

Is John's Λόγος Christology a Polemical Response to Philo of Alexandria's Logos Philosophy? (Part 1)

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Abstract

This journal article is the first in a two-part series that examines the Prologue to the Gospel of John (1:1–18) as a Christological statement for the purpose of repudiating Philo of Alexandria's philosophical logos. The current essay explores the use of the word Λόγος² in the fourth Gospel, John's likely rationale for using a prologue motif to open the gospel, and an exegesis of the Prologue producing ten specific statements that encompass John's Λόγος Christology. In Part II, we exegete Philo of Alexandria's writings for the purpose of determining his logos philosophy that may then be compared and contrasted with John's Christological Λόγος. We conclude that John used the prologue for two important reasons. First, he used a prologue for the commonly expected purpose of summarizing the entire gospel, introducing Christological themes and first-person testimony about the divinity and mission of Christ on earth, that would be more thoroughly explored in the remainder of the Gospel. However, John also adopted the Greek prologue motif as a literary device to introduce the eternal *Logos* of the Christian world while simultaneously redefining the commonly-known logos of the Greek world as the Christian *Logos*. John accomplished this feat by specifically refuting Philo of Alexandria's philosophical logos with his presentation of his seemingly simple yet theologically robust Christological *Logos*.

Keywords

Christology, Gospel of John, Hellenism, Logos, Philo of Alexandria, Philosophy, Prologue, Exegesis

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1 The views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the beliefs of the South African Theological Seminary.

2 Λόγος = Logos (Word). The capitalized English word equivalent will be used to represent usage representing Jesus Christ. Other uses will use lowercase logos.

1. Introduction

The origin of John's *Logos* Christology is generally discussed by scholars as (1) originating from or relying on a literary or oral tradition (often described as a hymn tradition), or (2) being a later addition by redactors of the gospel of John using written and/or oral Jewish or Hellenistic sources, or (3) having Jewish origins from within the emerging Christology, often cited as a replacement of the Jewish Sophia traditions or the Memra (The Word of the Lord) translation from the Jewish Targums written in Aramaic, or (4) growing out of Judeo-Hellenistic philosophical thought that found its way into the fourth Gospel, principally through the works of Philo of Alexandria and his use of a mystical logos as a pseudo-divine intermediary between transcendent God and humanity. The body of literature that addresses the first three options is immense and its evaluation is not part of this work. The fourth option will be addressed by this work using the apostle John's Prologue to his gospel (John 1:1–18). An exegesis of the Prologue will develop ten important observations about John's *Logos* Christology. An exegesis of Philo of Alexandria's complete body of writings as the exemplar of Hellenistic Judaism writings is also examined with particular emphasis on his logos philosophy. A comparison of the two will reveal any intersections between the two belief systems.

1.1. John's Use of Prologue

John's central theme of the fourth gospel is the incarnation of the Word, and the Prologue (1:1–18) is a description of Jesus Christ as the 'Ultimate Fact of the universe' (Dobrin 2005:209). John's Prologue is profound because of its highly developed yet succinctly stated Christology. The Prologue reveals that the Word of God is not an attribute of God but rather the Word is a preexistent, co-equal member of the Godhead responsible for the creation of all things. The Prologue '... remains one of the most complicated doctrinal statements in the Bible' (Borchert 1996:100). The Prologue also serves as a theological summary in a few verses of what the apostle John will carefully reveal in the remainder of the fourth gospel (Harris 2004:173) as well as a 'masterful statement with a poetic sound' (Borchert 1996:101).

A remarkable literary feature of John's Prologue is that it introduces eternal concepts that would have been familiar to ancient Hellenist philosophers, pagans, (and if Bultmann [1971] is correct, Gnostics) Jews, and Greeks, until the reader reaches verse 14 and 'the Word became flesh' and 'We have seen His glory.'

John wrote the Prologue to describe the coming of the Son of God in an engaging manner that would encourage readers to read the entire Gospel (Beasley-Murray 2002:5). The inclusive use of 'we' and 'us' in the text at verses 14 and 16, respectively, demonstrates John's recognition of a community sense of witness in the testimony of the Gospel, particularly in the strong Christological assertions of the Prologue. In his treatise, *The Cosmic Role of the Logos*, de Beer (2014:21) notes that in the majority of cases [in the New Testament] the word 'logos' represents a 'spoken word, story, or message' (Louw 1996:399) with the exception John 1:1, where the *Logos* is identified as divine, preexistent, and the defining force of all creation. The Jesus of history is suddenly and unexpectedly revealed as God-man incarnate, the defining force of all creation (Carson 1991:23).

John also adopted the Greek prologue as a literary device to introduce the eternal *Logos* of the Christian world in a familiar manner while simultaneously redefining the familiar logos of the Greek world as the Christian *Logos*. The similarities to the Greek prologue appear clear yet its use was purposeful. The use of prologue in Greek writings would have been readily apparent to the Hellenized readers of John's gospel. Also, the close connection between the themes introduced in the Prologue and expanded upon later in the Gospel is clearly on display when the entire Gospel is considered. John introduces a creation story that predates the Greek logos and introduces the divine *Logos* who was the creative force for all things. Greek readers, steeped in Platonic dualism, would have surely identified with the *Logos* until reaching verse 14 when the divine *Logos* cloaks himself in the form of humanity. By that point in the story, the Greek reader would want to learn more about the eternal *Logos*. After all, the Gospel of John, at its core, is an ancient evangelistic writing.

In a practical sense, the Prologue to the fourth Gospel functions as a means to foreshadow major themes of the Gospel (Carson 1991:110). The attention of the reader having been captured by the Prologue the reader is encouraged to explore the reasons for the incarnation of Christ and the subsequent rejection of the Son of God by fellow Jews. John's Prologue is also a summary of the principal themes of his *Logos* Christology that will be revealed in the remainder of the Gospel narrative, such as the eternal nature of Christ, the Word of God, and the eternal struggle of light against darkness (Brown 1997:374–376). Finally, Lioy (2005:65) points to the 'liturgical quality' of the Prologue in that it summons believers to enter into a worship experience of the God of truth and light that arrived incarnate with an invitation to 'believe in His name' in order to 'become children of God' (v. 12).

