

Outline of Fr. Patrick Winslow's Lecture on Lesson 1

A. What is a "word"?

1) A word is comprised of two parts:

- i. an outward, tangible, sensible and incarnate expression that points to
- ii. an invisible meaning or reality

2) Jesus is the outward, tangible, sensible and incarnate expression that manifests the invisible God.

- a) Jesus is not merely a visible sign pointing to an invisible reality. Jesus *is* that which He represents. He is God.
- b) Similarly for the Sacraments. They are not merely signs and symbols that point to some meaning and significance. They actually communicate what they signify. Sacraments make present the grace they signify.

3) The "words" used in John's Gospel are taken not only from the Greek language two-thousand years ago, but are also from the salvation history as presented in the Old Testament.

4) John uses double meaning:

- a) Words sometimes have more than a single meaning. Look at a dictionary.
- b) More so with Scriptural language - there is a common use and a Scriptural use. A word may mean much more than its secular meaning implies, e.g., words associated with the Exodus, the prophets, or the creation accounts in Genesis.

B. To say that the Word (Jesus) was in the beginning

1) Reveals that Jesus is divine and

2) Implies:

- a) Jesus is the One from whom all existence flows.
 - i. Jesus, as one with the Father and Holy Spirit, creates from nothing. This is distinctly divine. Man can only create by synthesis (bring things together).
 - ii. Jesus, divine in nature, sustains creation - if for one moment He ceased willing you to exist, you would cease to exist.
- b) Jesus is "in the beginning" in that He is first as a matter of time also of primacy. He is the One whom nothing is greater.
 - i. All that exists → two categories: that which is created and that which is not created. The only thing that belongs in the category of "uncreated" is God.

Jesus with the Father and Holy Spirit, are the only occupants of this category.

C. John connects his first words to the creation account in Genesis to show that Creation & Redemption are one seamless plan.

1) In the Creation account, the possibility of sin is the price God pays for our freedom.

a) Evidenced in the Original Sin. God makes us in His image and likeness - free persons with an intellectual soul to love and to be loved. The price paid for this freedom is the possibility for sin.

b) At creation this potential for sin is actualized in the Original Sin, and our need for Redemption is established.

2) Grief (suffering) is the price paid for love. With sin comes the need for redemption → linking creation and redemption. God's plan to redeem man is an act of His love that now requires suffering.

a) Sin gives rise to grief and suffering. God (who is Love) creates man in His image (with freedom); man sins (Original sin) and gives rise to grief.

→ Grief is the price paid for love - look at the Passion of Christ.

3) With Jesus there is a new creation.

a) Humanity can become divinized (incorporated into divine life as true children of God) through the Word made flesh and his redemptive work.

D. John the Baptist is the prophet who serves to connect (a) the Old Covenant that established the *order of nature* to (b) the New Covenant that *infuses that nature with grace*.

1) The incarnation (God becoming man) is the first and primary event that infuses nature with grace.

2) John (the Evangelist) suggests that there may have been some who were unable to make this transition and became stuck on John (the Baptist) himself. The Christian faith depends upon making this transition.