

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

John 1:1-18

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The Mystery of The Incarnation

John 1:14, *“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.”* The Word became flesh. And to grasp that, we must think of who the Word is, and then what it means that the Word became flesh.

So, go back to the 1st five verses and we get John’s introduction to the Word, where he says, *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.”*

The first 3 words of John, *“in the beginning”* brings us back to the first 3 words of the Bible, where also we have the exact 3 words. In Genesis 1, we have the record of creation, as God, the eternal God, brought into being the world that He made. That’s when time and all things as we know them began.

The Word is God Eternal

John 1v1, however takes us way back into a timeless existence before the creation of all things. John puts it this way, *“In the beginning was the Word (v1)He was in the beginning with God(v2).”* In other words, the Word was present before creation, before the beginning began. His existence is eternal.

The Word refers to a person, given the pronoun “He.” The person is none other than Lord Jesus Christ. The same John in Revelation 19: 13, tells us, he saw heaven opened and the Lord returning on a white horse, clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called the Word of God.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God.” In this statement we find both personality and distinction. The idea is that the Word was face to face with God, where there is a personal relationship with the two.

John also undeniably, reveals the deity of the Word, *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”* The Word, who is Jesus, possesses all the attributes of the essence of God. He is not a god, nor was He created, for He was one with God, before the foundation of the world.

The Word Was the Agent of Creation

Then it becomes even more clear, that this Word was the agent of creation. You see that in verse 3. *“All things were made through Him, and without Him was nothing was made that was made.”* Psalm 33:6, tells us *‘By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all the hosts of them by the breath of His mouth.’*

You remember that refrain, *“And God said...and there was.”* *“God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light.”* God created through His Word. He spoke and things came into existence. In the 1st creation, darkness was upon the face of the deep waters, until God called light in to being.

In John 1, John is using that language to introduce for us the concept of new creation. A second type of creation. Through faith in Christ, who is the living Word and true Light of the world, people can become new creations. God calls them out of darkness and into His marvelous light. Giving them the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Christ (2 Cor.4:6). As new creations, they are born again, from above! Born of God and created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness (Eph. 4:24).

The Word is Life and Light

We move from creation in v3, to illumination in verses, 4 and 5. *“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness have not overcome it.* Then in verses 9-10, *“That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.*

The Word is the light and life of all humanity. He gives everyone physical life and the natural illumination of reason. But He is especially the source of spiritual life and spiritual illumination of born-again believers.

The entrance of sin brought darkness in the minds of men. It plunged the world into darkness in the sense that men in general neither know God nor want to know Him. Jesus said in John 8:12, *“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.* Light and life go together! In John 10:10,” Jesus says, *“I have come that they may have life, and they may have it more abundantly.”*

The Word Dwelt Among Men

We have seen something about who this Word is and was in those first five verses and then in verse 14, we are told, *“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”*

He doesn't simply say that God became man. Of course, he means that, but he uses this word, "flesh", for a reason. Why does he use the word, "flesh."? Well, that word carries the connotation of human nature, in all its frailty and weakness.

Paul cautiously says, Jesus came *"In the likeness of sinful flesh."* Jesus was sinless and could not sin, but His human nature was subject to the conditions of the fall. He was able to suffer. He was able to experience pain and weariness. He possessed true human nature. He took on a human body, a human soul, and a human mind.

Now, why did he do that? He did it so that he could redeem man, who is flesh. So that he could save us. And to do that he had to dwell among us.

*Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with men to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.*

At Christmas we celebrate the miracle of God's incarnation. The mystery of the incarnation is that the Creator entered His creation, by taking on humanity. We know He was virgin-born and conceived by the Holy Spirit. Col.1:15, tells us, that Jesus is the express image of the invisible God. We see Jesus; we see God!

The Word Declares the Father

Let's look at verse 18, where John says, *"No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten of Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him."*

The bosom of the Father, what a beautiful and tender expression! There's a special intimacy there. And what John wants us to understand, is that the revelation Jesus came to make, is the revelation of God's heart and mind.

His speech reveals God's compassionate heart of love. In John Calvin's words, *"the breast of God is laid open to us in the gospel."* Jesus has declared God to us. What amazing words! God's Son is God's explainer. He is the revealer and interpreter of the mind and will of God. Listening to Jesus is hearing from God.

