

JOHN 1:14-18
THE INCARNATION!

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to John chapter 1 as we continue our in-depth study of this Gospel!

Remember the purpose for John writing this Gospel, bringing forth this *“Good News”!* The reason is to show that Jesus is God! He wanted those who read this Gospel to come to believe that Jesus Christ, Almighty God became flesh, dwelt among us to pay the penalty for our sins!

That is not just *“Good News”* it is – *GREAT NEWS!*

But there is something changing in America and not just with Americans in general, but with those who say that they are believers in Jesus Christ. Let me show you what I mean from this article and study from 2020, last year!

We are told,

A new survey reveals that 52 percent of American adults believe that Jesus was a great teacher and nothing more. If Jesus’ claim to be God is false, then He was either delusional or deceptive, but He could not have been a great teacher. . . .

Historically, evangelical Christians have affirmed the authority of the Bible and salvation by **Jesus Christ**. The Bible testifies often to the deity of Christ; He is God incarnate, the Word made flesh (John 1:1; 8:58; Rom. 9:5; Heb. 1:1–4).

It may not be a great surprise that the majority of the general U.S. population rejects the deity of Christ, but now almost a third of evangelicals (30 percent) agree that Jesus was merely a great teacher. And while 66 percent of American evangelicals disagree with the statement, “Jesus was a good teacher, but he was not God,” nearly as many (65 percent) still agree with the statement, “Jesus is the first and greatest being created by God.”

The confusion illustrated in these results suggests a dire need for Christians to be taught Christology, the doctrine of the person and work of **Jesus Christ**.

Dr. **Stephen Nichols**, chief academic officer of Ligonier Ministries . . . said:

“Statistics like these from the State of Theology survey can give us quite a shock, but they also shed light on the concerns that many American Christians and churches have expressed for decades. As the culture around us increasingly abandons its moral compass, professing evangelicals are sadly drifting away from God’s absolute standard in Scripture. It’s clear that the church does not have the luxury of idly standing by. This is a time for Christians to study Scripture diligently, engage confidently with people in our culture, and witness fearlessly to the identity and saving work of **Jesus Christ** in the gospel.”

- <https://prn.to/3v6yJid>

That is why we are taking our time going through these first 18 verses of The Gospel of John because, in this prologue, John is laying the foundation for what the rest of this Gospel is all about. It is all based on the fact that Jesus Christ is Almighty God and apart from that, then all that John has written is empty. If Jesus is not Almighty God, the eternal God, then we are still lost in our sins and there is no hope for us!

But this is the Good News, Jesus is Almighty God and John lets us know that fact as he opens this Gospel up with, **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.”** John 1:1-2.

Ray Stedman reminds us of this very thing. He wrote,

“The Word,” of course, is Jesus Christ. John begins his Gospel with the astonishing statement that Jesus – this man whom John knew so well as a friend and companion – was nothing less than the Creator-God of the universe, who was there at the beginning of all things! John watched the life of Jesus more closely than any other person on earth – and John came away absolutely convinced of the deity of Christ.

Sometimes I think it is difficult to believe that Jesus is God. I’ve never met a Christian who has not at one time or another felt the full force of all the arguments that make Him out to be nothing more than a human being. There are times when we find it difficult to comprehend the full intent of those words, *In the beginning was the Word.*

But if we find it difficult, how much more did His own disciples! They, of all people, would be least likely to believe that He was God, for they lived with Him and saw His humanity as none of us ever has or ever will.

They must have been confronted again and again with a question that puzzled and troubled them, “Who is this man? What kind of person is this who heals the sick, raises the dead, quiets the wind, and changes water into wine?”

Whatever signs, miracles, power, and wisdom that Jesus demonstrated, it must have been a great leap in their perceptions to move from saying of Him, “this man, Jesus,” to saying, “My Lord and my God!” . . .

Yet, so overwhelming and convincing was the evidence they saw and heard that when they reached the end of the story, when John began to write down the recollections of those amazing days, he began by boldly declaring the deity of Jesus.

- Ray C. Stedman, *Adventuring Through the Bible*, pp. 527-528

Again, this is so important for us to understand because so many today are downplaying the importance of Jesus being Almighty God and in doing so, they are moving away from saving faith and believing the lies of the Devil!

