Session 3 Jesus’ Pre-existence and Genealogy (Jn. 1; Mt. 1; Lk. 3)

1. Jesus’ pre-incarnate existence (Jn. 1:1-5)
   1. John began his gospel with the mystery of the transcendent God fully identifying with broken humanity by declaring Jesus’ preexistence as the uncreated God (Jn. 1:1-3) and His incarnation in being fully human (Jn. 1:14). Why? Jesus desires humans to be His eternal companion (Jn. 17:24).

*This is the third session in our class. In this session we are going to look at three different passages that all relate to Jesus’ early beginnings or His pre-existence. Matthew opens up with Jesus as the Son of David. Luke gives the genealogy of Jesus as the Son of Man. John goes far beyond that. He goes right to the Godhead. It says Jesus has more than a human genealogy, He is the uncreated God. He is pre-existent. Now the reason John takes that approach is because the main theme of his Gospel is the deity of Christ and Jesus’ relationship to the Father. That is the unique focus of the Gospel of John. As I said in one of the earlier sessions, the deity of Jesus is being hotly debated among people who profess to be believers. All of our faith is built upon the reality, the truthfulness, the reliability of His deity. That is not a truth that is up for debate or discussion. The Bible is absolutely clear He is God and all that come to Him must receive Him in that way.*

*Well, we are going to look at John 1, which is massive. I do not know if that is the right word. John 1:1-18 is filled with so many statements of truth. You could write a book on almost every phrase in John 1:1-18. John began his Gospel with this mystery of the transcendent, uncreated God. I mean the God before time, the God that existed long before Genesis 1. He is transcendent. He is holy: other-than, superior than all that exists. This God fully identifies with broken human beings. John declares that this Man Jesus is the pre-existent, uncreated God. Then it goes on and says that He became a Man. The incarnation means He became a Man. Of course the question we should ask is, “Why would one so great stoop so low to raise us up so high?” It is because He desires that we would be His eternal companion forever and that we would be fully God’s—that we would give ourselves to His Father—and we would be in partnership with Him forever. That is what He desired.*

* 1. Jesus is the Word—He existed before time, together with God, and is the source of creation (1:1-3).

1“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2He was in the beginning with God. 3All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” (Jn. 1:1-3)

*Let’s go ahead and look at this chapter with so many nuggets of truths. We will look at it just ever so briefly. John describes Jesus as the Word of God. That is an interesting title that the Holy Spirit gave Jesus because the Scripture is called the Word of God and Jesus is called the Word of God. Now the scriptures reveal God’s mind. They reveal God’s heart. They manifest His beauty, His majesty, and His excellence. Jesus does this very thing for the Father.*

*Verse 1, John takes us way back long before Genesis 1, before time began. He brings us to a place that our finite minds cannot even grasp, to the beginning. I mean this is before time. This is the eternal past. We cannot even grasp that with our finite minds. So John just lays it out, “In the beginning was the Word.” Now in a moment he is going to tell us who the Word is. It is a person. It is a Man. I mean the Word became human. He goes on to say that this Word was in deep fellowship with God the Father. When the Bible talks about God, often it is referring to the Father. In other words, there was a delightful fellowship between the person called the Word and the Father. Of course we know this was in the fellowship of the Spirit, so the Trinity is indicated here.*

*John said that the Word was more than just an expression of God, more than just a revelation of the Father. He is more. The Word actually* ***is*** *God. He is a separate person from the Father. The Godhead is three persons co-equally God, constituting one Godhead, one God in three persons. So John is saying that not only does He perfectly express the Father, but He is as much God as the Father is. The Word was God. What a dramatic statement!*

*Verse 2, “He was in the beginning with God.” So John makes it clear He is a separate person from the Father as He is* ***with*** *the Father. Verse 3, he goes on to magnify Jesus’ power and majesty. Everything was made through Him. Now instead of calling Him the Word, John uses the pronoun “Him.” This is a person. He goes on to say that there is nothing that came into existence that did not come through His creative power. There is no exception. I mean what a statement of the majesty of Jesus in that one statement right there, verse 3!*

*So what John is doing right from the beginning is introducing who Jesus is. This is not really a genealogy, but his introduction to Jesus. Just like Matthew gives a genealogy with Jesus as the Son of David, and Luke gives a genealogy of Jesus as the Son of Man, John is putting Jesus in relationship to time—He is from the beginning—in relationship to God the Father—He is with God, and He is equal to God—in relationship to creation—He is the creator of everything—and in relationship to redemption, to the human race. He goes on and develops that throughout John 1.*

* + 1. Jesus is the Word of God (Rev. 19:13). By seeing what Jesus *said and did* in the Gospels, we can gain understanding into various difficult passages in the Word. The values and truths about God as seen in the Word were experienced and expressed through Jesus’ behavior.

