51)

The vision of Daniel 7:13 presents the "Son of man" in a definite messianic setting. The Jews knew this title was associated with their Messiah (Jn.12:34). Jesus used the title in the same way (Mt.26:64). Jesus reminded the people that He came down from Heaven (Jn.6:38).

