

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to John 1

Let's pray...

[Jhn 1:14-18 NKJV] 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.

“And the Word became flesh”

Two weeks ago, when we began our study through the Gospel of John, John introduced us to someone who he addressed as the “Word” – the logos.

The Word was eternal –

The Word was with God and the Word was God

The Word is the Creator of everything – the Life Giver

The Word is the Giver of Light because He Himself is Light.

So after making it clear in the preceding versus that the Word is the eternal God who created all things, John here says He (the Word, the logos – the One who gives purpose to everything) became human.

This is the Incarnation.

Now, in order to fully grasp this verse – we first have to look at it in context of what was going on in the early church during this time.

You see, the first doctrinal challenge to threaten the Christian Faith was a heresy that denied the humanity of Jesus Christ.

This was the sect of Docetism

This is the opposite of what we see today, where many of the cults deny the deity of Jesus Christ – They will claim that Jesus is a created angel or just a good person that lived 2000 years ago.

But back then – it was the humanity of Jesus Christ that they struggled with.

You see, in light of all the miracles Jesus performed, in the face of the resurrection, the people of that time found it easy to accept His deity!

Why did they believe this way????

Because - The science of the day was dominated by the Greeks who said that matter was inherently evil while the spirit was good.

So God, being the perfect Spirit, could never therefore take on a human body.

Their science did not allow for the Incarnation – therefore they rejected it.

The belief of the sect was that Jesus only appeared to have a body – it was all an illusion.

Turn with me to 2 John 1 (We are going to see John warn the church of this sect)

[2Jo 1:7 NKJV] 7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ [as] coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

Later on in verse 10 John says that do not even allow these individuals who teach this doctrine into your home – because if you do, you share in their evil deed.

You see the problem with Docetism is that it denies the core truth of the gospel, namely the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

If Jesus did not have a real body, then He did not really die – and if He did not really die, He could not have a risen from the dead.

Without the actual death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we have no salvation, we are still in our sins, and our faith is futile.

That is why John had harsh words against this particular sect.

And this is why the Holy Spirit inspired John to write this verse in the manner that he did.

John writes that Jesus became human; not just in the spiritual sense

He says that the Word became “flesh” – He had a real body of flesh and bones no different than ours.

He was 100% God and 100% man at the same time.

How does it work? Don't know.

The Incarnation isn't something we can fully understand.

How does the infinite, perfect, glorious God take on the form and experience of the son of a Jewish teenager?

How does the eternal Word shrink down to the inarticulate cries of a hungry baby in the manger?

This is a mystery we will never solve.

But here's the thing – The Incarnation, is not a puzzle to solve; it's a truth to enjoy.

Our failure to comprehend it, doesn't in any way alter the reality of it.

God became man.

But there is more to it church.

Look at the next portion -

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us

The Word that is used here for dwelt is an interesting one – it is the word for tabernacled.

To set up your tent / to pitch your tent.

And that is what the Word did as He came to us and pitched His tent in our world and became one of us.

He tabernacled among us.

And there is a reason that John uses that word.

Because as John provides this picture of the Incarnation – of Jesus setting up His tent among us, it would have caused the Jewish readers to think back about that other special tent that we see in the Exodus.

The Tent of Meeting, the Tabernacle –

Remember, God gave Moses the blueprints he was to follow in setting up this tent, this tabernacle – and he was instructed to set it up in the heart of the camp – with all twelve tribes set around it.

That way, everyone had the opportunity to come and fellowship with God.

God wanted to be at the heart of their lives.

And as we studied Exodus, I made the point that everything in the Tabernacle pointed to Jesus – the showbread, the menorah, the materials used, the sacrifices – everything.

This is why God became man – Why the Word became flesh & dwelt among us –

So we would realize how passionately God loves & yearns for us to know & experience Him – both in this life and in eternity.

By the way, you might remember that to the outsider, those that were walking through, the tabernacle was not very impressive.

It was just one huge tent – remember, the outer covering was made of badger skin to protect it from the elements.

The inside was a totally different story.