*Let’s look at this idea that Jesus is called the Word of God. In Revelation 19:13, that is the name that is written on Him. That is kind of an abstract thought, that He is the Word of God. Well, God the Father has many deep desires and many thoughts that have not been expressed, that are not seen by anyone in the natural realm. They are hidden. They are hidden in God’s heart. They are unexpressed desires and thoughts. When the Word of God comes forth, those unexpressed ideas are now expressible. They are not discernible to people or to angels. God said, “I am going to choose one person who is going to give an open expression to all that is in my heart. I am going to do it through one person, the God-Man. He will be fully God and fully Man. He will physically give manifestation to those unspoken desires. They are going to become audible and expressed through this Man.” That is why He is called the Word of God.*

*Later on in John 1:18 it says that Jesus declared the Father. He makes God understandable, He makes Him understandable. Now when we read something in the Scripture, the Word of God, the written Word, and it confuses us, we think, “Wait a second! It seems like it does not make any sense.” What I do then is I go to the Living Word, the personality of Jesus. I heard one preacher say that Jesus is perfect theology. When I cannot figure something out in the written Word, I look at the Living Word, what Jesus said and did. It will line up with what Jesus said and did. The grid that helps me interpret the written Word is my interaction with the Living Word because all of the values and the truths and the plans and the ideas and the sentiments that are deep in the Father’s heart are expressed through Jesus. That is what John is saying.*

*Again Jesus is pre-existent. Jesus Himself said later on in John 17:5 when He said, “Father glorify Me with the glory that I had with You* ***before the world was created****.” That is, “Give Me the glory I had long before Genesis 1 ever happened.” That is John 17:5.*

* + 1. God created through the Word (1:3). Jesus is identified as the Creator of Genesis 1 who sustains the universe by His word (Jn. 1:3; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:2-3; Jas 1:18).

*God created through the Word. Jesus is identified in Scripture as the Creator of Genesis 1. God the Father had deep thoughts in His heart, deep plans about the heavens and the earth in the natural realm. The world was formless and void. The Spirit of God was moving. The Spirit of God was in power, but the darkness stayed in place in the world. I imagine God the Father had already “okayed” the plan for the heavens and the earth.*

*Now when we talk about the heavens here in Genesis 1, we are talking about the sky, the atmosphere around the earth. We are not talking about the heavens where God dwells. When it talks about “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,” it is talking about the atmosphere and the galaxies around the earth.*

*Well, the earth was formless and void, but God the Father already had the plan approved; it was already established. The Spirit was there in power, but the darkness remained. Then God said—this is Jesus that it is talking about—“Let there be light.” God gave expression; the audible Word and the Spirit moved in power when the living Word declared the intents of God’s heart. That is one reason God calls Him the Word of God. It is through His words that the Father’s plans and desires are made known and they come to pass. The Spirit releases them, but not until Jesus declares them.*

*See, that is the glory of intercession. Jesus joins us to Himself as His Bride. He says, “I am the Chief Intercessor. You are joining with Me. You are going to say what God says, like I do, and the Spirit will release it in power when we say it.” So as heirs of Christ and the Bride of Christ we join Him in this ministry called “saying what is in God the Father’s heart so that the Spirit releases it in power.” That is how we function, and it is called “intercession.”*

* 1. Jesus is the source of life for the redeemed (Jn. 1:4-5). We receive life from the Word.

4In Him was life [zoe], and the life [zoe] was the light of men. 5And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it [overpower it].” (Jn. 1:4-5)

*John goes on in verse 4 to say that He is not just the source of natural creation, but in Jesus is life. This life is the light of man. Now verse 5, “The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness does not overpower it.” That is what the Word means, and the darkness does not overpower the light, very significant statements here.*

* + 1. There are two Greek words for life—*psuche* speaks of natural life that humans and animals have; *zoe* speaks of supernatural life that only comes through relationship with the Spirit.

*There are two primary Greek words for life. There is the word* ***psuche*** *which is the life we receive when we are born, natural life. That is what it normally means. It speaks of natural life. All human beings, all animals have that* ***psuche*** *life; they have natural life.* ***Zoe*** *is a different type of life. The word* ***zoe*** *is usually is talking about spiritual life or supernatural life. What John is saying here by using* ***zoe*** *is that Jesus is not just the author of natural creation, He is the source and the dispenser of giving spiritual life. He fills the void in the human heart. He is the only One who has the life that satisfies and brings to fullness the contentment of the human heart.*

*So in our* ***psuche*** *life, in our “animal” natural life, we can try to fill our spirit hunger with natural things. More honor, more money, more pleasure, but they cannot touch that deep part in our spirits. John is saying here that in this Man is the source of that* ***zoe*** *life that will satisfy, and He is the only source that will satisfy the deepest cry of the human heart. So we are constantly trying to satisfy ourselves in the natural realm when we were created with a spirit man that needs* ***zoe*** *life. John is saying that it only comes from this Man. Do not even try to find it somewhere else.*

* + 1. Darkness cannot overpower spiritual light (1:5). The way to decrease darkness in our lives is to focus on increasing the amount of light we enjoy. We will not overcome the darkness of immorality, bitterness, or pride by focusing on it, but by being preoccupied with gaining more of the “light of the superior pleasure of the revelation” of God.

5The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (Jn. 1:5, RSV)

*John made a very strong statement that the darkness cannot comprehend or overpower this light. Wherever this light shines and is accepted and is agreed with, it will overpower darkness. The pastoral application of this in our own lives is where we get ensnared in the darkness of addiction or immorality or bitterness or depression or dullness or any kind of fear, just any kind of darkness can ensnare our heart. We all are touched by various applications or expressions of darkness. Sometimes we get tempted to focus on the darkness itself. We cannot get rid of darkness by just warring against darkness. The way we get rid of darkness is by letting light in. You know if the room is full of darkness, you do not go outside and get a bucket full of light and try to pour it into the room. It does not work that way. You cannot push the darkness out of the room by human force. You turn the light on, and the darkness instantly goes.*

*What John is saying here is that this Man is life. He is the source where the human heart will find satisfaction and fulfillment. He says that that life is stronger than any addiction, any darkness, any phobia, anything. If that light is yielded to and focused on, it overpowers darkness. It is superior to everything that exists in the created order. That is what He is saying here in John 1:4-5. I mean these two verses, verse 4-5, have a very powerful, practical, pastoral application to our heart of the glory of who Jesus is to us in a personal way.*