2. Religious Milieu of the Gospel

John wrote to Jews, including diaspora Jews, Palestinian Jews, and Jews deeply influenced by Hellenism, as well as Gentiles steeped in Greek culture. John wished persons from each group to embrace the gospel message. John assumes that readers have an elementary knowledge of Jesus (the background material present in Luke, for example, is missing from John) perhaps through a familiarity with the Synoptics, from earlier teaching, or by word of mouth. The intended recipients of the gospel reflect the disparate historical backgrounds of the diverse groups.

2.1 Hellenism is the Norm

The Hellenization of the known world was moving forward in the first century. It is well accepted within the scholarly community that the Gospel of John, particularly within the Prologue, has hints of Greek dualism (e.g. light vs. dark) that reflect John's intimate knowledge of Hellenism. The social context of the first century made continuing contact with Hellenism inevitable. Greek acculturation had been underway for 200 years in the Galilee. John lived and worked in a region ruled by Herod Antipas who was actively Hellenizing the region as a continuation of the work of his father, Herod the Great. The archeological remains in the region (e.g. Sepphoris, Caesarea Maritima), trade and commerce, and coinage attest to the impact of Hellenism on Jewish society at this time.

2.2 Friction Between Christians and Jews

In Palestine, friction between Jews and Christians was increasing late in the first century. It is important to observe that the rising conflicts between Christians and Jews did not originate with anti-Semites but were clashes that took place within the Jewish community. The often-thought pejorative use of the term 'the Jews' in the Gospel of John is best viewed as an internal conflict that does not involve the emerging Christian church. The term 'the Jews' in context is a metaphor for the Jewish leaders of the period, principally the temple officials and the Pharisees, who represent entrenched Jewish religious legalism that rejected Jesus and Jewish converts. The conflict with 'the Jews' was principally intra-Jewish, that is, Jesus and his followers (themselves Jews) were opposed by Jewish religious leaders. Even the Romans viewed these episodes as merely internal Jewish squabbles and not worth getting involved in. John's gospel does not describe the conflict between Christians and Jews, but it does describe conflicts between Jews within the Jewish community about Jewish religious issues, principally application of the Oral Law.

Enmity between Christians and Jews grew to the point that Jewish-Christians were expelled from the synagogue (John 9:22, 12:42, 16:2, not found in the Synoptics). John describes these Jewish-Christians as *ἄποσυνάγωγος* ('put out'), which is similar language to 'spurn your name as evil' found in Luke 6:22. Being 'put out' began with 'social ostracism and verbal abuse' by the remainder of Jewish society culminating with the predicted killing of expelled believers (v. 16:2, cf. Matt. 23:34, Luke 21:16) by those thinking they were doing service to God (Lincoln 2005:83).

However, this is not to say there was not strong animosity between splinter Christian sects and mainstream Judaism. The Council of Jamnia (ca 85–90 CE) under the leadership of Rabbi Gamaliel II is believed to have reorganized institutional Judaism and added the curse of the heretics (*Birkat ha-Minim*, 'benediction concerning heretics'), referring directly to Christianity. This view seems reasonable given there are no further references to decrees by Jewish leaders expelling Christians from the synagogue found in contemporaneous Jewish writings.

The split between Judaism and Christianity was complete and Jewish Christians were expelled from synagogues, likely beginning during the middle to late first century. The expulsions remain an important milestone for the emerging Christian church: the rift between Christian and Jew was permanent (Lincoln 2005:87). John's Christology, as presented in the Prologue, was perfected during this period of dissension. The historical setting of the first century in the eyes of Jewish Christians was one of rejection from the synagogue followed by persecution by Roman authorities. This was the level of societal discord within the Jewish community present when John wrote the fourth Gospel.

3. Exegesis of John 1:1-18

The first step in our comparative analysis of John's Christological *Logos* with Philo of Alexandria's philosophical logos is an exegesis of the Prologue. A detailed exegesis of the Prologue is presented in this section, including the writer's translation of the passage. The product of the exegesis is used to produce the essentials of John's Christological *Logos* found in the Prologue. The Greek text used is NA28 (Aland 2012:292–293). The exegetical process generally follows Fee (2002).

3.1 Organization of the Exegetical Analysis

Scholars have proposed a wide range of organizational options for the Prologue. McHugh (2009:78–79), for example, catalogues over a dozen variants. The organization of this exegesis of the Prologue reflects the scholarly consensus as:

John 1:1–5: The Eternal Word of God

John 1:6–8: The Witness of John

John 1:9–13: The Light Enters the World

John 1:14–18: The Word Became Flesh

Within the exegesis of each pericope, the author's smooth translation appears at the beginning of each section. A literal translation with alternative translation word choices is placed within brackets within each clause/sentence and within the exegetical discussion. Italics are used to denote the translation.

3.2 John 1:1-5: The Eternal Word of God

3.2.1 Passage Text and Final Translation

1:1 In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 1:2. This Word was in the beginning with God. 1:3 All things through Him came to be, and without Him not even one thing came into being that has come into being. 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of humanity 1:5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

3.2.2 Analysis of the Grammar and Key Words

1:1a. Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος,

In [the] beginning was the Word,

The Prologue begins with three clauses, each repeating the common subject, λόγος and using the same substantive verb ἦν to describe the eternal nature of the Word with respect to time, the essence of his being, and his divinity (Westcott 1908:2).

The first verse begins with the prepositional phrase Ἐν ἀρχῇ revealing to readers the object of interest. However, the expected statement that God was present before creation does not appear. Instead, the Word, the subject of the clause, has been present for all eternity. The phrase also echoes the creation story in nature and context from Genesis 1:1, which John surely intended. The word ἀρχῇ refers to the beginning of history when there was naught. In the first verse, ἀρχῇ may be considered in a historical sense but also in a cosmological sense.

Λόγος, the Word, is used in context as a noun for Jesus Christ and is only found in verses 1 and 14. Thus, the phrase speaks to Jesus Christ himself as existing before creation (although his preexistence is not unambiguously stated) and with a timeless undefinable origin before creation. Jesus was not only the creator of all things but was also present at the beginning of history, before creation.

1:1b. καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.

and the Word was with [or in the presence of] God, and the Word was [or was fully] God.

