

Subject: *Standing in Awe of Christ's Glory*

Scripture: *John 1:1-18*

As many of you know my mother has been in declining health for many months, and there's not a lot of things she can enjoy like she used to. One of those things is ice cream. The other day she was eating a little cup of chocolate ice cream and she told me that she used to eat a whole pint at one time. We agreed how good it is. Later on I was thinking about that and my mind went to the statement in Psalm 34:8, "O taste and see, that the Lord is good." If you know Christ as your Lord and Savior, you can't get enough of Him.

For the next few weeks we are going to look at some precious biblical truths about Christ. In this first sermon we are looking at the first part of John's Gospel, the introduction or prologue as it is called. In this text we see the glory of Christ in a special way, and we can never get enough. We always come back to this text again and again to see more of His glory.

The theme of John's Gospel is the deity of Christ. He is God in human flesh, Immanuel (God with us). As Paul states in Colossians 2:9, "In Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" and he writes again in Titus 2:13 that Christ is "the great God and our Savior." In John 1 we see Christ's glory set forth in several ways:

1. Christ's Glory in Relation to Time (1:1)

Christ is called the Word because He is the ultimate way that God reveals Himself to man. A few weeks ago Matt Darby preached from Hebrews 1 on the subject "God Has Spoken."

***Hebrews 1:1-2** 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.*

***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.*

In the beginning was the Word. Christ is the eternal word. He had no beginning and He was not bound by time, but He entered this world and voluntarily limited Himself in space and time. Christ laid aside the glory He had from eternity past.

2. Christ's Glory in Relation to the Trinity (1:1-2)

The Word was with God and the Word was God. Christ is equal with God and separate from God the Father. We have many Scriptures on this because it is so important.

***John 14:9** 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, Show us the Father?*

***Colossians 1:15** Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.*

***Colossians 2:9** For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.*

3. Christ's Glory in Relation to Creation (1:3-4)

Colossians 1:16-17 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.

Hebrews 1:1-2 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.

Christ is the creator and the sustainer of all He created.

4. Christ's Glory in Relation to Darkness (1:5-9)

Christ came as Light to a very dark world, and you would think that everyone would appreciate that and would welcome Him, but not so. Why would people reject the Light?

John 3:19-21 ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. ²¹ But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

The world rejected Christ's light, but they could not put it out or comprehend (overcome) it.

John was a man sent from God, but he was only a man. John came to be a witness of Christ as the Light of the world. John was not the Light, but he prepared the world for Christ and pointed people to Christ as the Light. He came to bear witness of the Light, so that all people could see Christ and follow Him.

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

5. Christ's Glory in Relation to Mankind (1:10-13)

He was in the world, the very world that He had made, but the world did not know (recognize) Him as the Son of God. His own people did not receive Him as their Messiah. But some did receive Him and became children of God. When people received (welcomed) Christ, then the Father received them. The people who received Christ believed on His name (who He was and what He did). The people who received Christ and believed on His name were born again by the Spirit of God. We learn from Christ's prayer in John 17 that the ones who received Him were given to Him by the Father. They were God's love gift to the Son.

John 17:2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

John 17:24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

6. Christ's Glory in Relation to His Humanity (1:14-15)

This verse makes it clear who the Word was. The Word refers to Christ and His incarnation. He was made flesh. He became what He was not, but He did not cease to be what He was. He is the God-man. He dwelt (tabernacled, pitched His tent) among us. The tabernacle was God's dwelling place on earth in the midst of His people. God's presence in the tabernacle was the glory of His people.

The glory of Christ was a special, unique glory as of the only begotten of the Father. John may have had the Transfiguration in mind when he wrote this. We read about it in Matt. 17, and Peter (one of the three who witnessed it) also wrote about it.

Matthew 17:1-2 ¹ And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, ² And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

2 Peter 1:17-18 ¹⁷ For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. ¹⁸ And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

7. Christ's Glory in Relation to His Ministry (1:16-18)

Christ came to make the invisible God visible. He came to explain the God who cannot be seen or touched. The word "declared" (vs. 18) comes from a Greek word that was used to describe a person drawing water out of a well, a lawyer explaining terms of the law, and a person revealing someone that had been hidden from view. Christ came to reveal the glory of God to us, and that's exactly what happens to us in salvation. Paul describes it this way.

2 Corinthians 4:3-6 ³ But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: ⁴ In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. ⁵ For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Spurgeon said it best: "You may study, look, and meditate, but Jesus is a greater Savior than you think He is, even when your thoughts are at their highest." And then he added: "I cannot know Christ through another person's brain. I cannot love Him with another person's heart, and I cannot see Him with another person's eyes. I am so afraid of living with a second-hand religion. I must know Christ myself. O God, let me not be deceived in this. I must know Him on my own account."