1. introduction of John’s gospel (jn. 1:6-18)
   1. John the Baptist’s life purpose was to be a faithful witness to Jesus (1:6-8)

6“There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. (Jn. 1:6-7)

*Well, he goes on verse 6. He says, “There was a man sent from God, John the Baptist. He came to bear witness to the light.” His point is that John did not claim to be the light. He came to bear witness of the light. The glory of Jesus is seen here in verse 6 in the quality of the man that God sent to announce Him. God would not allow Jesus and His glory to come unannounced. First He sent Gabriel to Mary, then He sent the star to the Magi, the wise men from the East. Then He sent the angels to Bethlehem to the shepherds, and on and on. Here He raises up the most dedicated man who ever walked on the earth. Jesus called him the greatest man ever born of a woman. God the Father is saying, “The glory of Jesus requires a man of this dedication to announce Him. He is worthy of being fully surrendered to, and John is the picture of this type of commitment.”*

*John spent his entire life—his teen life and his twenties, as he died when he was just a little over age thirty—he spent all of his young adult life preparing and giving himself fully. The message here in God sending this man is that Jesus is worthy of that kind of abandonment and that kind of witness from the human race of which John is the prototype of this radical dedication. The point is, Jesus the uncreated God is worthy of that kind of loyalty and announcement and being given witness of, and John is a picture of it.*

* 1. The incarnation and the response of people to Jesus (1:9-11). All people have a general revelation of God—the dual witness of creation and conscience (Rom. 1:19-21). If they submit to this general revelation of God, then the Spirit will reveal the specific revelation of God—which is Jesus.

9That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. 10He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. (Jn. 1:9-11)

*In verse 9, John goes on a bit more to describe the glory of Jesus. He said in essence that Jesus is the true light that gives light to every man or every person coming into the world. That is an interesting phrase. That is a big statement. First, He is the true light in contrast to the devil who, the scripture says in 2 Corinthians 11:13,* ***appears*** *as an angel of light. There are many deceptive demonic spirits and much deception in the world. John says that this Man is the source of what is true. He* ***is*** *truth. He is opposite of the deception that fills the earth that is promoted by man and by demons.*

*He is the true light in another way. In the Old Testament there were many types and shadows. That is, there were pictures of Jesus’ ministry through the Old Testament sacrifices and in the tabernacle. Those things were pictures of Jesus; they were a dim light. John is saying that Jesus is the full light. He is not a type or a shadow. He is not a whisper. He is the full expression of the light; He is the true light.*

*Then he makes this unusual statement that Jesus is the source that gives light to every man. What does that mean that “He gives light to every man?” The Scripture lets us know in Romans 1:19-20 that all people have a general revelation of God. All human beings have a general revelation of God through the dual witness of conscience and creation.*

*It says in Romans 2:15 that God wrote His law on the conscience in the heart of every single person, so there is a witness of truth. It is not a full witness, but it is a witness that God is real. Every person has a conscience. It takes work to dull it and silence it; it takes work to do that. In our youth we step across the line, and some say, “That does not feel right.” It is not the whole truth, but it is a witness of the truth. John gives Jesus credit for that. He says that Jesus is the source of that ministry to you called your conscience.*

*Then Romans 1 says that you can look up and see the sky and the created order. That is a witness of God, too. It is not a complete witness. It is not a full witness. John is saying that Jesus has brought some dimension of light to every person. If they will respond to the light of conscience and creation and begin to inquire about the true God, God will move heaven and earth to bring the specific revelation of Jesus to them. What John is saying here is that Jesus is even the source of moving on people through creation and conscience before they know Him in salvation in a personal way.*

*Verse 10, this One—the Word who existed before time, this Word who was with the Father, this One who created all things, this one, “the Word who is God,” equal to the Father—came into the world as a Man. I mean this is staggering. He came into the human experience. The uncreated God who created everything stepped into the planet in humanity. That is again the Incarnation: He became human.*

*Verse 10, but, John laments, though the world was made by Him, they did not recognize Him. What this verse is doing is magnifying His power and His glory by talking about the great tragedy that they did not recognize Him though He created them. Though He put light in them—the light of conscience—and gave them the created order itself, they could not connect the dots with who He was.*

*Then in verse 11, it became more specific than just the nations who did not figure out who He was. “He came into His own”—the Jewish people—as the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophets, as the fulfillment of the Old Testament types and shadows, but Israel did not receive Him.*

*So the world is charged with ignorance because, when He came, they did not get who He was. The Romans did not get Him. Israel is charged with rebellion, He came right to them as the fulfillment of the types and shadows of the Old Testament sacrifices and all the Messianic prophecies. They rejected Him.*

* 1. The privilege of those who accept Jesus, the Word (1:12-13): The power, authority, and privileges that Jesus walked in as a Man are available to His people (Rom. 8:16-17; 1 Jn. 3:1-2).

12But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (Jn. 1:12-13)

* + 1. ***Not of blood***: Salvation does not come by natural birth—boasting in ancestry is futile.
    2. ***Nor of the will of flesh***: Salvation cannot be forced on others. We cannot pressure or convince people to be saved by natural logic. It takes a revelation of God to each individual’s heart.
    3. ***But of God***: Salvation is a supernatural miracle that comes by revelation.