Now that may seem harsh, but if what many are believing, that Jesus was just a great teacher, a good man and not Almighty God is wrong, then it is not of God and there is only one other place it is coming from! *THE DEVIL* or what Paul tells us about false teaching, they are nothing more than – *DOCTRINES OF DEMONS!*

Paul put it like this in I Timothy 4:1, a warning for the days we are living in, “**Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.**”

I truly believe that is why the Lord lead me into a study in the Gospel of John, so we can see who Jesus is clearly and all that He has done for us. You see, the truth will set you free from the lies of the Devil!

I have called our study this morning – *THE INCARNATION!*

And the focus is this. Almighty God became flesh and dwelt among us and out of that we will see what comes forth.

I have broken these verses here in John chapter 1 into four main points and they are,

THE WORD IS MADE FLESH – JOHN 1:14

JOHN BORE WITNESS – JOHN 1:15

GRACE AND TRUTH – JOHN 1:16-17

GOD MADE KNOWN – JOHN 1:18

So John is going to finish up his prologue or introduction that covers John 1:1-18, as I have said. And we will see that the truthfulness of God the Father dwells in the Son!

With that as our introduction, let's begin reading in John chapter 1, beginning in verse 14 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word and we look at this topic –

THE INCARNATION!

JOHN 1

VERSE 14

The first point we are going to be looking at is this – ***THE WORD IS MADE FLESH!***

And in this verse, we see humanity added to His deity, God became flesh and dwelt or tabernacled or pitched His tent among us, the Incarnation!

What is the point, what is John trying to tell us?

Let me first share with you what Matthew tells us about the birth of Jesus. In Matthew 1:22-23 we are told, **“So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: ‘Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,’ which is translated, ‘God with us.’”** Matthew is quoting out of Isaiah 7:14. And notice who this child is – **“God with us.”**

I think that is pretty clear, Matthew is telling us that Mary is going to bring forth a Son, not a spirit, and I will deal with that in a minute, but flesh and blood Son, and not just a Son, but the Son of God!

And John tells us that the Word, Jesus became flesh and not only that, but He dwelt among us as well.

Of this word, “**dwelt**” Clarke tells us, “**And tabernacled among us: *the human nature which he took of the virgin, being as the shrine, house, or temple, in which his immaculate Deity condescended to dwell. The word is probably an allusion to the Divine Shekinah in the Jewish temple.***”

And John wants us to understand that they beheld His glory and I think John is speaking of that Shekinah glory that filled the Temple as well as the moral glory that was manifested in His life. He had no sin!

And Paul, in regard to the incarnation, said In I Timothy 3:16, “**And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.**”

Notice what Paul is saying here, just like John has told us. “**God was manifested in the flesh.**”

And please understand that when they beheld the glory of the Lord it was not some casual look, not at all.

In fact, the word “**beheld**” is stronger than the words “*saw*” or “*looked.*”

John tells us that he and the other disciples carefully studied the glory of the Word made flesh!

Listen to what John wrote in I John 1:1-3, **“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life - the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us - that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.”**

John opens up with a bang here in I John 1:1 as he speaks of Jesus and he tells us, **“That which was from the beginning . . .”**

John is not talking about the beginning of the world or creation, but before there was anything, when all there existed was God, Jesus was there, the Word was there! He is eternal!

It is as Micah 5:2 says, **“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”**

In other words, from beyond the vanishing point, as far back as you can go, God the Son existed. So John is starting out in this epistle speaking of Jesus being Almighty God, he is speaking of the deity of Jesus!

And then John speaks of seeing and touching Jesus. The point here is that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us! Jesus was not a spirit or some kind of ghost, but flesh and blood!

John wants us to understand that the eternal God, Jesus, became flesh and dwelt among us and John can attest to that with 100% confidence.

How can he be so sure?

Because John was there, he heard Jesus talk, he saw Jesus with his own eyes, he looked steadfastly at Jesus examining Him, he touched Jesus.

And like I have said, Jesus is not some ghost or spirit, but He was flesh and blood in the Incarnation, and He was fully God!

In spite of what the Gnostics were saying, John was there and thus, these things are true concerning the Word of life!

You see, they were eyewitnesses of the Lord, and thus, the Gnostics were not, and we can trust the accounts of John and the other disciples because they saw what transpired.