And the reason I bring this up is because the prophet Isaiah – when he writes about the Messiah tell us in Isaiah 53:2 – that , There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to Him.

Whenever we watch a movie in the life of Jesus – Jesus is the one with the blue eyes, He is the one that is neatly groomed, he is the handsome one compared to his disciples – who by the way, look like they haven't showered in a few weeks.

The scriptures tell us that his tent looked just like the other tents.

This is why I believe that when Judas betrayed Jesus – we find it in the gospel of Matthew – that he arranged with the religious rulers to identify Jesus with a kiss. So that they would know who to arrest.

Judas didn't tell them – go arrest the good looking one in the group or the one with the blue eyes or the one who looks like He showered or the one with the halo over His head.

“Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him”

So we have another example of how the Tabernacle points to Jesus

Don't miss what John is saying here -

There came a time in history when the eternal God entered the campground of this world & set up His tent smack dab in the middle of humanity.

And while here, those who camped out with Him got to really experience life because they came to find out that He made the campground & that life is all about Him.

and **we beheld His glory**, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, **full of grace and truth.**

John states that we beheld His glory – and many people assume that John is referring here to transfiguration, where for a brief moment, the glory Jesus had known before the Incarnation was restored to Him.

It could be that John is referring to this – however, John was only one of the three disciples that were there – the others being Peter and his brother James.

I believe John is speaking of many of the other miracles that Jesus performed throughout His ministry.

Turned with me to John 2

Here we have Jesus' first miracle – one that we will be studying in more detail in a few weeks.

Now when you read the details of the miracle, we find out that Jesus was invited to a wedding and they run out of wine.

So Jesus turns water into wine.

Look at verse 11

[Jhn 2:11 NKJV] 11 This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

The first miracle that Jesus performed – it was done in secret.

The only ones who knew of the miracle were the servants that were pouring and carrying water and Jesus' disciples.

The newlyweds and the people at the reception – the ones who benefitted the most by this miracle – they never knew.

And the truth is church – they couldn't know. That was the entire point of the miracle.

Jesus didn't turn water into wine because it was still early and He wasn't ready to go home.

He did it to keep the newlyweds from the embarrassment of running out of wine at their own reception.

John was a witness to this quiet work, this miracle – meant to save a young couple from a shame-filled future – and in it, He sees a manifestation of Jesus' glory.

A glory that was visible in everything that He spoke and did.

John then adds -

full of grace and truth.

Notice that the John doesn't say that He is full of law and judgment, or legalism and death.

If your bible says that – you have the wrong bible.

Jesus came full of grace and truth

And here is the thing church, when we are filled with Jesus, we too, will be full of grace and truth.

When we are wronged, we won't retaliate. We won't take matters into our own hands.

When someone talks bad about us, we won't start slandering them. We will just stand aside and allow God to handle it in grace and truth.

Jesus Christ is the perfect example of how grace and truth are mixed together.

When we abide Him, this perfect balance and blend of grace and truth comes through us.

Notice – perfect balance and blend.

And the reason I say this is because it is very easy to choose one over the other.

Because there are those who emphasize grace over truth.

The problem with that is that it is possible to be very full of grace and abandon truth – which then it isn't grace at all.

The only way we can experience grace is by believing the truth.

Then there are others who emphasize truth over grace.

They focus so much on the truth that they become graceless. They win the arguments yet, lose the people – because they failed to show grace. They failed to remember why we are here. They failed to remember that Jesus came both in grace and truth.

When John says Jesus was full of grace & truth, he means that Jesus is the embodiment of these things and so should we.

15 John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.' "

Here is verse 15, the Apostle John is referring to John the Baptist.

John the Baptist was Jesus' older cousin. 6 months older.

However, John the Baptist knew that Jesus existed before him. He knew Jesus was eternal.

So what the Apostle John is doing here – he is packaging his testimony (vs 1-14) and John the Baptist testimony together.

Because according to scripture, everything has to be confirmed in the mouth of two or three witnesses.

16 And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.

Jesus was full of grace & truth, not just for Himself, but for us.