*Verse 12, “But to as many as received Him, He gave them the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name” and verse 13, “who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but born of God.” Well, what is happening here is that verse 12 gives us the human side of salvation, what God requires. Verse 13 gives us the divine side of salvation, what God provides.*

*So verse 12, “as many as,” no matter how sinful. It does not matter if they are Gentiles, though the Jews thought that only the Jews could be saved. John said something radical, “As many as”–the most sinful, rebellious, evil, broken, rebellious Gentiles who hate God and Israel and everything, if they repent, as many as they may be, He will give them not just free forgiveness so they escape hell, but, more than that, He will give them the right or the power—other translations use the word, the power. It is more than just a small privilege, it is the power—to be accepted into the family of God and to fellowship with the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—in a way that is far beyond what the angels will ever experience.*

*This is a radical statement, “as many as,” no matter how sinful. Jew, Gentile, it does not matter what condition. If they will believe, they receive the power of God to be received and established in the family of God with the very seed of God, the Holy Spirit, dwelling in them forever. Radical transformation, forever, billions and billions of years, resurrected body, ruling and reigning forever! They are in the family. They are in fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit forever.*

*The human side is that they have to believe. Now some ministries have taken this idea of believe and reduced it to what preachers have called, “easy believe-ism” which means mere intellectual assent. You know they get somebody to repeat a prayer and intellectually assent. Do you believe Jesus was God? Sure. You want Him to be your Lord? Yeah, I guess if you want me to want Him, yeah sure. Okay, you are saved.*

*Believing is far more than intellectual assent. Biblical New Testament believing is this giving of ourselves to Him in His leadership and fullness. Now we may not do it well, but we do it with all of our heart. Believing means embracing His leadership, believing He is God, believing He is King, believing He is Savior so much so that we give ourselves fully to Him. We do not earn anything, but included in the response of believing is a full giving of ourselves based on our gratitude for who He is.*

*So some people have taken believing and teased it apart from our heart commitment. They say, “Well, if you require a heart commitment, then you are earning salvation.” No, to believe He is the King and creator, to believe He is the John 1 God, is to give ourselves fully to Him. Those are inseparable ideas. That is the human side.*

*Verse 13 is the divine side, what God provides. He said these people are brought into the family. I mean we are talking about brought into God’s family forever. Everybody wants to be in a royal family. It is an amazing privilege to be in a royal family that is divine and lives forever. He said that these people, verse 13, who are born, they are “not born of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of men, but of God.”*

*When it says, “they are not born of blood,” he is saying that ancestry and hereditary background and tradition are not going to get you into the family of God. Some people say, “Well, I was born in a Christian family. I have a Christian heritage. Hey, Jesus, You know my uncle or my grandfather was a preacher.”*

*John says, “No, no, it is not about your ancestry. It is not about where you were born. It is not how dedicated your ancestors were. It is not those that are born of the flesh.”*

*This also means we cannot force somebody into believing. We can present the truth, but at the end of the day our efforts will not move their hearts if they are not aided by the grace of God. Now we always make the effort because we never know what God is going to do. What John is saying is this: it is more than human effort. It is more than just the will of flesh.*

*Someone says, “I want my friend to be saved, so therefore I am going to corner him. I am going to put tracts under his pillow at night, and I am going to try to trap him into going to a conference so I can get a bunch of people around him. They are all going to prophesy over him. Then I am going to bring him out to a Christian movie, and then I am going to lock him in a room and we are going to witness and prophesy over him.” I have tried a few of those things.*

*John says, “No, it does not work that way. They are born of God.”*

*It is a supernatural act. It is a miracle. It is a supernatural thing when the human heart says, “Wait a second. This is real. This is real!” That is why believing means embracing His leadership and giving ourselves to Him. Again we give ourselves, and we stumble and fall many times, but the giving of ourselves is real and it is full. Salvation is a revelation; it is not just logic. It is not if we can win a debate and give them better ideas, then they will believe.*

*Somebody said, “Well, let’s go to the place and debate the person, and we will use better logic and prove God is real.” The problem is not intellectual ever. The problem is always a heart issue.*

*John 7:17, Jesus basically told the Pharisees, “If you were willing to obey, you would believe.” The problem with believing is not intellectual; it is that you are not willing at the heart level. When we understand that, then we can cooperate with the grace of God more in our efforts toward others. Then we rejoice in the fact that the answer to “How did the truth break through in your heart?” is “It was the grace of God, to the glory of God.” God went after you. He convinced you. He is worthy of us giving everything to Him.*

* 1. The Word was given expression through Jesus’ physical body (1:14). God’s glory is defined as miracles and character (2:11). God’s power and love were expressed in a human form by Jesus.

14“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” (Jn. 1:14)

*Verse 14, “The Word became flesh.” This is one of the great statements in the Word of God. Jesus took on human nature in that moment when He was conceived, and then born there in the person of Christ was the union of two natures, the only person in existence with the union of two natures. The Father and the Spirit do not have a human nature. No other human is the uncreated God but Jesus alone, and His person is the union of two natures. He is fully God and fully Man. That is why He is referred to as the God-Man.*

*Paul said in 1 Timothy 3:16, “Great is the mystery” that God—the John 1, the Genesis 1 God—is human. He said that it staggers our mind, and it staggers the angels still. It is awesome beyond our human imagination, the full implications of this. Great is the mystery of this glorious reality that God became human! The Word from the beginning became flesh, and He dwelt among broken and fallen, weak men and women.*

*In verse 14, John says, “We,”—meaning the apostles, “we beheld His glory.” He explained that for three years they saw things indescribable in their glory. John saw Him on the Mount of Transfiguration when Jesus was in prayer and His face shone like an angel, His clothes becoming bright. Jesus’ divine nature was manifested in glory in a way that John had never seen. Peter, James, and John saw His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration in Matthew 17. They saw Him walk on the water in the storm and command it. They saw Him do incredible miracles.*