It is as one writer put it, ***“I am so glad my knowledge of eternal life is not built upon the speculations of the philosophers or even theologians but on the unimpeachable testimony of those who heard, saw, gazed at, and handled Him in whom it was incarnate. It is not merely a lovely dream, but solid fact, carefully observed and an accurately recorded fact.”***

So we have seen that Jesus is Almighty God, He is eternal and in the Incarnation God dwelt in a body of flesh. Fully God and fully man in the Incarnation.

And the point we are dealing with here, the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us, was something that Gnosticism was coming against and John deals with that heavily when he wrote I John and shows them that God did become flesh and blood and dwell amongst us.

You see, the Gnostics believed that the flesh was evil and thus, God could not indwell a human body because that would make Him evil.

So they believed that Jesus was just a spirit that hovered over the ground and he never inhabited a body of flesh.

Let me share a few Scriptures with you to show you that the Word became flesh in the Incarnation!

In Philippians 2:5-8 we are told, **“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”**

First of all, Paul shows us that Jesus is Almighty God.

The word **“form”** is the Greek word MORPHE and it speaks of the outward manifestation of an inward reality.

In other words, the second person of the Holy Trinity, the Word has always existed, He has always been God and when He became flesh and dwelt among us, He was still God even though He took on a body of flesh. That inward reality was manifested in the things He did even though He was covered with flesh!

Notice what it says. Jesus **“did not consider it robbery to be equal with God.”** What is the point?

The point is this and it is awesome and very clear.

When Jesus spoke that He was Almighty God, the Great I AM, equal with God, He was not trying to steal something that was not His.

Why is that?

Because He is Almighty God and thus, He is just claiming who He is!

Now if I said that I was God, I would be trying to usurp the position that God has, to steal it away from Him.

We see Satan do that as he tried to usurp the position of God and when he did, God removed him from his position as the Anointed Cherub!

And from there Paul tells us here in Philippians that Jesus came in the likeness of men or that He became flesh and blood!

I think that is very clear, the Word became flesh!

In I Timothy 2:5 Paul wrote, **“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.”**

The Living Bible puts this verse like this, **“That God is on one side and all the people on the other side, and Christ Jesus, himself man, is between them to bring them together.”**

Jesus had to become man to be the Kinsman Redeemer, He had to be a relative to the human race to pay for our sins, and that is exactly what God did, He became a man!

I think that is very clear, the Word became flesh!

And John, in dealing with the Gnostics and their belief that God could never inhabit a body of flesh, wrote in I John 4:1-3, **“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.”**

And once again, listen to how The Living Bible puts these verses, **“Dearly loved friends, don’t always believe everything you hear just because someone says it is a message from God: test it first to see if it really is. For there are many false teachers around, and the way to find out if their message is from the Holy Spirit is to ask: Does it really agree that Jesus Christ, God’s Son, actually became man with a human body? If so, then the message is from God. If not, the message is not from God but from one who is against Christ, like the “Antichrist” you have heard about who is going to come, and his attitude of enmity against Christ is already abroad in the world.”**

This is a challenge from John that we are not to believe what others are saying unless they are in line with the Word of God. And the point here is that if a group, a church, a person is saying that God never became flesh and dwelt among us, they are liars and they are of the Devil!

Pretty strong words and they need to be if you are going to head off destructive teachings!

I think that is very clear, the Word became flesh!

And in II John 1:7 we are told, **“For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.”**

The Living Bible puts this verse like this, **“Watch out for the false leaders-and there are many of them around-who don’t believe that Jesus Christ came to earth as a human being with a body like ours. Such people are against the truth and against Christ.”**

Make no mistake about it, and John is very clear on this, God became flesh and dwelt among us. If a person rejects this or they are teaching otherwise, then **“This is a deceiver and an antichrist.”**

I think that is very clear, the Word became flesh!

And then John speaks of Jesus as being “**full of grace and truth.**”

The Savior was full of grace and truth. On the one hand, full of undeserved kindness for others, He was also completely honest and upright, and He never excused sin or approved evil. To be completely gracious and at the same time completely righteous is something that only God can be.

And we are going to deal with this idea of Jesus being an exact representation of the Father when we get to our last point this morning.

I pray that you have clearly seen – ***THE WORD IS MADE FLESH!***

VERSE 15

Now John speaks of John the Baptist. And the news that John is bringing is that Almighty God has become flesh, has dwelt among us, and He is above all, even John the Baptist.