The preposition πρὸς with an accusative object is normally translated as *with* (Louw 1996:791), but it also has the connotation of possessing common characteristics. The phrase πρὸς τὸν θεόν (*with God*) may then be interpreted as *in God's presence* or perhaps having a *personal relationship with God*. In context, Jesus was in God's presence at the moment of creation. Also note that God is placed first in the final clause, θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος signifying John's emphasis has moved to God as opposed to the Word. The subject (Word) has a preceding article and the predicate (God) does not, thus the phrase must be translated as *the Word was God*, not 'God was the Word.' The verse states the equivalence of the Word and God, neither has a superior or inferior position but both share divine characteristics thereby completely expressing the deity of Jesus Christ, the Word.

1:2. οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν.

This Word was in the beginning with God.

Οὗτος is a near demonstrative pronoun typically translated *this one* (Louw 1996:816). In context, the pronoun is referring to the Word. The seemingly redundant clause serves the valuable purpose of summing up and emphasizing the three important propositions presented in the first verse: the Word existed before creation, the Word was with God at the time of creation, and, the Word is God. The equivalence of deity of the first two persons of the Trinity (a concept that will remain undeveloped for centuries) is thus established.

1:3a. πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο,

All things through Him came [exist] to be,

The plural, neuter adjective πάντα is usually translated as *all, every* (Louw 1996:596) but in this pronominal form, *all things* or *everything* is expected.

The sum of a collection of things is in view, emphasizing the great number of different created things rather than a group of parts that define a whole. *All things* is emphasized because it is at the beginning of the clause—not a single thing came into being that wasn't made by the Word. The second word in this clause is *διὰ* and with a genitive object is a genitive of means, which points to the causative agent (Louw 1996:796). Thus, *though/by Him* all things were made. Viewed distributively, the Word created all things, one by one.

1:3b. *καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν ὃ γέγονεν.*

and without [apart from] Him [the Word] not even one [thing] came into being that has come into being.

Χωρὶς (with a genitive object) is a negative marker, such as *without, not with, no relationship to, or apart from*' (Louw 1996:791). *Οὐδέ ἓν* is an idiomatic statement *not even one* (Louw 1996:665). The aorist middle indicative verb *ἐγένετο* (*became, came into being*) may be contrasted with its cognate perfect active indicative verb *γέγονεν* (*come into being*) is a grammatical means of emphasizing creation itself as *becoming* from the Word, as opposed to *being* (v. 1) when speaking of the Word himself. The contrasting verbs reveal that although creation by the Word occurred at a point in time in the past (*ἐγένετο*) its significance continues to unfold (*γέγονεν*).

1:4a. *ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν,*

In Him [the Word] was life,

The verb *ἦν* is not spatial or temporal but rather the source of life. The noun *ζωή* refers to both spiritual and physical life (Morris 1995:72, Beasley-Murray 2002:11).

1:4b. *καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων*

and the life [the Word] was the light of [for] humanity [men].

Jesus Christ (the Word) brought light to all people. In this metaphor, light symbolizes the Word bringing illumination or knowledge about divine truth to every human being. This knowledge includes the ability to discern God's will and our personal sinful nature.

1:5a. *καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει,*

And the light shines in the darkness,

The present, active, indicative verb *φαίνει* (*shines*) has the sense of producing light, such as heavenly bodies or fires (Louw 2006:172). The shining light is a reference to Jesus Christ (Beasley-Murray 2002:31) rather than an impersonalized light (Morris 1995:31).

Beasley-Murray (2002:121) notes that even pagan Greeks would agree with John's description of creation. John now introduces the duality of light and darkness that becomes a central theme of the remainder of his gospel. However, it is at this point that John makes it clear that he is not describing a Greek dualistic creation standing in equal opposites because light soon overcomes darkness. The present tense verb (shines) suggests the shining occurred and continues to shine to today. The noun σκοτία (*darkness*) is likened to the realm of spiritual darkness where sin and evil abide (Louw 2006:755).

1:5b. καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν.

and [yet] the darkness did not overcome [recognize, comprehend] it.

The aorist, active, indicative verb κατέλαβεν has a very wide semantic range, such as *to grasp* or *to understand*, or *to comprehend* (Louw 2006:382, 473). In the present usage, the sense is either the darkness was unable (actually, impossible) to overcome or conquer the light (Morris 1995) or people were unable or unwilling to comprehend or understand the light, that is, the truth of Jesus Christ (Beasley-Murray 2002), (KJV, NASB). Fallen humanity will consciously reject the light in favour of darkness. Louw (2006:382) suggests that John may have used a wordplay with οὐ κατέλαβεν and a dual meaning of *not comprehend* and *not overcome*. John often uses such wordplays in his Gospel and this interpretation best fits the context. The indicative aorist tense summarizes events from the time of creation, to the time Jesus was alive on the earth, and through the completion of the Church Age (Beasley-Murray 2002:11). At no time does darkness either defeat or comprehend the person and work of Jesus Christ.

3.3 John 1:6-8: The Witness of John the Baptizer

3.3.1 Passage Final Translation

There was a man having been sent from God, whose name was John. This one came as a witness so that he might testify about the light, so that all might believe through him. That one was not the light but he came so that he might testify about the light.

3.3.2 Analysis of the Grammar and Key Words

1:6. Ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος, ἀπεσταλμένος παρὰ θεοῦ, ὄνομα αὐτῷ Ἰωάννης.

There was a man having been sent [commissioned] from God, whose name (was) John.)

John the Baptizer, as the forerunner and witness of Jesus Christ, now makes an unexpected appearance in the Prologue.

The verb ἐγένετο is the aorist middle indicative of γίνομαι meaning *to be* or *to become* (Louw 2006:810). The aorist verb in this clause describes a completed action thus introducing and inserting John the Baptizer into the storyline, so the best interpretation is *There was*. The perfect passive participle ἀπεσταλμένος refers to the sender instead of the person sent and as a completed action so *having been sent* is a proper translation. Louw (2006:190) describes the sending action as having a specific reason, as noted above. Finally, the preposition παρά with a genitive object reflects the agent of the action, God. John the Baptizer, the last of the Old Testament prophets, was sent by God to bring a message of repentance to the Jews, and to be the first prophet to proclaim the arrival of the Word.