*Beloved, now, as New Testament believers, Paul says that we can behold the glory of the Lord—2 Corinthians 3:18. By reading the Word and engaging with the Spirit and doing the works of the kingdom and walking in the kingdom community we see glimpses of His glory all around us. Paul said that we can behold His glory, though not in the full, direct way the apostles did when Jesus was in the flesh. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 3:18 that we have glimpses of His glory and it transforms us. The glory of the only begotten of the Father, this uniquely begotten One. The Father brought Him forth in this unique way of being the only One who possesses the two natures, fully God and fully Man.*

*So He is brought forth in this unique dynamic, fully God and fully Man. “Begotten of the Father” is the phrase that is being used to describe that. He is the only one. There is no angel, there is not another human, and there is not another person in the Godhead that this will ever happen to. He is the* ***only*** *One brought forth by the Father in this way. This Man is full of grace, and He is full of truth.*

* 1. We receive grace and truth through the Word (1:16-17).

16And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. 17For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.” (Jn. 1:16-18)

* + 1. We received of His fullness. God does not give to us out of His weakness, but His fullness (Eph. 3:19). Grace speaks of God’s power and love—it is lavishedupon us (Eph. 1:8).
    2. The truth of what we have become in Christ was not made known by Moses’ law. Now God’s purposes for us and His love and the power available to us have been revealed. They are no longer a hidden mystery as they were while under Moses (Col. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 2:7-9).
    3. No man has seen God at any time. Jesus has revealed and explained God to the human race.
    4. Jesus lived in the bosom of the Father and continues to live there (Jn. 14:3b).

*Verse 16, “and of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.” One translation says, “Grace upon grace.” Meaning that God heaps grace and favor on us. Day after day He gives us new grace as we interact with Him. We never ever exhaust the supply of grace; it is new every single day. In every circumstance there is grace sufficient for us to carry our heart in peace and to walk in victory, grace upon grace.*

*In verse 17, John basically says, “Well, let’s go back to Moses.” Now Moses was* ***the*** *great man of the Old Testament. I mean there was Abraham, and there was David, but Moses was in a category of his own. The leadership of Israel were always talking about Moses, how amazing he was, because Moses on the mountain saw the glory of God like no man ever did. Moses divided the Red Sea. and all these incredible miracles happened in Moses’ ministry. There is nobody like Moses in the Old Testament.*

*So, verse 17, John says, “The Law was given through Moses.” Moses had a supernatural ministry that was second to no one in the Bible besides Jesus. The Law was given to him. Sin was revealed through the Law, justice was revealed through the Law, many good things were revealed through the Law. “But,” John said, “grace and truth came through Jesus.”*

*You see, in the Law we do not have revelation of God’s personality in fullness. We do not have the gracious tenderness of God. I mean God was tender in the Old Testament, but it was not made known through the teaching of Moses. Through the teaching of Moses, we understood justice, we understood what was right and was wrong in many ways, but we did not understand the affectionate delight and the graciousness of God’s heart. Now God had revealed a bit to Moses, but it was never something that was revealed and carried through the Old Testament with any kind of emphasis.*

*Jesus came and brought the truth of God’s grace that was always true, but He brought it to light. Notice He brought grace* ***and*** *truth. Now some people really like grace, but they cannot tolerate truth. They want the gracious tenderness of God and His delightful way and His open heartedness, but they do not want God’s words, and they do not want God’s ways. Truth and grace are forever joined in fullness in the Man and in the message of Christ Jesus. Many in the Church try to separate grace and truth. Jesus did not only bring grace; He brought truth.*

*I remember the passage in John 6 where Jesus had many followers with Him and He multiplied the bread. Then Jesus started teaching them some heavy stuff. Many of the disciples said, “We do not want to follow You anymore. We are offended at You.”*

*Jesus looked at Peter and said, “Peter, do you want to go, too? I am not changing My message because you do not like it. I am the witness of My Father’s truth. I am the manifestation of My Father’s grace.” Grace and truth do not contradict or cancel each other out. Many of the disciples withdrew from Jesus and they did not want to follow Him anymore. They were offended because they did not like truth.*

*When Jesus went to His own hometown in Nazareth at the synagogue, they loved His miracles that they heard stories of. He had done miracles in the other places, and they were excited and they loved His teaching. They said, “We hear Your teaching is amazing, but aren’t you Joseph’s son?” Then Jesus started giving the message. They got so angry at Him that they drove Him to the edge of town to throw Him off a cliff. They wanted grace, but they did not want truth. Jesus is the fullness of both of them.*

*So do not let some religious Christian rhetoric let you pull those things apart and say they are contrary and in opposition to each other. Jesus is full of grace and full of truth, and they fully go together forever.*

*Verse 18 brings us to the end of this introduction of John. He says, “No one has ever seen God at any time”—not even Moses. Moses saw more of the glory of God than any other man in history but he never saw God physically in the way that Jesus has been face to face with the Father from eternity past. When John was writing this passage, Jesus in His physical body had been raised from the dead, ascended up to the right hand of the Father, and was with the Father face to face.*

