

## Pt 5 The Word Was Made Flesh – John 1:14-18

A sermon series in the Gospel of John, by Pastor Byron Chesney at Porchlight Baptist Church [www.pbcknox.com](http://www.pbcknox.com)

### John 1:14-18

14 And the Word was made 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.

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.

16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

17 For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.

We pick back up in our Gospel of John Sermon Series, in John 1:14. While there are many things mentioned in the Gospel of John, the number one focus is Christ. Look at our opening verse again:

14 And the Word was made 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 more than any other Gospel writer connects the man Jesus with the deity of God. The first part of our verse says: **And the Word was made flesh**

It is important for us to know that Jesus is God in the flesh. While he was born a man, he never ceased to be God.

Christmas will be in 21 days from today and we are all familiar with the Christmas story of the Incarnation as told in: **Luke 2:1-14 (read)**

The doctrine of the Incarnation is that God became flesh, He assumed a human nature and became a man in the form of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the second person of the Trinity.

You need to understand that not all religions believe in this Biblical doctrine. For example;

**Jehovah Witnesses** believe that Jesus was a created god and was actually **Michael the Archangel** in human form. They teach that Jesus was the “first born of all creation.” Prior to his incarnation, he existed as Michael the Archangel in Heaven. Michael became Jesus. Upon his earthly birth, Michael became Jesus, but he was only a man. He was not empowered as Christ until he was baptized. They believe that Jesus died on a torture stake and his body was dissolved by God the Father. The Father then recreated Jesus’ body 3-days later, in a spiritual form but not physical form, and then he ascended back to the Father and he went back to being Michael the Archangel.

So, the JW’s deny **the deity of Jesus Christ**; therefore, they also rejected the doctrine of the **Trinity**: They claim that the Holy Spirit was just the “**force of God**,” but was not a person. In fact, in their New World Translation (NWT) they change **John 1:1: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god.**

The **Mormon’s** do not believe that Jesus and God are one in the same. They do not believe that Jesus is God in the flesh form. They believe Jesus is one of God’s sons that he was physically produced through intercourse. They also believe Jesus is Satans big brother.

We as Bible believing Baptists, know that the JW’s and the Mormon’s are false religions and do not believe the Bible.

In our King James Bible, we read in **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;

In verse 3 it mentions “**The brightness of his glory**” and John wrote “**we beheld his glory.**” This is describing the glorious brightness that radiates from God. We just studied over the past two weeks how Jesus was a light sent into this world of darkness.

Moses experienced the brightness of his Glory when he was in the presence of God for 40-days and when he came down off the mountain his face was shining so bright that the people were afraid of him. He had to wear a veil while he talked with them.

Peter, James, and John experienced the brightness of his Glory on the Mount of Transfiguration: **Matthew 17:2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.**

Again in verse 3 of Hebrews 1, it says: “**The express image of his person**”

An express image is an imprint or an impression of something. Think of a coin. The penny has the express image of Abraham Lincoln, the nickel an express image of Thomas Jefferson, the dime has Franklin D. Roosevelt, the quarter is George Washington, and the half dollar is John F. Kennedy.

Since God is a Spirit and cannot be seen, Jesus is the imprint or impression of the person of God. In the Book of Colossians we read this about Jesus:

**Colossians 1:15-17**

15 Who 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.

Our opening verse also says, “**and dwelt among us.**”

If you study the Old Testament, you will find that God’s presence would dwell in the form of something.

- For Moses God’s presence was in a burning bush.
- For the Children of Israel his presence was in a Pillar of Cloud by day and Pillar of Fire by night.
- Later his presence was in the Tabernacle and between the two Cherubims on the lid of the Ark of the Covenant.

But, here in the New Testament, we see that God’s presence is manifest in the bodily form of a man, Christ Jesus. This is how He “**dwelt among us.**”

The Apostle Paul writing to his young son in the faith, Timothy, wrote:

**1 Timothy 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.**

While God may not be among us in bodily form in the present day, He is still with us. The Bible teaches us that He dwells within the heart of all believers.

**John 14:15-16**

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

**John 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.**

**Romans 5:5** And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

### **Ephesians 3:14-19**

14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,  
16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;  
17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,  
18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;  
19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

**2 Timothy 1:13-14** Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 14 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

Those are just a few of the many places in the Bible that we are assured that God dwells with us still.

The last part of our opening text in **verse 14** it says: full of grace and truth

Grace and Truth are, of course, attributes and gifts of God. We see that down in verse 17 of our text: 17 For the law was given by Moses, *but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*

And, what did Jesus say in **John 14:6b** ...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

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.

The John mentioned here is John the Baptist. It says that John bare witness of him. To bare witness of someone means that you testify they are who they say they are. You could call it John's Testimony. It was the very purpose John was sent. To be the forerunner of Christ, so that he could bare witness of him.

John says this is the One who I have been speaking of. He's the blessed Promised One.

Then he says something that almost seems like a riddle: He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.

We know John was born 6-months before Jesus was and John's earthly ministry began before Jesus' did. So in his human nature, Jesus came after John but in his Divine nature he was before John because Jesus is eternal. John has already said this as we studied in **John 1:1-2** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Also notice John says Jesus "is preferred before me." In other words Jesus is Superior to me. He is more worthy of honor than me.

I like what Albert Barnes, a 19<sup>th</sup> Century Presbyterian Minister says about this verse in his commentary: *We may learn here that it is one mark of the true spirit of a minister of Christ to desire and feel that Christ is always to be preferred to ourselves. We should keep ourselves out of view. The great object is to hold up the Saviour; and however much ministers may be honored or blessed, yet they should lay all at the feet of Jesus, and direct all men to him as the undivided object of affection and honor.*<sup>1</sup>

We see again the humbleness of John the Baptist in his Testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ. Not only should all ministers exalt Christ above themselves but so should every

believer.

16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

That phrase "grace for grace," does not mean God swapped his grace for ours. It means grace upon grace. In other words God heaps his grace upon us abundantly. As you know the word grace means "unmerited or unearned favor." Because of God's grace we are saved by grace, and he gives us His grace as Christians. The fulness of God's grace never ends.

17 For the law was given by Moses, *but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*

Here John gives us the comparison of the Law which was given by Moses, and grace and truth which was given by Jesus Christ. The Law was not a demonstration of God's grace, it was a demonstration of his demand for holiness. It was our schoolmaster to teach us of our unrighteousness and the need for a Savior.

Listen to what Paul wrote in **Romans 3:19-25**

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him.*

We've already mentioned it this morning, but the fact is, God is a Spirit, and no man has ever seen Him.

- Moses heard his voice
- The Children of Israel saw the cloud and pillar of fire which represented God.
- Jacob declared he had seen God face to face when he wrestled with a man, but it was not God's Spirit, it was a manifestation of God in human form.
- Isaiah saw the Lord high, holy, and lifted up in the Temple, but it was not God's Spirit that he saw, it was a symbol of God's presence in a vision.

Listen to what it says in **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;

The truth is, the only way for man to see God is by looking at His Only Begotten Son, Jesus.

The whole purpose of John the Baptist is the same purpose as the Church, the pastor, preacher, evangelist, missionary, Sunday school teacher, Bible college professor and every Christian, is to point the lost toward the Son, Christ Jesus.

<sup>1</sup> Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible, John 1:15