1:7a. οὗτος ἦλθεν εἰς μαρτυρίαν ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ φωτός,

This one [John] came as a witness [for the purpose of] testimony so that [in order that] he might testify about the light,

Verse 7 begins with the preposition εἰς with an accusative object showing intent with perhaps an expected result (Louw 2006:783). The best translation is *for the purpose of* or *for*. The preposition περὶ with a genitive object (φωτός) describes the content of the object, *about* or *concerning*. The subjective verb μαρτυρήσῃ may imply uncertainty, although most scholars interpret the verb as *to testify*. The purpose of John the Baptizer is to give personal testimony or to speak of the actions of the Word based on personal knowledge (Louw 2006:417). Note the double reference to the testimony μαρτυρίαν ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ (*testimony in order to testify*) as emphasis, thus indicating the importance of the testimony of John the Baptizer about the light.

1:7b. ἵνα πάντες πιστεύσωσιν δι' αὐτοῦ.

so that all might believe through him.

The conjunction ἵνα is a marker for a final purpose clause, typically translated as *in order to*, *for the purpose of*, *so that* (Louw 2006:784). The aorist active subjunctive verb πιστεύσωσιν communicates uncertainty, so it is best translated as *might believe*. Humanity is expected to place its trust in Jesus Christ, the object of belief in this phrase, based on John's witness. The object of the clause is Christ, although some suggest the object is the truth about Jesus, the message of John the Baptizer, or the light. However, unlike the apostle Paul who often packed prepositions with great theological meaning, the apostle John seems to use Jesus as the object of faith rather than as the agent of faith.

In addition, the subject of verse 7 and verse 8 is John the Baptizer, so interpreting the pronoun as Christ is an unnatural interpretation. The best interpretation is John the Baptizer is making an introduction of Jesus Christ to the Jews, and thus to humanity.

1:8. οὐκ ἦν ἐκεῖνος τὸ φῶς, ἀλλ' ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ φωτός.

That one [John] was not the light but (he came) so that [in order that] he might testify about [concerning] the light.

The far demonstrative pronoun ἐκεῖνος refers to *that one*, a reference to an 'entity' that is outside of the current discussion (Louw 2006:816). The word ἀλλ' (in crasis form) is a marker of a pending, more emphatic contrast (Louw 2006:791), *but* or *instead* are commonly used. The word ἵνα is a marker of purpose typically translated as *in order to* or merely *to*. The verb *to come* is implicit. As in verse 7, the aorist active subjunctive μαρτυρέω is best interpreted as *he might testify*. This is the purpose of the coming of John the Baptizer. The preposition περὶ with a genitive object is properly translated as *about* or *concerning*. John the Baptizer was not the light but rather he came so that he might testify about his personal knowledge about the light (Jesus Christ).

The negative unequivocal truth *John was not the light* serves to emphasize the positive statement in verse 7 that John came to testify about the light. But John the Baptizer isn't the light. John's negative statement was made to reinforce the importance of the coming ministry of the incarnate Christ. John the Baptizer was the first and foremost witness of the arrival of the Messiah.

3.4 John 1:9-13: The Light Enters the World

3.4.1 Passage Text and Final Translation

9. The true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. 10. He was in the world, and the world was created through Him, yet the world did not recognize Him. 11. He came to His own, but His own people did not accept Him. 12. But as many as accepted Him, He gave them the right to be children of God, to the ones believing in His name, 13. who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, or of the will of a man, but of God.

3.4.2 Analysis of the Grammar and Key Words

1:9. Ἦν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν, ὃ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον, ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον.

The true [authentic] light, who (gives) light [enlightenment] to humanity [everyone], was coming into the world.

The adjective ἀληθινόν refers to something that is *true* or *genuine* (Louw 2006:674). Beasley-Murray (2002:12) translates the word as *authentic*. The present, active, indicative verb φωτίζει suggests *giving light to, enlightening, or illuminating*. Thus, the true light illuminates humanity, that is, the Word has been revealed in sufficient detail for humanity to understand the message of the Word. Also, the present middle/passive participle ἐρχόμενον may be translated as *coming*. The noun κόσμον normally refers to the earth, the place where humanity lives, or all the inhabitants of the earth. Not only was the light sufficient to enlighten humanity, the light was coming into the world where humanity resides.

The grammatical challenge with this verse is identifying the subject of the verb ἦν (was) that begins the final clause (Morris 1995:83). The subject of ἦν is the true light which requires combining the verbs ἦν and the present middle/passive participle ἐρχόμενον (*coming*), thus *the true light was coming*. This interpretive option is consistent with the context of the Prologue, that is, the Word will illuminate humanity and the Word is coming. It is also preferred as it produces a more literal translation that is focused on the actions of the light (the Word). The light shines on all of humanity in order to provide necessary spiritual understanding for the purposes of salvation (Rom 1:20).

What remains is John's concept of how the Light illuminates humanity (ὁ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον). One view is the true Light has shone on every person since creation and continues today. This view is consistent with the generally-accepted view of General Revelation. Internal illumination of all humanity by the Light leaves all persons without excuse before Christ. Another view is Jesus is the Light for humanity, although it is clear from the text that many will reject Jesus. The Light may also illuminate externally, that is, an objective illumination of the world by the coming of the Word. Once again, John likely has dual meanings in mind for φωτίζει: the Light internally illumines humanity in terms of General Revelation but also the mere presence of the Light spiritually illuminates all humanity, not just the Jews.

10a. ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν,

He was in the world,

The subject is denoted by the pronoun *He* because the object is masculine (τῷ κόσμῳ). The pronoun refers to *the Light* that was coming in the previous verse. The Word *was* and the Light *was coming* give the arrival a progressive sense, a building of tension for the reader that will peak with verse 14 when the Word arrives incarnate.

This is a reference to the Word as preexistent as well as his presence in the world prior to and after his physical birth. The noun *κόσμῳ* is usually a reference to the earth, the home of humanity, although in context it is very likely a reference to the Jews or Israel in particular.

1:10b. *καὶ ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο,*

and the world was created [came into being (existence)] through Him,

In the second clause, the aorist middle indicative verb *ἐγένετο* may be translated as *to come into being* or *come into existence* (Beasley-Murray 2002:12). The preposition *δι'* with a genitive object is best translated as *through*. The context of the noun *κόσμος* in the second clause is slightly different from its usage in the first clause. Here the term points to all the created things on the earth, which includes humanity. This reference may also be to John's progressive use of *κόσμος*, suggesting an expansive use of the term to include the entire universe of created things (cf. Col 1:16–17). The context of verse 10 is best viewed as the coming of the Word, the promised Deliverer, as the prophet John the Baptizer declared.

1:10c. *καὶ ὁ κόσμος αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔγνω.*

[yet] the world [all of humanity] did not recognize [acknowledge] Him.