*It says in verse 18 that no one has ever seen God face to face besides Jesus. Listen! I love this statement: He is in the bosom of the Father right now. This phrase, “the bosom of the Father,” is such a tender phrase. It depicts the close, affectionate relationship, this tender communion with the Father. A matter of fact. it was John in John 13:23, who put his head on Jesus’ bosom at the last supper. That is how John describes what happened at the last supper. He put his head of Jesus’ chest. In various meal occasions and dinner times, it happened on occasion that one member of the family would lay their head on the chest of the other. It is in the Scriptures. In Deuteronomy 13, it talks about a man and taking a wife to his bosom. It talks about a child and a father, and the father taking the child into his bosom. There are other examples. It is a tender embrace of affection and trust.*

*One of the most powerful statements here in John is when John says that Jesus is the bosom of the Father. He is not just at the right hand, reigning; He is in this affectionate interchange with the Father forever. He is wooing us to enter into that with Him. John said, “I did that some with Jesus” in John 13:23. He says, “And that is where Jesus is—He is with the Father.” So this is John’s description and introduction of the Man Christ Jesus.*

1. Jesus’ human ancestry through Joseph (Mt. 1:1-17)
   1. Matthew opened by presenting Jesus as the *son of David* (king of Israel) and the *son of Abraham* (savior of the world). This referred to two Old Testament covenants—the nations would be blessed through Abraham (Gen. 12:7) and the kingdom would come through David (2 Sam. 7:12-16).

1“The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham (Mt. 1:1)

*You cannot really say John 1 is the genealogy of God because God does not have a genealogy. It is Jesus’* ***history*** *with God from the beginning. Matthew 1 gives Jesus’ ancestry through Joseph. In Luke 3 it is His ancestry through Mary. We will just look at this briefly. I will let you look at it more in your time.*

*Matthew 1 starts, “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham,” right from the beginning. Remember Matthew wrote to the Jews revealing Jesus as the King and the Messiah whom the Jews were looking for. That is who Matthew focused on. Luke was writing to the Greeks, and he was talking about the humanity of Jesus. Luke was showing Jesus is the Son of Man so he took a different approach than Matthew.*

*Matthew says, “the Son of David”—that is the great King of Israel. The Messiah is going to be a King like David—and “the Son of Abraham.” That is a little bit different because God made a covenant with Abraham that all the nations would be blessed through Abraham’s seed, that all the nations would be touched and healed and blessed. In other words, “Son of Abraham” is a description of Jesus as the Savior of the world. In this very first statement Matthew is tying together two Old Testament covenants: the covenant that the nations would be blessed through Abraham and the covenant that God would raise up an eternal King over all the nations through David.*

* + 1. The Messiah had to be traced back to David’s royal family line to be accepted by Israel as heir to the throne of David. Both Mary and Joseph were in David’s family line.

*Now the reason this was important is because the Messiah had to be traced back to David’s royal family line to be accepted as the King of Israel. They were saying, “No, prove to us that He is of the line of David and of the line of Abraham.” Now it is interesting—well, more than interesting, it is significant—that Mary’s ancestry also goes back to David and Abraham too. So though they had two different family lines, they both led to David. Joseph came through David’s son Solomon, and Mary’s line came through David’s son Nathan, two different sons, but both had the father David.*

* + 1. There are over fifty genealogies in the Old Testament. Today, most Jewish people do not have a historical record of their ancestry. Thus, none can prove to be in David’s royal line.

*There are over fifty genealogies in the Old Testament. Today because of all the scattering of the Jews and all the destruction, most Jewish people do not have any historical records. There are attempts to piece it together, but there is not strong, credible historical evidence of genealogies for the Jews like they used to have.*

*So somebody could say, “How do we know that the Messiah who is coming is the Son of David?” because we cannot prove it. A matter of fact, the last man that had a claim that was provable in history with a genealogy as the King and Messiah that could be proved to the nations was Jesus. He was the last one that the nations have record for who* ***both*** *claims to be King* ***and*** *has a historical genealogy. He was the last Man for whom we still have record of His genealogy. There is no other man who can claim it except for Jesus. So the Jews are a little bit in a quandary trying to figure out how they are going to figure out who their Messiah really is. They have to tie him to Abraham and to David.*

* 1. Matthew’s genealogy traces the generations through Joseph’s family line starting with Abraham through David down to Joseph and Jesus. Luke’s genealogy is the reverse—it starts with Jesus and traces the generations through Mary back to Adam. One begins with Jesus; the other ends with Him.

*So Matthew’s genealogy goes through Joseph’s line. He starts with Abraham and works down to Joseph and Jesus. Luke is the opposite. Luke does not start with Abraham and go down to Jesus. Luke starts with Jesus and works his way backwards to Adam, all the way back to Adam in the garden of Eden. One of the genealogies begins with Jesus—the Luke 3—and the other one ends with Jesus—Matthew 1.*

* 1. Why a genealogy? To establish Jesus was a son of David and a son of Abraham through Joseph and Mary, so He had the *right* to rule the throne of David. God revealed Himself in Jesus’ genealogy. He is the only person who “hand-picked” His genealogy—it is significant who He picked.

