



# CHANGE YOUR MIND

## The Beginning of Everything

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2025

John 1:1-13

The beginning of a New Year often marks the beginning of renewed efforts for transformation – change. This could be keeping a journal, increasing exercise, adjusting diet, new qualification, more reading, cleaner home, tidier mind, etc. And these can produce incredible benefits.

1 In this new six part series we are going to look in detail at the beginning of the gospel of John and how this can transform your mind, so you can think more

2 like Jesus every day. But let's start in Romans 12:1-2,

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup>And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

3 Three things we should notice that will help us get more from John 1. **Firstly**, the gospel of Jesus Christ calls us to surrender our whole bodies to God – including your minds. (Paul said in 2 Corinthians 10:5, 'bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ')

**Secondly**, do not be conformed to this world. You do not have to be shaped by the ways, and patterns, and thinking of this world. The world will tell you to conform or miss out. It's not true and you have a choice to make.

**Thirdly**, our minds need to be renewed. Without this renewal there will be no transformation. In other words Christian, if you keep thinking the same things you will keep doing the same things. If you want certain sinful habits out of your life you are going to have to change the way you think about everything.

4 Now for this transformation to occur we are going to be need to be taught by the Holy Spirit Himself who as John 16:13 says,

when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth

So practically, you need to show up and get connected every Sunday.

5 To summarise:

1. Surrender your mind/thinking to God
2. Stop being formed by all the thinking of this world
3. Start being transformed by changing the way you think

Now let us go to John's gospel and chapter 1. We will not have time to cover every single point that John raises, but I want to guide you through this so you can answer this question:

6 Does it matter how and why everything – the universe, life, even me – began? And does that have any relevance to my life in 2025?

Now I put it to you that yes, how and why life began; how and why you began, has a huge impact on how you live today.

7 Let's start with verses 1-3,

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

Jesus is the Word. Jesus was there at the beginning. Jesus was both fully God and with God – the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Everything was made through Jesus. Nothing that was made was made without Jesus. And that was the beginning of everything – except God Himself. John wrote 'He was' as in He had no beginning. Which is true as we find in Psalm 90:10,

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You *are* God.

In other words, before the beginning of everything God existed from eternity past – no beginning.

9 Now verses 4 and 5,

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

This everlasting God, Jesus Himself, who gave everything its beginning – including you and me – was also the light.

10 However there's a problem. **Our instinct as people who walk in darkness is to reject the light.** Like when someone turns the lights on in the morning and we hide under the duvet begging them to turn them off.

The natural response of darkness is rejection. A failure to grasp the needful reality of light. Literally we could not see Him as essential for life.

And the natural mind left to itself, will continue on this path of rejection of God as the beginning of everything and the sustainer of everything beyond the beginning.

11 And you might wonder is the natural mind really at odds with God. Let us see what God has said in His word, Hebrews 1:1-3,

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; <sup>3</sup>who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power,

12 You and I can come and go, and some would argue it doesn't make much difference if we were ever here. But if God's words stopped, if His sustaining power stopped, then we would be right back at Genesis 1:1 – darkness. The world says learning to do without God is true enlightenment.

So we cannot live without God and yet every breath we take will either be used to try and prove we can live without God or to prove we cannot live without God.

13 However, all is not lost. In John 1:6-7 we read,

There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John. <sup>7</sup>This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.

God sent John. John came to bear witness to the reality of the Light (Jesus Christ) and our need of the Light – that is, our need of Jesus Christ.

14 Whilst His own people rejected Him, there is something you need to hold onto in verse 12,

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

Receiving Christ as the beginning of everything; the Light of the world; accepting Him as the sustainer and giver of every good gift, changes everything.

15 Paul urges us to recognise this transformation in Ephesians 4:17-19,

This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles [unbelievers] walk, in the futility of their mind, <sup>18</sup>having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; <sup>19</sup>who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

16 What does Paul mean by the ‘futility of their mind’? He means living as if the light does not exist; as if life has no purpose, except what I choose to do with it; as if the beginning of everything has nothing to do with why I am here.

Notice also, everyone walks in the direction of their thoughts.

The hope in all this is that the Light still exists for our good even if we have chosen to reject rather than receive. Better than that, if you will receive the Light you too can be a child of God! Even better you can be transformed by having your mind renewed.

17

- When dark thoughts arise come back to the light
- When darkness seems to surround, you can surrender to the Light
- When life seems purposeless, you need to lift your eyes to see Him once again
- Acknowledge Him in all your ways
- Walk in the light as He is in the light (1 John 1:7) – daily in the word