

John 1:1–2

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

² He was in the beginning with God.

John 1:14

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” ***John 1:14***

INTRO:

In our Christmas series this year, we are studying Who the Lord Jesus Who was born of the virgin Mary at Bethlehem really was. If all we know is the Baby born at Christmas, we do not begin to understand Who He is and why He came.

Two Sundays ago, we learned that our Lord Jesus, Who will return the precise moment the Father chose just as He broke into history the first time at the precise moment, is the blessed controller of all things.

Last Sunday we learned He was and is the Good Shepherd Who laid down His life for His sheep.

Today, we find ourselves in the prologue to John’s Gospel. We are going to look at the nativity passage in the Gospel of John -- **John 1:14**. Our Lord Jesus was and is God in human flesh, and we witness His glory through His work.

I. The Word Became Flesh

II. We Beheld His Glory

I. The Word Became Flesh

“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.” (John 1:14).

A. ***“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”*** What happened when the Word became Flesh?

1. The Word of **John 1:1-3** became incarnate. **(1)** He Who was from the beginning, He Who existed before time itself existed; **(2)** He who always existed in an eternal relationship with God; He Who was and is the eternal God; **(3)** He Who created all things; became God in human flesh. In short God, Himself, stepped into the flow of human history!

2. The thought itself is mind boggling. Immediately we ask, “*How is this possible?*” How could God become a man?

B. The Apostle Paul attempted to convey to us the magnitude of this event in **Philippians 2:5-8**.

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 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.”

1. What was involved for our Savior to be willing to become flesh, to live among us, and to die on a cross for our sins? First, it involved the Lord giving up something to become incarnate in human flesh. The Greek word translated by the phrase, “*made Himself of no reputation,*” means literally to ***empty Himself***.

2. Paul wrote that when the Lord became incarnate in human flesh, He gave up something. He emptied Himself. What did He empty Himself of? He did not give up His divinity. God cannot cease to be God. It did involve the limiting of His glory! We know this because of what He said in **John 17:5**.

“And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.”

In a real sense, glory is the sum total of all that makes God, God. Part of what Jesus gave up was the independent use of some of His attributes. E.g. before the incarnation He was omnipresent. After the incarnation He was limited to a human body. Before the incarnation He was self-sufficient, He needed no one. After the incarnation, he knew what it was to be hungry, tired, and thirsty!

3. Second, it involved His condescending to become a servant. He came to be the Servant of the LORD as we read in Isaiah. At the same time, in fulfilling the Biblical type, He also became the servant of men.

4. Third, the incarnation involved His willingness to go to the cross. He had to be willing to endure the incredible pain of our sin. He had to endure the rejection of His Father that purchased for us our eternal salvation.

C. What a miracle it was. The eternal God of the Universe entered into the flow of history as a baby. The ***logos, the self-expression of God***, took upon Himself human flesh.

II. We Beheld His Glory

A. John does not stop there. He goes on to tell us that when the Eternal God became flesh, He pitched His tent among us! With this phrase John launches us on a historical journey.

1. When we think of a tent many different images come to mind. I think of the countless camping trips that I took as a child. You may think of some Boy Scout outing. However, when John and the Jewish people of his day thought of a tent, the image they saw in their minds was of the Tent, the greatest tent of Jewish history, the Tabernacle.

2. The Jewish Tabernacle was a very important tent. **(1)** The Tabernacle was where God met His people. **(2)** It was where God dwelt in the midst of His people. **(3)** And in its ceremonies, God was reconciled to His people.

3. When Jesus tabernacled among us, He was and is to us all that the Tabernacle was to the Jewish people of old. **(1)** In Christ, God meets His people.

John 14:6 *“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’”*

(2) In Christ, God dwells in the midst of His people. **(3)** In Christ, God was reconciled to His people.

2 Corinthians 5:19 *“That God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.”*

B. And the word *“tabernacled”* also brings to the forefront the issue of Glory. The Tabernacle was where the *“Shechinah”* of God was seen. *“Shechinah”* literally means *presence*, but it came to be the word that was used to describe the glory of the *“presence of God.”*

1. This verse looks back at a scene in **Exodus 33** and **34**. Moses has gone into the tent of meeting to meet with God and to intercede for the people because of their great sin of idolatry. You remember what happened. Moses successfully pleaded for Israel’s forgiveness, and also for God’s presence with them on the journey. Then He stops and makes one more major request, a request that is the heart cry of anyone who knows the Lord Jesus as his Savior and Lord. *“Lord, show me your glory!” (33:18)* I want to know You as You really are. I want to see You in all of Your beauty! Lord, I want to see Your glory!

2. Do you remember what God said to Moses? He said, *“I will make my goodness pass before you and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you.” (Exodus 33:19)*

God delights in displaying His goodness to us and all that He is as our faithful covenant keeping God.

3. Later in **chapter 34** as the scene changes to Mount Sinai and God is parading His glory before Moses, He makes another statement about how His glory is seen.

“Now the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty.” (Exodus 34:5-7)

God gives us mercy and forgives iniquity and He does it while at the same time ***“not clearing the guilty.”*** The glory of God’s holiness is seen in that Sin is not a game to God! Sin is serious business. Now we say, *“Oh no! I am guilty, How can God be merciful and gracious to me without clearing me?”* He forgives by judging our guilt in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ!

Isaiah 53:6 ***“All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned, every one, to his own way. And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”***

That is why Jesus became flesh and tented among us. This is what Calvary is all about!!!

Beloved, have you seen the face of God in Jesus Christ? ***“For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”*** (2 Corinthians 4:6) This is what salvation is all about.

If we have seen His glory, we need to be living our lives in such a way that we shine that light to the darkened world around us! We are to be salt and light. May the light of His glory shine in us!

Hymn #185 When I Survey The Wondrous Cross