*Why is there even a genealogy? Well, I just mentioned that for the Jews they had to have proof—historical proof that other people could verify—that He was the Son of David and the Son of Abraham or He did not have the right to rule the throne of David. It had to be verifiable with many witnesses that could verify the historical records, and they had them.*

*There is another reason for the genealogy. The genealogy reveals God’s personality because Jesus is the only person who ever hand-picked His genealogy. He picked His grandparents. He picked His great-grandparents. I mean from Genesis 1 He looked down and he picked all of the people in His line. No other Man has ever done that.*

*Now to the Jewish people and to people in other nations as well having a genealogy with noble people was very important for social status. It was very honorable to have honorable people enter into your genealogy. If you had criminals and wicked people in your family line, that brought an unfavorable light upon your family. So the Jews did not really want people to know if they had trouble in their genealogy.*

*Jesus is the opposite. He handpicked His genealogy. It has murderers, immoral men and women, wicked kings. Jesus says, as it were, “I want them all there because I want to send the message that as many as receive Me, I want them. I want to identify with the whole human race, all of them. I do not just want the good and the noble. I want everybody.”*

*His message is His commitment to identify with human weakness and failure. It does not put Him off. He says, “I want them in My family. That is who I am going after.” So He is approachable to all without any reference to race. He picked Jews and Gentiles. With reference to age, He picked old and young. With reference to sex, male and female. With reference to social status, He picked kings and He picked peasants. He picked intellectual giants and illiterate people in His line, deeply spiritual and deeply flawed, rebellious people who were entrenched in sin. They were all there.*

* 1. Jesus identified with all mankind through the genealogy that He picked. He wanted all types of people in His family line—*the message is that Jesus identified with human failure and weakness*.   
     He is approachable by all, unrelated to race, age, sex, social status, education, spirituality, etc.

2Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob…3Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar…5Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, 6 and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah [Bathsheba]… 10Hezekiah begot Manasseh,…11Josiah begot Jeconiah…12And after they were brought to Babylon…Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. 13 Zerubbabel begot Abiud…15Matthan begot Jacob.   
16And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ. (Mt. 1:2-16)

* + 1. ***Four women***: It was highly unusual to include women in a genealogy. Three of the women mentioned were involved in immorality— *Tamar* (Gen. 38:11-30), *Rahab* (Josh. 2:6; 6:25), and *Bathsheba* (2 Sam. 11). *Ruth* the Moabitess was a foreigner. Moabites were enemies of Israel and forbidden even to enter God’s house.

*You notice there are four women in His genealogy. It was highly unusual for the Jews to ever list women in a genealogy because the legal line of being an heir was always through the father, always. This was a very unusual thing, but the Spirit insisted on it.*

*You will notice that of the four women picked, three of them were involved in immorality: Tamar, Rahab, and Bathsheba.*

*Tamar played the harlot to trick her father-in-law. You can read it in Genesis 38. It is a pretty deceitful story, I would say. So her father-in-law Judah went to a harlot. The harlot was his daughter-in-law, but she was disguising herself, so all kinds of trouble.*

*Rahab was a professional prostitute. Jesus said, “I want her in my line.” She was a Gentile; she was not of the faith of Israel.*

*Bathsheba committed adultery, and her husband was murdered by David. Jesus said, “I want her as my grandmother.” Bathsheba had one son Solomon from whom Joseph was born many generations later. Another son was Nathan from whom Mary was born. So both of them have Bathsheba and David as their grandpa and grandma way back together, you know way back.*

*Ruth was a Moabitess. The Moabites were enemies of Israel, they were Gentiles, and they were idolaters. Jesus said, “I want them in My family line.”*

* + 1. ***Joseph the husband of Mary***: Scripture never refers to Joseph as the father of Jesus, but only as the husband of Mary. The royal line legally passed through the father—Jesus was Joseph’s legal son by adoption. Through Joseph and Solomon, Jesus was legally heir to David’s throne.
  1. Three periods of ancestors (v. 17): This is not a complete list. The editing of the genealogy to identify fourteen generations in each of three periods was intentional**.**

17So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations.” (Mt. 1:17)

*There are three periods that Matthew distinguishes, each of them with fourteen generations. Look at verse 17 where it says that all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen. All the generations from David to the Babylonian captivity were fourteen. All the generations from the captivity of Christ were fourteen.*

* + 1. The first period from Abraham to David—the period of the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph) and the judges (Deborah, Barak, Samson, Jephthah). This was the period of the birth and establishing of Israel as a nation.

*Number one, the first period was the period of the patriarchs and the judges. This is when Israel was birthed and established as a nation.*

* + 1. The second period from David to Jeconiah—the period of the kings was through the time of Jeconiah. This period had a few good kings like Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah. However, sinful kings dominate this period, like Rehoboam, Ahaz, and Manasseh, leading to apostasy and ultimately to the destruction of Israel and the captivity in Babylon.

*Number two, the second period was the period of the kings. There were a few good kings, but most of the kings of Israel were wicked. It brought the whole nation into apostasy and ended up in the destruction of Babylon. That was a very sad time.*

* + 1. The third period from the Babylon captivity until Jesus’ birth—600 years of names we don’t know. It was a hard time in which Israel faced many enemies and much silence.

*The third period was from the Babylonian captivity through when they returned back to Israel to the birth of Jesus. This period of about 600 years was a very hard, very difficult time. It was a time of silence, as there were mostly no prophets through that time, through the last 400 years at least. It was a bit of a bland, dull time with very little history that was notable except for the Maccabees.*

* 1. Jesus’ human ancestry through Mary (Lk. 3:23-28): Luke traced the genealogy back to Adam to emphasize Jesus’ love for all in the human family. Priests began their ministry at age 30 (Num 4:3).

23“Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli, 24the son of Matthat…the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel…31the son of Mattathah, the son of Nathan, the son of David, 32the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz…34the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah…36the son of Shem, the son of Noah…37the son of Enoch, the son of Jared… 38the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.” (Lk. 3:23-38)

For the next three or four minutes I will briefly mention Jesus’ ancestry through Mary. Now the ancestry in Matthew starts with Abraham and works down to Jesus. This one starts with Jesus and goes all the way back to Adam, way back to the garden of Eden. Because Luke was emphasizing truths in his Gospel for the Greeks, this was emphasizing Jesus’ love for all humanity, not just for the Jews. So it goes back to the garden of Eden. The Spirit was saying that Jesus says, “The whole group is in My genealogy.” Jesus wants to identify with all the human race, even all the way back to Adam.