The third clause once again begins with the conjunction *καὶ* (and yet) with the context of 'surprise' and 'unexpectedness' much like the beginning of verse 5 (Louw 2006:811). The aorist active indicative verb *ἔγνω* preceded by *οὐκ* may be interpreted as not recognizing or not acknowledging. This a reference to those who do not acknowledge or believe the Word (Jesus Christ). Given John's intended audience, his two references to *κόσμος* in this verse may be intended to be interpreted by the Jews as applying to themselves as well as the Gentiles, although in a more general manner. The reference to Israel may also be a synecdoche for all of humanity.

1:11a *εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν,*

He came to [his] own (people),

The neuter adjective *ἴδια* can be translated one's own [things] although in context it is better translated as his own (NASB) or the exclusive property of someone (Louw 2006:557).

John has been building anticipation for readers in his description of the Word with a series of carefully chosen verbs: the Word was before time began (v. 1a, 2), was in the presence of God (v. 1b), was the source of life (v. 4a), was the light for humanity (v. 4b), was coming into the world (v. 9), and was in the world (v. 10a). The climax is the Word came to His people. The aorist active indicative verb ἦλθεν means, in context, He came. The clause is thus translated as He came to His own [people].

Various options have been suggested for the implicit subject of the clause. Hendriksen (1953:80) and Morris (1995:86) suggest the land of Israel. Louw (2006:112) suggests the phrase means His own people. A more expansive view, particularly because the previous verse referenced the entire world, is the subject of the clause is the entire world. The world is the creation and the property of the Word (Beasley-Murray 2002:95–96). Therefore, Jesus came not just to the Jews but to all people, which is consistent with the context of verses 10–11. This view has much to recommend it, given that John’s gospel was very likely written to Gentiles as well as diaspora Jews, although both views have merit. There is a possibility that John was again intentionally ambiguous given his eclectic audience.

1:11b. καὶ οἱ ἴδιοι αὐτὸν οὐ παρέλαβον.

but [and] [His] own [people] did not accept [receive, welcome] Him.

The verse continues with οἱ ἴδιοι, a masculine plural adjectival phrase meaning His own with an implicit subject people, as discussed above. The aorist active indicative verb παρέλαβον has the meaning to accept or to welcome as a guest (Louw 2006:452) plus a negation. Thus, the clause may be literally interpreted as His own people [the Jews] did not accept Him.

1:12a ὅσοι δὲ ἔλαβον αὐτόν,

But as many as [All who] received [accepted] Him,

The plural pronoun ὅσοι means *as many as* or *all who* in a comparison of quantities sense (Louw 2006:594). Once again, the aorist active indicative ἔλαβον has the meaning of *to accept* or *to receive* although in a positive sense, thus, *But as many as received Him*. The KJV and NASB render these verbs as *(not) received-receive* in verses 11–12. *Accept* has a more contextually correct connotation, because it requires action on the part of the recipient. *Receive* appears to be too passive for the context of verses 11–12. So, the clause may be rendered as *But as many as received Him . . .*

1:12b. ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν τέκνα θεοῦ γενέσθαι,

He gave them (the) right [authority, privilege] to be [become] (the) children of God,

The aorist active indicative ἔδωκεν with αὐτοῖς is simply *He gave to them*. The aorist middle infinitive γενέσθαι describes the ability to *acquire* or *experience a state* (Louw 2006:153). The concept is being given the ability or authority, derived from a rightful source, to change one's state or condition of being. This may also be a reference to God's authorization to become his children.

The aorist middle infinitive γενέσθαι may be rendered *to become* this new state. The phrase τέκνα θεοῦ γενέσθαι describes the result of the change of being, that is, those who believe have the authority or have been offered the privilege of becoming a child of God.

The noun τέκνα, never singular, is often a reference to biological children or close personal relationships (Louw 2006:109). We do not become God's biological children, but God changes our status before him from estrangement into a close personal relationship, certainly a brand new existence. New believers are children of God who immediately embark on a life-long journey of progressively becoming more like the Father. Finally, the aorist tenses of ἔλαβον (*received*) and ἔδωκεν (*gave*) suggest the two events occur simultaneously. When one receives Jesus as Lord one immediately becomes a child of God with all the benefits and responsibilities thereof.

1:12c. τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ,

to the ones believing in His name,

The final clause of this verse adds a condition or restriction to the right or authority of humanity to become children of God. The present active participle πιστεύουσιν means *believing* with the concept of complete trust and reliance (Louw 2006:375). The ones believing in his name, that is, the ones who place their complete trust in the person and work of Jesus are the ones who have been given the authority or ability to become children of God.

1:13a. οἳ οὐκ ἐξ αἱμάτων

who [the (ones)] were born, not of bloods [blood],

Verse 13 describes the subsequent spiritual rebirth that follows belief in his name. What follows are three different situations that demonstrate that spiritual rebirth is not linked in any way to natural or worldly influences. First, becoming a child of God does not occur from natural reproductive processes.

The genitive plural noun *αἱμάτων* is literally translated as *bloods*. A literal translation is *The ones not from bloods*. The plural may be based on the ancient belief that the natural process of procreation requires the mixing of the blood of the parents. Being born into the family of God is not based on the blood or ethnic origin of the parents. John is likely making the case that Jewish heritage and thus covenantal inclusiveness does not constitute spiritual rebirth.

1:13b οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος σαρκὸς

nor of [the] will of the flesh,

The second means by which a person is able to become a child of God is through natural procreation. The aorist middle indicative verb *θελήματος* is a reference to human will or desire. Louw (2006:291) describes *σαρκὸς θέλημα* (literally, *desire of the flesh*) as an idiom describing sexual or physical desire. The noun *σαρκὸς* is a reference to human desire or human nature. This is not a statement of illicit desire, but is a reference to what is a natural sexual desire that results in human reproduction.

1:13c οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος ἀνδρὸς ἀλλ' ἐκ θεοῦ ἐγεννήθησαν.

nor of (the) will of a man but of [to be given birth from] God.

