

Subject: *The Word Became Flesh – Part 2*

Scripture: *John 1:1-18*

In this introduction to John's Gospel we find simple words and profound truths. John writes about Christ before His incarnation and birth in Bethlehem. In our text John refers to Christ in five ways: He is the Word, the Creator, the Source of life, the Light, and the only begotten Son. John begins his gospel with the distinctive title of Christ as "the Word." We learn four things about the Word: the identity of the Word, the eternality of the Word, the deity of the Word, and the humanity of the Word.

1. The IDENTITY of the Word

The Word of whom John writes is Jesus Christ. He is called the Word because He is the full and final revelation of God to us. He is the visible expression of the invisible God.

2. The ETERNALITY of the Word

Christ did not begin as a baby in Bethlehem. He had no beginning. He was eternally active; He was eternally with the Father; He was eternally glorified; He was eternally rich; and He was eternally equal with the Father.

3. The DEITY of the Word

John writes about the Word being God: the Word was God (vs. 1). He had the attributes and abilities of God. If you think this is not all that important then you need to think again.

If Jesus is not God, there is no divine Trinity.

If Jesus is not God, He was a liar because He testified that He was.

If Jesus is not God, then John and the other apostles were misled and they have misled us because they said He was.

If Jesus is not God, then His name Emmanuel is a fraud, because it means "God with us."

A. Christ shared fellowship and glory with the Father (vs. 1-2)

John 17:5 *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*

From eternity past Christ shared equality with the Father. He enjoyed eternal fellowship and shared eternal glory with the Father.

B. Christ created all things (vs. 3, 10)

Hebrews 1:1-3 ¹ *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,* ² *Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;* ³ *Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.*

Colossians 1:15-17¹⁵ (Christ) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: ¹⁶ For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

C. Christ is the source of life and light for all men (vs. 4-5)

In verse 6, John introduces John the Baptist (“a man sent from God”). There is a stark contrast between John the Baptist and Christ.

Christ is the Word. John is a mere man (*anthropos*).

Christ is God himself. John is merely sent by God.

Christ is the real Light. John merely testified of the Light.

Christ is the object of faith. John was the agent who told men to believe in Christ.

John 1:15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.

John 1:29-30²⁹ The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. ³⁰ This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.

D. Christ is the only way to know the Father

John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared (explained) him.

John 14:7-9⁷ If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. ⁸ Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. ⁹ Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

John 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

To know Christ is to know the Father.

E. Christ claimed to be God

John 5:17-18¹⁷ But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. ¹⁸ Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

John 8:57-59⁵⁷ Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? ⁵⁸ Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. ⁵⁹ Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

This was a direct claim to His eternality and deity, and that's how people understood it.

4. The HUMANITY of the Word

John makes it very clear that the Word is fully God, but then in verse 14, He tells us that the Word is fully man. He dwelt (lit., pitched his tent) among us. This is why we celebrate Christmas. God became a man.

John wrote this gospel to identify and clarify who Jesus is. He wrote to counter the false teachings of his day, and they are still with us. Christ is both God and man. He is fully God and fully man, not half God and half man. He is all God and all man.

If Christ was not fully man He could not have been the second Adam who obeyed the will of God and kept the will of God on our behalf. If He was not fully man He could not have bled and died for our sins. As a man Christ died for our sins, and as God His death was sufficient to take away our sins.

The deity and humanity of Christ are both so important, and that's why the Bible teaches both. That's why the early church fathers wrote so thoughtfully and carefully about what the Bible teaches. That's why all the important Christian confessions and creeds teach His deity and humanity. Christ did what He did because He is who He is—God in human flesh.

Charles Wesley wrote the beloved carol we sing...

Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come, Offspring of the Virgin's womb;
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; Hail the incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King.

With all that magnificent truth about Christ, you would think everyone who reads John's Gospel would believe in Him become a follower of Christ, but sadly that's not the case. Everyone who saw Him and heard Him when He came to earth didn't receive Him. John tells us what happened in verses 10-13. What happened then still happens today. The world did not know Him. It did not understand or recognize Him for who He was. The world did not receive Him. But some did receive Him. The word "receive" means to embrace Him completely and submit to Him, trust Him, and obey Him. It is a full commitment, not a half-hearted, superficial commitment. The same word "receive" is used in John 1:16 and 14:3. When we receive Christ we receive His fullness of blessing.

John 14:3 *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

Some people are only interested in what Christ offers. They want forgiveness, but they don't want Christ. They want heaven, but they don't want Christ. A few years ago there was a popular slogan: "Try Jesus." The Bible doesn't say that. It says "Receive Jesus."

What is John driving at in these verses? This is not just good information; this is to lead us to salvation and full dedication of our life to Christ. *Joy to the world, the Lord is come, let earth receive her king.*