

And the Word Became Flesh...

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was

John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 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 1:1-14 (KJV)

The above scripture reading is the introductory statement of the Gospel account written by the Apostle John. There are many wonderful truths found within these few scriptures, however, for the purpose of our discussion I would like to key in on just a few of those key truths. The first truth that John is very clear in stating from the outset in his Gospel account is that Jesus is the Word incarnate and that the Word of God is God, Himself. Therefore, if Jesus is the Word of God and the Word of God is God, therefore, Jesus is God. This may seem to be a very simple truth to understand and grasp. However, this was the greatest stumbling block for the Jewish leadership to comprehend.

Actually, this still is the greatest "hang up" for the Jewish people today as well as many other people in the world. It was an incomprehensible thought to them. First of all it was hard for them to grasp that this "mere man" was God come in the flesh. Secondly, is the thought that if Jesus was actually God, how could God die on a cross? We will leave those items for another discussion. However, that is exactly why John wrote His Gospel.

If we notice, John's Gospel account is very different than the other three Gospel accounts. There are many reasons for this. First, John's Gospel was written many years after the other Gospel accounts were written and circulated. John "assumes" that His readers have read or heard the other accounts of Jesus' life and ministry. The second and most important reason was that John needed to reestablish the fundamental truth that Jesus was the Son of God who came in the flesh as the Son of Man. All through John's Gospel we see that the Jewish leadership always went back to the same question. The question basically was, "Who is your Father?" The reason for this was that they most likely knew what seemed to them to be the circumstances regarding His birth. They believed that Mary was unfaithful to Joseph while they were betrothed. They believed within their own natural understanding that Jesus was an illegitimate child and that His father was either a Gentile or even worse, a Samaritan. They never once gave any credence to the "virgin birth" and everything else that we read in the Gospels concerning the birth of Jesus.

However, in John 10:30 Jesus states it very clearly as He declares, *"I and my Father are one."* They knew exactly what He meant. If He was stating that He and Father God were one, then He was stating that He was equal with God and therefore, God in the flesh. We can understand why we read in the very next verse that they *"took up stones again to stone him."*

The very first truth that must be established and believed without a shadow of a doubt is that Jesus is God. He and God the Father are one. Many times, even we as Christians do not fully grasp and understand this truth. When you really think about it, this truth is very difficult to grasp with our finite way of thinking. We

must deposit our trust in this truth and simply believe. I am reminded, of a Christmas card I recently received. It had a picture of Santa Claus on the front with the caption, "Believe." I found it amusing that people would desire to propagate a fantasy and say "believe," even though it is not real. It just brings them a "cute, warm, cuddly feeling inside." We as believers in Jesus must have that simple childlike faith and simply believe the truth which is that Jesus is God. He is not a subordinate to the Father. He is God just as the Father is God and just as the Holy Spirit is God. God the Father, God the Son (Jesus) and God the Holy Spirit always was, always is and always will be - God.

This then brings us to the next truth that I would like to discuss – The Word (God) became flesh. Jesus was God but He was also a man. John's Gospel account is very specific in this area. John's Gospel is the only Gospel account that includes the piercing of the side of Jesus at the crucifixion. In John 19:34 it states, "*But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.*" John continues to say in verse 35, "*And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.*" John states that he witnessed this very important aspect of the crucifixion. Yes, it was a fulfillment of prophecy. (Zechariah 12:10) However, the fulfillment of the prophecy was not the only reason why this was even prophesied in the first place. This "piercing of the side" of Jesus was to be a witness that Jesus was indeed 100% man just as He was 100% God.

At the time of John's writing there was a Greek philosophy that was beginning to creep into the Body of Christ. That "philosophy" was known as Gnosticism. It basically went like this – anything that was of the spirit realm was inherently good and anything that was of the physical realm was inherently evil. Therefore, if Jesus was a man, according to their thinking, He would be inherently evil. Therefore, according to their thinking, if Jesus was not a man then He must have been only an apparition, a spiritual allusion, a spirit being, when He walked the earth. This would make Him inherently good and therefore, coincide with Him declaring He was God. If I didn't confuse you too much, do you see the problem with this thinking concerning Jesus? Let's see the error in this.

Jesus was 100% God and therefore, yes, He was inherently good. However, He also was 100% man. If He was not also 100% man He would not have been able to truly take our place upon the cross and die for the sins of all men. He had to be **both** 100% God (pure and holy as the perfect sacrifice without spot or blemish) and 100% man to be able to be the perfect final sacrifice as the perfect substitution for all mankind. As a man He was able to take the place for all men and women, and pay the final price for our sin and our redemption. John states that he witnessed this piercing at the crucifixion along with all those who were present and that water and blood poured out of Jesus. John was indeed declaring and stating without a shadow of a doubt that Jesus was definitely fully man. The truth revealed was that Jesus was truly 100% God who came 100% in the flesh and dwelled among us.