The third factor that does not influence spiritual rebirth is the will or desire of a particular person. The noun *θελήματος*, as in the prior clause, is a reference to a human will or desire, in this case, a reference to the singular noun *ἀνδρὸς*. The phrase *θελήματος ἀνδρὸς* is like that of a husband's desire for children. The aorist passive indicative verb *ἐγεννήθησαν* is literally to give birth. In context, the passive means to be given birth. The act of spiritual regeneration or rebirth originates only from God (*ἐκ θεοῦ ἐγεννήθησαν*) and not from the desires of a person or persons. God himself (*ἐκ θεοῦ*) is the source of the rebirth, which is a metaphor for a new spiritual life.

Taken as a whole, the verse emphasizes with a series of three negatives that all natural factors in the birth process, which are under the control of individuals, are excluded from a spiritual birth, which is a work of God alone. Humanity has been given the power to become children of God, but spiritual rebirth is solely a work of God. Spiritual rebirth stands opposed to the Jewish view that mere physical birth as a Jew makes one a child of God.

3.5 John 1:14-18: The Word Became Flesh

3.5.1 Passage Text and Final Translation

14. *The Word became flesh and took up residence among us, and we saw His glory, glory as the One and Only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. 15. John testified concerning Him and has proclaimed saying, ‘This was the One of whom I said, ‘The One coming after me is greater than me, because He existed before me.’ 16. Indeed, we have all received grace after grace from His fullness, 17. for the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18. No one has ever seen God; the One and Only Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He has made Him known.*

3.5.2 Analysis of the Grammar and Key Words

1:14a. Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ,

And the Word became [came into being, born] flesh [man] and took up residence [lived, dwelt] among us, and we saw [observed, beheld] His glory,

The grammatical construction of this sentence is awkward. It begins with the main clause that describes the incarnation of the Word into flesh, then it adds a spatial or temporal dimension, and ends with testimony that confirms the divinity of the Word incarnate. This is not a statement that Jesus ceased to be what he was before, that is, 100% divine. In context, the noun *σὰρξ* means the Word *became* (*ἐγένετο*, from verse 10b, *came into being, made, born*) flesh and blood, 100% a human being. Note that Jesus became *man* and not ‘a man’ (Westcott 1908:10). Jesus was human, but not like any particular human being. The Word has taken the world as a new home since verse 1 states the Word’s home is with the Father.

Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο also links back to verse 3 in which πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο. All things came to be through the work of the Word and through the Word, the Word became flesh. The literal concept behind ἐσκήνωσεν is to ‘pitch one’s tent’ much in the same way that God took up residence in the Tabernacle in the time of Moses. The Jews met God in the Tent of the Meeting and today humanity may meet Jesus Christ, divine, yet clothed in humanity. The concept of *dwelt* may be ingressive (*began to dwell*) or complexive (*dwelt completely*). Both views may correctly describe Jesus’ incarnation. The divine Word clothed in humanity lived among humanity, although temporarily.

The aorist middle indicative verb ἑθεασάμεθα (*we saw, we beheld*) refers to those who personally beheld the glory of Jesus Christ or perhaps more narrowly as the apostolic witnesses. Those who saw or beheld his glory were followers who personally came into contact with Jesus, witnessed the miracles he performed, and his death and resurrection (Beasley-Murray 2005:13–14).

However, the apostle John (and the Synoptics) relate episodes when many people beheld Jesus' ministry, his miracles, and even his resurrection, yet without experiencing a heart change. These people saw and heard but did not understand. Thus, those who beheld his glory were not only personal witnesses of Jesus' ministry but also those who experienced the life-changing grace and spiritual rebirth that comes with being a child of God.

John's reference to his glory (τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ) also brings to mind the God's visible presence as he took his place in the Tent of the Meeting. This glory is a visible glory described as brilliance or radiance. The following clause further unpacks John's understanding of τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ.

1:14b. δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας.

glory as the (of) [unique] only one and only (begotten, one) from [of] (the) Father, full [complete] of grace and truth.

The second half of verse 14 begins with the word glory, and it is immediately followed with the comparative ὡς (*as*) thereby offering a comparison of God's glory with that of the Father's only Son. The adjective μονογενοῦς can be translated as *only begotten* (only KJV, NASB) or as *the one and only* (e.g. NIV, NET) son. The definition must also communicate the uniqueness of the Son, that is, the only one of its kind. There has never been, nor will there ever be another Son of God.

The clause πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας describes the one and only Son of the Father as being πλήρης (*full or complete*) with the qualities of χάριτος (*grace: mercy, compassion, love*) and ἀληθείας (*truth*). The clause modifies the *only begotten (one)*, not *glory*, as believed by a minority of commentators (i.e. the *glory* was full of grace and truth). God's χάριτος (*grace*) is the showing of kindness or graciousness to another (Louw 2006:748). God's ἀληθείας (*truth*) is a statement of the Word also having God's intrinsic property of absolute truth or truth revelation. The Word has the identical eternal and divine properties of grace and truth exhibited by the Father.

The following preposition *παρὰ* with a genitive object means *of* or *from* (as v. 6) the Father. If the preposition is translated as *from* then the implied word *coming* must be supplied and *coming from the Father* could modify either *only begotten* or *glory*. Beasley-Murray (2006:14–15) suggests the phrase as modifying the *only begotten* Son. The better view is that it's the Son's glory that is in view.

The Son's glory isn't derived from the Father because he is the Father's One and Only but because the Son's divinity is equivalent to the Father. The Son is equally deserving of the inscription grace and truth.

1:15 Ἰωάννης μαρτυρεῖ περὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ κέκραγεν λέγων· οὗτος ἦν ὃν εἶπον· ὁ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος ἔμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν, ὅτι πρῶτός μου ἦν.

John testified concerning [about] Him and has proclaimed saying, 'This was the One of whom I said [speak], The One coming after me is greater than [surpassed, in front of] me, because He existed before me.'

The perfect active indicative verb *κέκραγεν* means *proclaims* or *shouts out* (Louw 2006:398). In this verse, the perfect tense is properly interpreted as a present tense. The verbs *κέκραγεν* (*proclaims*) and *μαρτυρεῖ* (present active indicative, *testifies*) form a hendiadys that describes John the Baptizer's continuing ministry. A hendiadys is usually two nouns (or verbs) conjoined with an 'and' that may be rewritten as a single descriptive phrase. In this verse, the two verbs may be expressed as *loudly testifies* so the verse (unexpectedly) can be termed a hendiadys. The effect is to strongly express the present reality of John the Baptizer's proclamation of his prophetic message.