* + 1. Luke presents the genealogy of Jesus in reverse order from Matthew’s—giving 77 names. Both genealogies mention Joseph as the father of Jesus, and include Abraham, David, and Zerubbabel (Mt. 1:1, 12; Lk. 3:27).
    2. ***Heli***: He was Mary’s father (v. 23) and Joseph’s father-in-law. Joseph’s physical father was Jacob (Mt. 1:16). It is suggested by many that Mary had no brothers and thus Joseph was adopted by Mary’s father after their marriage.
    3. ***Nathan***: Mary’s family line is traced, not through David’s son Solomon, but through Nathan, David’s third son with Bathsheba. Nathan’s family line will be blessed in the end times (Zech. 12:12). Messiah’s ancestry is traced through Nathan, bypassing the line of the kings of Judah.
    4. ***Adam***: He is described as the son of God (3:38) to compare and contrast with Jesus as the son of God (3:22; 4:3). This genealogy comes right *after* Jesus’ baptism and anointing by the Spirit as Messiah (Lk 3:21-22) and right *before* Jesus was tempted in the wilderness (Lk. 4:1-13) in a way that parallels Adam’s temptation and sin in the garden of Eden (Gen. 3:1-7).
    5. By obedience, Jesus stood in the human family as the last Adam restoring sonship to God.

*Look back to verse 38. After it goes all through the genealogy, it says that he is the son of Seth and Seth was the son of Adam, and Adam was—this unusual phrase—“the son of God.” Like what? It is the only time where Adam is called the son of God. Now this refers to before Adam sinned. He was, in other words, created directly by God. What Luke is wanting to do very strategically here is to create a contrast between the first Adam who fell in sin and the last Adam, Jesus, who represented the human race and who triumphed.*

*Very significantly the genealogy is in Luke 3. The reason it is not in Luke 1, but in Luke 3, is because right* ***before*** *the genealogy Jesus was baptized in water and anointed with the Spirit. Then we have the genealogy. Then right* ***after*** *it He goes into the wilderness to be tempted in the same way that Adam was tempted in the garden of Eden. So Luke lodges the genealogy there, bringing it back to Adam, placing it strategically after Jesus is baptized and anointed, right before Jesus is tempted as he is making a very deliberate correlation between Jesus and Adam.*

*He is saying that the first Adam fell and brought destruction to the whole human race, but the last Adam succeeded. The parallel is very, very specific and very deliberate. He is going to bring the restoration of the human race back to sonship with God. As John said, “As many as receive Him, they will have the right and the power to be children of God and to be born of God.” So that is what Luke’s major point is in this genealogy.*

*Amen! Let’s stand before the Lord. I want to encourage you to go back to John 1:1-18. That is one of the high points of Scripture. Again every phrase is absolutely loaded, and we just covered it about in twenty-five minutes which is really fast to cover it. I want to identify that passage to you as one of the main ones you really want to go deep on. I want to encourage you to take the notes out and get some other commentaries and tease apart those phrases. Talk to the Lord about them.*

*Let’s just go before the Lord here.*

*Thank you, Jesus, that You chose harlots, murderers, sinful men to be in Your genealogy because You love us. Oh, You are the glorious, uncreated God, full of grace and full of truth! We thank You that You became Man, walked on the earth, and endured rejection in Your generation. You did not draw back. You did not shrink back. You did not quit. Jesus, we love You! Lord, we want to be Yours. Worthy is the Lamb to receive the full reward of that which He suffered for, the full commitment of His people.*

*Holy Spirit, I ask You come right now and just stir our hearts. We want to love this Man more. We want to love this glorious Man who thought through every detail before it happened in His life. He made so many statements to us about how dear we are to Him. Holy Spirit, I ask You to come and touch us. Glorious God, we love You. Lord, come and mark our hearts. Come and mark our hearts, Lord. You are the Man we love! You are the Man we love.*

*John said that Jesus gives grace upon grace. There are some of you who need a fresh supply of experiencing the grace of God today. You are in a difficult circumstance or you have been in a struggle. You need that renewed confidence and that renewed refreshing of the Holy Spirit’s presence. I want to pray for grace upon grace for anybody who would like to receive that tonight. I invite you to come forward. Grace upon grace. Jesus came to bring the fullness of grace.*

*Lord, I ask You for the winds of Your Spirit to blow upon us. Lord, You said that to as many as will believe You will give grace to us. Lord, I ask You for the wind of refreshment. We thank You for Your grace, Lord. I thank You for grace. We declare grace, a fresh grace upon grace now. There is none like You. He is the true light. You are the true light that enlightens our heart. In You is the light, Jesus. Lord, I ask You for the wind of refreshing to blow.*

*John said that in Him is life. It is our temptation to go to broken cisterns to get satisfaction. John said Jesus is the source. The Lord is calling some of you to realign yourself to find your life in Him. Though there are other blessings but they will never satisfy our heart, never. John declared, in Him is the life. Grace upon grace flows from Him.*

*So I want to invite you to realign your heart, all of you throughout the room.*

*I speak grace. Lord, I ask You for the wind of renewal, the wind of refreshing.*

*The Lord would say, “Look to Me! Do not look to other sources. I will be the wind to you.”*

*I want to invite the ministry team to come up and any others who are in any kind of leadership in our spiritual family at FCF or in this ministry to go ahead and come on up to pray for people.*