The next thought I would like to discuss is the aspect in which John writes, "*He came onto His own but His own received Him not.*" Now, I am aware that we are taught that this is referring to the Jewish people. We are taught that He came to the Jewish people but that they rejected Him which "opened the door" of salvation for the Gentiles. I am not saying that I totally disagree with that, however, the phrase, "*those who received Him not*" might not be only referring to the Jewish people. I believe it could include all of God's highest form of creation. We were created in His image and likeness. Man - Jew and Gentile, male and female, were created to be God's precious ones – His own. Jesus came into the world of both the Jews and the Gentiles but they both "*received Him not.*" However, John does state that there were some – and as we know it included both Jew and Gentile – who received Him and believed on Him. After all, the first believers and disciples of Jesus were Jewish. Then as we also know it opened up to the Gentiles. Actually, this was God's plan from the beginning. 2Peter 3:19 tells us, "*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, **not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.***"

John states that those that “received” and believed (whether they were Jew, Gentile, male or female) that He “*gave them power*” (through the regenerative work of the Holy Spirit) to be restored back into truly becoming “His own” again. That is why we are told that in Christ there is no longer a Jewish identity or a Gentile identity. The identity that the believer now walks in is that they are the “One man in Christ” or as it is also put “One new man in Christ.” 2Corinthians 7:17 – “*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*”

The last thought I would like to share is found in John 1:14, “*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.*” I would also like us to look at John 1:16, 17 – “*And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*” We see that John speaks of Jesus being “*full of grace*” and that “*grace and truth came by Him.*” I have to admit that these scriptures used to give me some cause to ponder. After all we are taught for the most part that “grace” is a just New Testament concept. It would seem as if these scriptures back that up. However, we do see God’s grace introduced and taught in many of the Jewish scriptures.

Adam and Eve received tremendous “grace and mercy” after they sinned. He did not destroy them. God immediately established a way of redemption for man in His action towards them as He removed them from the tree of life that if partaken of would have kept Man in their state of spiritual death forever with no way out. We see God’s grace in action and that His grace was within His heart even before Genesis 1, for we know that Jesus was the Lamb slain before the foundations of the world were ever established. We also see that the scripture tells us that “*Noah found grace in the sight of God.*” If we truly open our eyes to truly see, we would see God’s character of showing grace upon His creation is found throughout the Jewish scriptures or what some refer to as the Old Testament.

In the scriptures that we are looking at in the Gospel of John, John uses two key words when discussing “grace” as it pertains to the coming of Jesus into this world. He uses the words “full” or “fullness.” Jesus was “...**full** of grace...” and “...His **fullness** we have all received...” What John was referring to was that God’s grace, as well as everything found within the Jewish scriptures were mere shadows or glimpses into God’s character. However, we see the **fullness of God’s character** in a tangible way manifested in and through the life of Jesus. Jesus was God as He walked this earth. He was not God’s ambassador. He was not a mere representative of God. HE WAS GOD COME IN THE FLESH!!! Through Jesus, God humbled Himself so that reconciliation could occur between God and man. In Jesus we see the **total fullness** of God’s love. In Jesus we see the **total fullness** of God’s grace, mercy and peace. John put it this way in verse 14, “*(and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*” In Jesus we behold the **fullness of the glory** of the Living God. The person who “receives” Jesus and becomes a “son of God” is now able to behold His “infinite presence” within.

The beginning scriptures of the Gospel of John are not usually used during the time of year that we celebrate the birth of Jesus, our Savior, our Lord, and the Messiah. However, its message pours out with the truth of what the birth of Jesus was all about. He is God. In Him all things were made. He was the Word of God incarnate. Psalm 119:105 tells us, “*Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.*” Jesus was the Light to men that leads them on the path of a restored relationship with their God. Darkness and evil cannot comprehend the warmth of His love, grace and truth. Jesus is the Life to all that would receive Him. He is the path that leads the way to a new life – a life that is renewed and born again; a life that is eternal and is forever in oneness with Jesus and the Father. Jesus came and dwelt among us for a season so that we would behold, experience, and see the **fullness of God’s glory and grace**. He was born so that all men would see God’s truth, His Word, revealed and in action as an example for us to follow after.

Jesus came to “*His own*,” his beloved and most precious of all His creation – whether they be Jew, Gentile, male or female - all mankind. He has come to us. He has come to you. It is my sincere prayer and desire that you would “receive Him,” “believe on His name” and allow Him, through the regenerative power of the Holy Spirit in making you a new creation in Jesus – a born again, child of the Most High God. In this you may enter into a relationship of “oneness” with the Father and His Son, Jesus and experience His “infinite presence” (His glory) within you.

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,
that whosoever believeth in him should not perish,
but have everlasting life.*

– John 3:16