

The Gospel of John: The Word Made Flesh

John 1:14-18

Context

Throughout human history since the incarnation of Christ, there have been many aberrant views of the nature of Christ. Some have denied his full deity—others have denied His full humanity. A biblical view of Jesus is that He is fully God and fully man. That was officially solidified in the Council of Chalcedon in 451 A.D.. Without having a correct view of Christ, the salvation He offers is without effect. John has made the case through the opening prologue of his gospel (1:1-18) and especially makes the point with these closing five verses from our text this morning.

John's purpose for writing is evangelistic.

John 20:31—*but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.*

1 John 1:1-4—*What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life—² and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—³ what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.*

3 Realities of The Word Made Flesh

I. The incarnate God took on humanity

John 1:14—*And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

A. God revealed Himself

1. In creation (Romans 1:18-21)
2. In the OT Scriptures

2 Timothy 3:16—*All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness*

2 Peter 1:20-21—*But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, ²¹ for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.*

3. In the person and work of Christ

Became—does not mean that Christ ceased being the eternal Word when He became a Man. Though God is immutable, pure eternal “being” and not “becoming” as all His creatures are, in the Incarnation the unchangeable (Heb 13:8) God did become fully man, yet remained fully God. He entered the realm of those who are time and space creatures and experienced life as it is for those He created.¹

I Timothy 3:16—*By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.*

B. He dwelt among us

Dwelt— to live in a tent; pitch a tent

C. They saw His glory

1. OT glory

2. Transfiguration

Matthew 17:2—*And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light.*

3. In the New Jerusalem

Revelation 21:23—*And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.*

Only begotten—does not imply that Jesus was created by God and thus not eternal. The term does not refer to a person’s origin, but describes him as unique, the only one of his kind.²

Grace and truth—inseparably linked

¹ The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, John MacArthur, John 1-11, p. 39

² Ibid. p. 42

II. John (JTB) testifies about the Word

John 1:15-16—John *testified about Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'" ¹⁶ For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

A. JTB understood his subordinate role

Matthew 3:3—For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet when he said, "THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT!'"

B. Jesus existed before John (although He was born 6 months after JTB)

John 8:58—Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."

C. The witness of all believers, v. 16 ("we have all received")

Colossians 2:9—For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form

Grace upon grace—a never-ending, limitless supply of grace is ours through Christ

2 Corinthians 12:9—And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

Ephesians 2:7—so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

III. Jesus fully explains God

John 1:17-18—For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

A. The law was given through Moses

Exodus 31:18—When He had finished speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, He gave Moses the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written by the finger of God.

Acts 7:37-38—This is the Moses who said to the sons of Israel, 'GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN.' ³⁸ This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness together with the angel who was speaking to him on Mount Sinai, and who was with our fathers; and he received living oracles to pass on to you.

The law was imbued with His glory and reflected His holy and righteous character.³

Romans 7:7a, 12—*What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! ...*¹²*So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.*

B. The Law could not save

Acts 13:38-39—*Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, ³⁹and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.*

Romans 3:20-22—*because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.²¹ But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²²even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction*

C.f. **Romans 8:3, 10:4; Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9, Hebrews 7:18-19, 10:1-4**

Galatians 3:24—*Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.*

C. Grace triumphed over the Law

Ephesians 4:21—*if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus,*

John 14:6—*Jesus *said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.*

D. The invisible becomes visible

Colossians 1:15—*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.*

1 Timothy 1:17—*Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.*

Hebrews 11:27—*By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.*

Only begotten God—emphasizing Christ's deity and equality with the Father

³ *Ibid.* p. 45

Who is in the bosom of the Father—Christ's shared nature with the Father