The phrase *οὗτος ἦν ὃν εἶπον* may be literally translated as *this One was who/whom I say/tell* or better, *this One was [He of] whom I speak/said*. The aorist active indicative verb *εἶπον* (saying) is an indicator of a quoted statement that follows. The article *ὁ* is usually translated a definite article, but when standing alone *he* is required. The present passive participle *ἐρχόμενος* (*He comes*) has as its subject the pronoun *ὁ*. The prepositions *ἔμπροσθέν* (*in front or before* [Louw 2006:716]) and *ὀπίσω* (*after* [Louw 2006:469]) describe physical or special positions, in front of and following, respectively. The perfect active indicative verb *γέγονεν* describes *to come into existence* (Louw 2006:157). Literally, this phrase may now be rendered as *He [who] follows me comes, in front of me came into existence, because first me was*.

The phrase *because first me was* is a ὅτι expegetical clause because it provides further clarification or explanation of what was just said (Wallace 1995:459). The adjective πρῶτός signifies the first at a point in time.

The majority view is this is a reference to a superior position (Morris 1995:96, Beasley-Murray 2002:15), which is certainly true in a divine as well as an ontological sense. This view is also consistent with the Jewish belief that the wisdom of age placed someone superior to another of lesser age. However, the Prologue, thus far, reveals that the Word was divine, the creator, and preexistent. The better view is the Word has a superior position because of His preexistence.

The Word also comes before him in importance (*has a higher rank than I* [NASB], *greater than I* [NET]) because the Word was the author of all creation. In other words, the One coming after me is greater than me because he was preexistent. By making this statement, John intentionally links the glory, grace, and truth demonstrated by God to the same characteristics found in the Word. Then in verse 16, John expands the presence of the divine grace and truth present in the Word (*His fullness*) as gifts to all those who have received him and become children of God (v. 12).

1:16 ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἐλάβομεν καὶ χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος.

Because we have all received grace after grace from His fullness,

The apostle John is now speaking, not John the Baptizer. The noun πληρώματος describes the completeness (*fullness* by KJV, NASB, NET) of the Word and refers back to *full of grace and truth* in verse 14. God is the source of grace and truth. The aorist plural ἐλάβομεν preceded by ἡμεῖς πάντες may be translated as *we all have received*. The preposition ἀντὶ with a genitive object signifies *upon* or *after* so that the phrase χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος may be rendered *grace upon grace*. The NET bible interprets this phrase as *one gracious gift after another*. This phrase functions as an explanation of the first half of the verse. The Word is the source of an unending stream of grace to those that who are the children of God. This grace given is a reflection of the inexhaustible supply of God's grace (Louw 2006:748) and that grace is freely given (Louw 2006:568).

1:17 ὅτι ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωϋσέως ἐδόθη, ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐγένετο.

for the law was given [granted, imparted] through Moses, grace and truth came through [was imparted] through Jesus Christ.

The word ὅτι (*because, for*) begins an exegetical clause, verse 16. The verse explains the source of the grace upon grace that is received by believers. A comparison is offered with the grace the Law provides through Moses and the grace that comes through Jesus Christ. The aorist passive indicative verb ἐδόθη is best translated as *was given* or *was granted*. The Law was given by God *through Moses*. The aorist middle indicative verb ἐγένετο means *came through, was imparted* or *happened*.

The concept is something of value was transferred (Louw 2006:565). The preposition διὰ with a genitive object means *through*. Because the Law was given by Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Note the three contrasting relationships between the Law given through Moses and grace and truth through Jesus Christ. First is a comparison of the Law with grace and truth. The Law came through God's *loving kindness and truth* (Exodus 34:6) but now grace and truth have been personally delivered to humanity by the Son of God. Second is a comparison of Moses with Jesus Christ. Moses, a human being, delivered the Law that was provided by God. The ultimate expression of God's love was delivered by grace and truth: Jesus Christ incarnate. Finally, grace and truth were *given by* Jesus Christ instead of imparted through Moses. Moses was the vessel through which God delivered the Law to the Jews. Jesus Christ himself imparted grace and truth to all those who accepted him. Taken together, the grace and truth imparted by Jesus Christ are superior in all ways to the Law given by God through Moses to the Jews. Christ was operating through his personal character and love for humanity. Moses, a servant of God, gave the Law in obedience to God's command.

1.18a Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε.

No one has ever seen God;

The perfect active indicative verb ἑώρακεν means 'has seen'. The adverb πώποτε means *ever* (Louw 2006:620) or perhaps *at any time* (NASB). Thus the phrase may be judged as: *No one has ever seen God*. There is not universal agreement with the interpretation *has seen* as a reference to physical sight. Morris (1995:100) points out that although some have been given partial visions of God, no one has seen or can comprehend God. Therefore, God can only be *seen* through Jesus Christ.

1.18b μονογενῆς θεὸς ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο.

(the) only (one), Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has made (Him) known.

The adjective *μονογενής*, as in verse 14, describes *one that is unique or one of a kind*. The NET Bible translates *μονογενής θεός* as *the only one, himself God*. A better translation is *the one and only God*. The phrase *μονογενής θεός* is implicitly a statement that Jesus Christ is God, according to Beasley-Murray (2004:15–16). A better view is the statement is implicitly about the equivalence of Jesus Christ and God, or in mathematical terms, Jesus Christ = God while still having the closest possible relationship with each other.

This verse also form an inclusio with verse 1 to conclude the Prologue. In verse 1 we learn that the Word = God, in a mathematical sense. If verse 18 states Jesus Christ = God, then John has told us that the Word = Jesus Christ.

The noun *κόλπο* means *bosom* and describes one who is close to the Father's heart or one *who is in closest fellowship with the Father* (NET). An intimate relationship with the Father is in view.

The demonstrative pronoun *ἐκεῖνος* is emphatic and literally means *He (Himself) made him known*. The aorist middle indicative verb *ἐξηγήσατο* means to 'make something fully known by careful explanation or by clear revelation' (Louw 2006:339). The second definition is more to the point. God has made *His invisible attributes . . . eternal power and divine nature* known to humanity by clear and convincing revelation (Rom 1:20). This clause reads thus: *the one and only God, who is in the bosom of God, that One [Jesus Christ] has made Him known*.

4. Summary and Conclusions

The Greek vocabulary found in the Prologue is deceptively simple yet, as shown, the Christological theology of the Prologue is quite complex with its many layers and profound in its revealing of the relationship of Jesus Christ and God. The following are ten essential emphases of John's *Logos* Christology found in the Prologue derived from the exegesis.