That's why He became flesh & dwelt among us, so that our lives could be turned from mortal to immortal.

So our fallen state could be reversed and our brokenness healed.

Notice the word received – that is the same word that we saw in our study last week in verses 11,12

[Jhn 1:11-12 NKJV] 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. 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:

The believers receive all of Jesus' fullness.

He wants to share His fullness with us – and notice at the end of verse 16, and grace for grace.

This is the endless, non-diminishing supply of grace upon grace upon grace.

We have received the fullness of the grace that He possesses, grace in the place of grace in the place of grace in the place of grace.

As God's grace comes to us in the person of Jesus Christ, it makes room for and leads us to more grace.

Paul in his letter to the church in Rome -

[Rom 5:20-21 NKJV] 20 Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, 21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Paul says here that one sin leads to another – then to another.

What we need to understand is that the same principle applies toward grace.

His grace never wears out.

Every moment, every day, He gives us new grace in exchange for the old grace.

When the Children of Israel were wandering the wilderness

You may remember that they started to run out of food and so, they cried out to God for food.

And God responded to give them with “manna” – which is a picture of grace

So, every day God would provide this manna and all the Children of Israel would have to do was pick it up.

They could only collect enough for that day and if they tried to hoard it in their tent and it would rot – it would grow worms.

This is such a great picture of how God wants to give us daily grace.

He wants our walk with Him to be fresh, up to date, each day.

Church – always remember.

We cannot exhaust the grace of God if we embrace the Person of Jesus Christ.

[Heb 4:16 NKJV] 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

17 For the law was given through Moses, [but] grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

John is drawing a contrast between Moses and Jesus Christ.

You might remember that -

The law **was given** to Moses on a quaking mountain.

The law was written on tablets of stone

The law was unyielding, demanding and without mercy

The law cannot change you

The law can only communicate to you.

The law can only remind you and dictate to you what is expected and what is required

The law may even tell you where you have wronged

For example,

Driving up and down I19, there are speed limits.

The law says that I better be driving under 75 mph – especially when I am heading home from church and have the Calvary Santa Cruz sticker on my back window.

however, the law doesn't prevent me from going faster, it only declares to me that I am going too fast.

It only talks to us.

And spiritually that is exactly what the law does to you and me.

It talks to us.

It says, this is the heart of God – that God requires perfection to get into heaven – that He requires righteousness.

And the law tells us that we are all law breakers.

Because the scriptures tell us if we break one – we break them all.

The law tells us that we need help. That we need a redeemer.

The law was given – but grace and truth came

Grace and truth came

The law was impersonal – but grace and truth came wrapped up in a warm, approachable, vibrant human being named Jesus

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us

And in that, we are able to see grace and truth perfectly blended together.

We see God's grace; His unmerited, unearned, undeserved love and care and favor for you and me.

And it is unfortunate that God's grace goes out to all – but very few receive it.

As believers, we don't live our lives by a list, we live our lives by love. His love for you and me.

We don't live our lives by trying –

Many times when we are struggling we hear someone say, "Well I am trying to do better"

We are not called to try, we are called to trust.

And when we do, that is when God's grace changes us.

18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared [Him].

For the last three weeks, we have seen John telling the church that Jesus is God, that He is eternal, that He dwelt among us – yet here in verse 18, he says that no one has seen God at any time.

Turn to Phil 2

[Phi 2:5-8 NKJV] 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, [and] coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to [the point of] death, even the death of the cross.

The point that John is trying to make here is that when Jesus, when the logos became God-man, He did not stop being God

However, His glory was veiled – He humbled Himself.

And we see glimpses of His glory – like at the Transfiguration.

However, John points out that even though no one has ever seen God revealed in all His glory, Jesus is the perfect declaration of the unseen God.

That is why later on in our studies, we are going to see Jesus say, He who has seen Me has seen the Father.

Jesus has unveiled God to man.

We cannot KNOW God unless we KNOW the Son

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 'May the LORD bless you and protect you. 25 May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you. 26 May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'



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