

## WHO IS JESUS?

### THE WORD MADE FLESH!

**“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 1:14**

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### WHO IS JESUS? THE WORD MADE FLESH

Perhaps when you were little, you heard Sunday School stories about Jesus. But do you know him as a person? Do you know him as the only Savior? Do you know him as your Lord, Master, Ruler, and Friend?

The four Gospel writers set forth Jesus, each from a particular viewpoint. Matthew portrays the Lord Jesus as the Son of David, the long promised King of the Jews. Mark pictures Jesus as the Servant of Jehovah, bringing out the wonderful characteristics of his service. Luke sets forth the humanity of Jesus, the Perfect Man. And finally John treats Jesus as the Heavenly One who came down from Heaven and dwelt among us and unveils his Divine glory.

I would like you to follow along with me in John's Gospel, so that we can know Jesus. John's purpose and theme is to show that Jesus is God, the Divine second person the Trinity. That this is John's purpose is clearly written towards the end of John's gospel, "But these (things) are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name (John 20:31)."

### JESUS IS THE WORD

John does not start his gospel with the details of Jesus birth. Rather he starts with Jesus' dwelling with God before time began or the earth was formed. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John 1:1)." In the Bible there are several beginnings: the beginning of the world, the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the beginning of sorrows, the beginning of miracles, etc. Here, it is the beginning, before creation, before the beginning of time. We read in Genesis 1, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and earth." Jesus was there and he was "with God". This means that He was in the presence of God. And it means secondly that he has a separate personality. He is the second person

of the Trinity. He always existed, not created. "And the Word was God."

He is called the Word, because he reveals God. He communicates, he speaks, and he spoke and all things were made by him (vs. 3). Some people think that God cannot be known. They are called agnostics, which means 'not know'. But we can know God, and we can know his Son, Jesus Christ. God reveals and makes himself known: in creation, in Scripture (the written Word), and more importantly, in his Son, Jesus (the incarnate Word).

### JESUS IS MADE FLESH

In John 1:14, we read, "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." The plain meaning of those words is, that the second person of the Trinity, who always existed now took on himself our human nature. He who is God now also became a man. A big word for that is *incarnation*. It means the in-fleshing. He did not stop being God. But now he also was a real, sinless, perfect man. Luke's Gospel tells us of his miraculous birth from a virgin. He had no earthly father because God was his Father. We have this great mystery that we celebrate every Christmas. We read in I Tim. 3:16, "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh."

Why would God want to do this? Why would he want to become a human being? Why would he leave the glory and beauty of heaven to come down into our world which is filled with sickness, pain, suffering, and death? God's Word states: "and he dwelt among us." The word 'dwelt' can be translated 'tabernacle'. In the Old Testament, as the people of Israel travelled through the wilderness, they lived in tents. And in the center of their tents was the Tabernacle of God. It was God's dwelling place. It was temporary, merely a tent, something suited to be moved about during the travels to Canaan. It was the place where God met with his people and spoke to them. And it was the place of worship and where the sacrifices were made. So, in "the Word made flesh", God comes down to visit us in Jesus.

God comes to dwell with us and live in closest fellowship with us.

Are you lonely? Do you have times when you wish there was someone you could unburden to? Jesus, God's Son, dwells with us. For 33 years he dwelt with us in his flesh. But now that Jesus is risen from the dead, he is physically in heaven, but still with us by his Spirit and his Word. You can talk to him in prayer. He is God with us. The name Immanuel or Emmanuel means "God with us." The 'el' at the end of the name Emmanuel is the word for God. The rest of that name means 'with us'. God would be with his people and never forsake them. Jesus cares. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities so that he can be our sympathetic high priest in heaven. The name Immanuel refers to the fact that Jesus is God and man in one person. In him, God is with us in the closest possible way.

Jesus was born into this world. He lived and died here. He is one with us. He came down from heaven to dwell with us in our sinful condition. He came down from heaven to stand in our place and take our sins upon himself. He came to suffer and die, so that we might live and have fellowship with God. He arose from the dead and ascended into heaven so that he gives us his eternal life.

### **JESUS' GLORY**

The Apostle John continues to write in John 1:14, "and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

It was a veiled glory. That is, when one looked at Jesus, what did they see? Did not the shepherds visiting the baby Jesus, (the Word made flesh), see a little infant born to poor Jews in a cow stable? They did not see a King in a royal mansion. The wise men worshipped a little infant in a house in Bethlehem. Others saw a man raised in Nazareth by a carpenter, and asked, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth (John 1:46)?" Later as

Jesus is spit upon, flogged, and nailed to a cross, was this not a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief? At best, one could see a real, sinless man who could become tired and thirsty; one who could do miracles and teach as one who had authority.

But with the eyes of faith, we see far more than merely a good man. We see God. Did not Jesus say in John 14: 9, "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father?" God, who so loved us, sent his only begotten Son into this world. We see his divine power so that the blind are able to see, the deaf to hear, the sick healed, and the dead raised to life. Even the wind and waves obey him! We see his love, as he had compassion on the multitudes that were like sheep without a shepherd. By the work of the Holy Spirit and faith, we even see glory in the shameful death on the cross. We sing, "In the cross of Christ I glory." The Apostle Paul wrote in Gal. 6:14,"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, is full of grace and truth. Only because he is God, and only because he willingly also became man, can he be our Savior. Only because he is God can he be worshipped. Only as God can he be the One who is always present for us, one who helps, rules, saves, and can be a constant friend. If he is not God, then he is only a historical figure of the past.

Sadly, today there are many who only see Jesus as a historical figure, a man. Others believe that Jesus is God, but not really a man, only the appearance of a man. But only as God and one who is truly one of us, a man, could Jesus come to take away our sins and save us.

By faith, may you and I behold Jesus, God made flesh, God with us, Immanuel. May we know him, whom to know is eternal life. May we by God's grace love him, flee to him, and trust him as our only Helper and Savior.