Think about this for a minute. Before the Lord entered His public ministry, John the Baptist came on the scene and bore witness that Jesus was the Son of God. He was preparing the way for the Messiah, preparing the hearts of the people to repent and return to God.

Keep in mind that John the Baptist and Jesus were cousins.

Also, John was born some six months before Jesus was.

In knowing that, how in the world can John the Baptist say, “**... This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.’**”

First of all, John prepared the way for Jesus and then Jesus came on the scene!

But how could Jesus be before John the Baptist, saying that Jesus was before him knowing that John was born six months before Jesus was?

John the Baptist is speaking of the pre-existence of Jesus, that Jesus is eternal, and thus, He was before John!

Ray Stedman put it like this, I believe that these are all “time” words, so that what John the Baptist said was “This one who comes after me in time was before me in time. He was indeed my first.” (That is the literal expression used.)

“The one who came before me preceded me in time.” It is important to see that.

It is true that Jesus was greater than John the Baptist - there is no question about that - but John used a riddle, as it were, to get people to think.

- Ray Stedman

You see, in the Incarnation Jesus entered the space/time domain, but before He became flesh and blood, He always existed with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Warren Wiersbe said this of John the Baptist. He wrote,

John the Baptist is one of the most important persons in the New Testament. He is mentioned at least eighty-nine times.

John had the special privilege of introducing Jesus to the nation of Israel.

He also had the difficult task of preparing the nation to receive their Messiah. He called them to repent of their sins and to prove that repentance by being baptized and then living changed lives. John summarized what John the Baptist had to say about Jesus Christ (John 1:15-18). First, He is eternal (John 1:15). John the Baptist was actually born six months before Jesus (Luke 1:36); so in this statement he is referring to our Lord’s preexistence, not His birth date. Jesus existed before John the Baptist was ever conceived.

- Warren Wiersbe, The Wiersbe Bible Commentary – NT, pp. 229-230

We will deal more with John the Baptist and his role, a type of Elijah as we move on in our study of The Gospel of John

But as we have seen – ***JOHN BORE WITNESS!***

VERSES 16-17

In these verses we see that Jesus manifested – ***GRACE AND TRUTH!***

As you look at these verses did you notice what God is giving to us, and notice that it is not just a little or some but what He is giving to us is “**His fullness.**” So we can’t get any more than that.

If a glass is filled to the brim with water, you can’t add any more water to it, it is full. That is the idea here, whatever Jesus is giving to us is filled to the brim you might say!

We first see that Jesus gives to us a fullness of His grace. You see, when it says, “**grace upon grace**” or “**grace for grace**” he is speaking of “***abundant grace***” or you can’t give any more than you have already given!

That means that every Christian, in all the countries of the world, throughout the ages, receives this fullness and it does not decrease the grace of God at all, not even a drop!

And God’s grace speaks of getting what we don’t deserve and thus, it is God’s gracious favor that He pours out upon His children, you and me!

But not only grace, but a fullness of His truth. God’s truth is found in His Word and not apart from it. In other words, God does not contradict what His Word is telling us. And that is important for us to understand.

Listen again to what Ray Stedman had to say about these verses. He wrote,

Notice . . . the words “grace and truth,” and the contrast which John draws between them and the Law and Moses.

The Law makes demands. It is hard, cold, unyielding, without mercy.

The symbol of it today is the IRS. We are approaching that time of demand when we must give up what the law requires. If we do not we are subject to penalty: “Do this and thou shalt live,” says the IRS.

John says that the Law was given by Moses. Moses did not originate it, but he gave it.

Moses may disappear, but the Law remains - cold, unyielding, demanding, without mercy.

But, John says, “grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”

Take away Jesus and you take away grace and truth; he is the channel of them. What John is saying in this section is that law is demand, but grace and truth are supply. Designed to meet that demand.

Many people think that law and grace are contradictory, that they are opposing principles.

But not in the sense in which they were originally intended. Law and grace supplement one another. Law makes its demands, rightfully and justly, and no one can meet them, but grace and truth is given in order to meet that demand.

In Exodus 20 there is the remarkable account of the giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai; the Law, which came with smoke, thunder, earthquake, fire, fear and trembling.

But in the very next section we read the detailed plans for the building of the tabernacle - God’s provision to meet the demands of the Law.