The Grace of The Incarnation

Secondly, the grace of the incarnation. You see this also in verse 14, *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, full of grace and truth."*

The Word Has Displayed His Glory

Do you remember that story in Exodus 33, where Moses makes a daring request. He says, *“Lord, show me your glory.”* And you remember that the Lord says to him, *“I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. But He said, “You cannot see My face, for no man shall see Me and live.”*

Then in the next chapter, in Exodus 34:5-6, God places Moses in the cleft of the rock, and God’s presence passes before Moses, and Moses sees just the back parts, the “after glow” of God’s passing glory.

Moses wanted to see his glory, and God said, *“You can’t see My face and live.”* God is pure spirit and invisible to the physical eye. But John now says, the glorious One, the One who descended in the cloud, the One that Moses could not see has now been displayed among and women. He has descended from Heaven, as come into the world. *“We have seen His face. I John 1:1, “we have seen Him with our eyes, and our hands have touched Him. We’ve beheld His glory. Though the fullness of his glory was veiled in flesh, nonetheless, “We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

There are 2 ways in which His glory was revealed. First, there was His moral glory. By this we mean the radiance of His perfect life and *character. He was perfect in all his ways. Then, there was the visible outshining of His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration, when “His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light.”*

The Word Abounds with Grace and Truth

Then in verse 16, John says, *“Of His fullness, we have all received grace for grace.”* That word, “fullness” is an important word. It carries the idea of fullness or overflowing from a fountain. And so, in Christ, a fountain of grace is open for you and me, to drink from. From the fountain of grace, we have all received, grace for grace.” It can be understood as grace in place of grace. Grace succeeding grace. God showers his beloved children with ongoing grace!

And verse 17 explains it: *“For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”* There was grace, in the law, in the old covenant. But, in Jesus Christ, there’s a new grace that fulfills and supersedes the old grace.

What John is teaching us here, is that the law was a true expression of God. It was a true expression of his character, but it was God’s character in silhouette form. But in Jesus Christ we have the reality, the substance, not the shadow. The visible form. In Jesus Christ, the self-expression of God has come to life, and you see God with a human face.

Moses was the mediator of the Law, but Jesus Christ is not only the mediator but the embodiment of grace and truth. That is the grace of the incarnation.

OUR RESPONSE TO THE INCARNATION

Let's look at verses 11-13—*He came to His own, and his own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

Those verses show us that there are two possible responses to Jesus, the Word made flesh. You can either “**receive Him**” or you can “**reject Him.**” Christ is presented to us as God's gift. Because of His mercy and great love for us all, he offers us the possibility of receiving His divine nature and extends to us the right to become the children of God.

The Word Can Be Received

To receive Him means to trust Him and accept who He is and what He has done for you. The bible says, “*He came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim. 1:15).*” Sin is humanity's problem, yours, and mine. Sin destroys, so He took it upon Himself to destroy sin. Jesus willingly died on the cross and shed his blood to pay for the penalty of your sins and to provide forgiveness, cleansing and renewal.

Jesus said, “*Unless a man is born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*” (John 3:3). Christmas is about the virgin birth of Christ, and one of the reason Christ came was, so that you might have a new birth. A second birth. A spiritual birth. This is what we all need. This is the intention of God in the incarnation.

Spiritual rebirth, in many ways, parallels physical birth. Just as physical birth requires two parents, spiritual birth also requires two: the Word of God and the Spirit of God. Jesus said, “*Unless, a man is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*” (John 3:5). Water is a symbol of the word of God. When the word of God and the Spirit of God unite together in the heart of a believing sinner, the miracle of the new birth happens.

Our natural birth is deficient because it is bound up with sin. The new birth that God engenders is sin-free and bound up with God. When parents conceive a child, they don't create life; they transmit life. The life of the parents goes into the child. We receive the nature and characteristics of our parents. When you are born again, God does not create life in you: He transfers life to you. The life of God comes into you. You become a partaker of His divine nature, receiving His nature and characteristics.

Only those who receive Jesus Christ in their heart, become children of God, and are born again, *not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

The Word Can Be Rejected

John 3:18, says. *“He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

Those who prefer to stay in their darkness and love their sinning, stand condemned already. They refuse salvation in Christ Jesus. If you are still unsaved, and your sins are still you, I urge to get saved, by surrendering your life to Christ, accepting Him as your Lord and Saviour, before its too late. Should you persist in rejecting the free gift of eternal life in Christ the Lord Jesus, your sins will ultimately destroy you and bring you into an everlasting darkness and ruin.