1. Jesus Christ is preexistent and eternal (John 1:1a, 2). The *Λόγος* (Word, Jesus Christ) was present before creation. The *Logos* preceded creation and was present with God when the universe was created. Even before the creation of the heavens and the earth (cf. Gen 1:1), Jesus Christ was present, in a historical and a cosmological sense. Jesus Christ shares eternity with God.

2. Jesus Christ is divine (1:1b, 2, 3a). The fully divine Jesus Christ exists as a separate person in this revealing of the first two persons of the Trinity (a concept that will be developed later in church history, but used here for descriptive clarity).

Jesus Christ enjoys a unique position in creation because of his close, very personal relationship with the Father, distinctive of the Trinity. The *Logos* is in the presence of God. The *Logos*, however, is a distinct person yet has the fully divine nature and attributes of God, yet he is God. Because Jesus Christ shares God's divine nature, he is not a created being.

3. Jesus Christ is the creator of all things (1:3). Every single thing that has ever been created was created by the *Logos*.

The *Logos* was the sole agent of creation and that consummate act of creation continues today. Jesus Christ is the creator of all physical life and the creator of all inanimate objects, including the basic elements from which all of creation emanates—Jesus Christ created all things *ex nihilo* (out of nothing).

4. Jesus Christ is the source of humanity's spiritual enlightenment (1:4–5, 9). A spiritual, divine light has been present in every human being from creation. The light shone throughout the Old Testament beginning with the *Proto-Evangelium* (Gen 3:15), the Passover Lamb, the serpent lifted up in Numbers 21:8 (cf. John 3:14, 15), and, the sacrificial shedding of blood found in the Levitical laws. The light shone in the New Testament with the birth of Jesus, his crucifixion, his resurrection and ascension, and his exaltation in heaven. The light shone in his free offer of salvation.

The light continues to shine today in a dark and evil world, and will continue to shine into the future. This spiritual light provides sufficient wisdom to each person to discern the existence of God (General Revelation), apprehend one's sinful nature, and the ability to recognize divine truth (internal moral compass). Implicit in this statement is that the *Logos* is the source of salvation for humanity. These and other divine attributes were revealed to sinful humanity by Jesus Christ.

5. John the Baptizer called for repentance, heralded the coming of the Messiah (1:6–8, 15). John the Baptizer, the exemplar of his never-ending light that shines upon humanity, came to proclaim the coming of the Redeemer, Jesus Christ. John the Baptizer came to bring testimony and a call to repentance to the Jews. John the Baptizer introduced Messiah Jesus Christ to all humanity. John was a man, commissioned by God, and God's agent who testified of the coming Light to humanity.

Jesus Christ *was* from eternity past, is the *Logos*, is himself God, is the true spiritual Light to humanity, and is the object of our faith. The apostle John quotes John the Baptizer as saying Jesus Christ is greater than himself in all aspects (v. 15). John the Baptizer was chronologically older in human days, but Jesus Christ was his senior based on his divinity, eternity, and glory.

6. A majority of fallen humanity rejects spiritual enlightenment (1:5, 10–11). Fallen humanity will continue to reject the true Light and intentionally embrace the darkness. Yet the Light, the object of our faith, continues to shine. The Jews and the world (lit. a large portion of humanity) did not acknowledge him (v. 10b) or show hospitality (v. 11b).

Those people who have voluntarily accepted spiritual darkness and suppressed the spiritual light present in all people (cf. 1:4b) are implicitly liable for God's righteous judgment. Rejection of the Light tacitly includes an active resistance or a hostility towards the spiritual light.

7. A minority of fallen humanity embraces spiritual enlightenment, become children of God (1:12–13). The great majority of Jews who heard Jesus speak rejected Messiah Jesus, but a few individuals, not limited to Jewish descent or nationality, did accept Jesus' salvific message (lit. *believed in His name*) and were adopted into the Kingdom of God and, irrespective of nationality or ethnicity, became children of God. The will of an individual may not establish this spiritual relationship. At the moment a person *receives Him*, that person also became a child of God, that is, one is *begotten* of God. The context supports the conclusion that more than intellectual knowledge or assent to the historical Jesus Christ is required (cf. v. 5).

8. Salvation is not the product of human work (1:12–13). This is a clear rejection of the Jewish view of their special relationship with God that ensured their communal righteousness based on keeping the Mosaic Law. Works righteousness does not produce salvation. In the same way, merely being biologically born into a particular ethnicity or belief system does not qualify a person to become a child of God.

9. Jesus Christ arrived incarnate in the world (1:14). In an act of supreme love, the *λόγος* took on the mantle of humanity while preserving his divine nature. Jesus is 100% human and 100% divine, '... concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ ...' (The Confession of Chalcedon).

The *Logos* lived among humanity taking on human nature yet remained without sin. During his earthly ministry, the apostle John and others personally observed, studied, composed, and reflected on his glory. John wished to fully comprehend the presence of the Son of God, the miracles he performed, and his death and resurrection. Jesus' glory was derived from his own being, not by virtue of his relationship with the Father. The *fullness* (cf. vv. 16–17) of God may be described as his grace and truth and because Jesus Christ reflects the Father, those attributes also describe the Messiah.

10. Jesus Christ is the source of grace and truth (16–18). The apostle John and others that believe in his name, will, from his fullness, continue to receive grace from Christ's infinite supply of grace, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

It is through the Father that grace and truth flowed through Jesus Christ to humanity, and therefore the actions of the Son bring glory to the Father.

While the Law came *through* Moses who never saw God, the grace that has been extended to humanity came *from* Jesus Christ, and is superior to that originating from Moses and the Law. Jesus Christ *see[s]* the Father in some unexplained manner. However, we may *see* God, through spiritual eyes by believing in his name and becoming a child of God. Thus, faith in Jesus Christ, who has an intimate relationship with the Father, is the only means by which the Father may be properly comprehended by humanity.

In Part II, an exegesis of the writings of Philo of Alexandria identifies and quantifies the key attributes of his logos philosophy, based upon Philo's contextual use of the term in his writings. Possible intersections of John's Λόγος Christology developed in Section 4 may then be compared and contrasted with Philo's logos philosophy. At that point important conclusions may be made concerning the purposes of John's Prologue.

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