Thus, Jesus is in the Old Testament as well as the New. That tabernacle is a picture of Jesus, the meeting place where God's demands are fully met in terms of the sacrifice of blood, of a life poured out.

Thus John saw in the coming of Jesus the fulfillment of that tabernacle: "The one who was after me has already been before me."

So it is with us. We can say with John, "Out of his fulness (of grace and truth), we have all received, grace upon grace."

God has a daily supply of grace for us. Grace is the generosity of love reaching out toward us, giving itself to us. To those who come to Christ, God's promise is that every day we can take a new supply of his love. We can know that we are loved. We know we are cherished, protected, and blessed. We are strengthened, kept, and supported by his love; grace upon grace, day after day, like the manna to the Israelites in the wilderness. So God gives us a daily supply of love. Because we have been loved, when we reach out in love to someone else, when we give as fully and freely as we have received, then we fulfill the Law, for love is the fulfilling of the Law.

- Ray Stedman

Now keep in mind that for the Jews, there were the rigid laws for them to keep.

The problem with these laws is that they could never save a person, they only showed them and us that we were sinners separated from God.

The Law shows us our need for the Savior, it points us to Jesus, that is what the Law does. It does not have the power to save us, but only show us where we have come up short and we fall far short of the glory of God because all of us have sinned and missed the mark of perfection!

But we need to keep in mind that in John 1:17 John is not saying that there was no grace under the Law, but not the way we think.

You see, like I have said, every sacrifice that was made was an expression of the grace of God, but those sacrifices could never take away all your sins but only deal with the ones you have committed at that point!

And the Law revealed to us God's truth, it told us what we needed to do when we sinned, it showed us when we sinned.

But here comes Jesus and in Jesus we see grace and truth reach their fullness and that fullness of grace and truth is available to all of us! Praise God for that!

Remember what Paul said in Ephesians 2:8-9, "**For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.**"

How are we saved?

We are saved by the grace of God, through faith in Jesus Christ.

But what about all the good works that I have done?

What about how I am serving the Lord?

We are saved by the grace of God, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Why are not my good works needed for salvation?

Because all our good works, our righteous deeds, are like filthy rags before a holy and righteous God! (Isaiah 64:6)

Thus, we are saved by the grace of God, through faith in Jesus Christ.

If we add anything to grace, which means unmerited favor, then it is no longer grace but it is works. And now that it is works, the good that I have done, then God owes me heaven!

It is hard for me to even say that because there is no way that God owes me anything but death because of my sin. But because of the fullness of His grace that He has extended to me, to you, we have eternal life with Him through Jesus Christ!

I think we lose sight of the fact that God's grace is inexhaustible to His children. And as hard as that is to believe, listen to what Martin Luther wrote regarding this grace. He said,

The sun is not dimmed and darkened by shining on so many people or providing the entire world with its light and splendor. It retains its light intact. It loses nothing; it is immeasurable, perhaps able to illumine ten more worlds.

I suppose that a hundred thousand candles can be ignited from one light, and still this light will not lose any of its brilliance. . . .

Thus Christ, our Lord, to whom we must flee and of whom we must ask all, is an interminable well, the chief source of grace. . . .

Even if the whole world were to draw from this fountain enough grace and truth to transform all people into angels, still it would not lose as much as a drop. This fountain constantly overflows with sheer grace.

- R. Kent Hughes, John, p. 21

Now, in saying that, let me deal with the Law because so many people today feel you just have to be good enough and God will accept you. I have touched on this, but it is important because you may feel that way, but you are wrong, not because I have said so, but because the Bible does!

Paul makes this point in Galatians 3:23-26 where he says, **“But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. Sons and Heirs For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”**

And if you think the Law can truly save you, think about this verse in Galatians 2:21, **“I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”**

And if you really want to live by the Law you will die by the Law, as James 2:10 tells us, **“For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.”**

Praise the Lord for God’s grace or we would all be in trouble!

Of this one writer put it like this. He wrote,

Our own experience as believers enables us to bear testimony with reference to this plenitude that is in Christ, for out of his fullness we have all received grace upon grace, like the waves that follow one another upon the seashore, one taking the place of another constantly.

The law, which was given through Moses, was unable to supply this fullness of grace and truth. Though good in itself, it was unable to save. It made demands, but did not possess the pardoning and enabling grace needed by sinners, who are confronted by these demands. It provided types and shadows (e.g., in its sacrifices) but never the reality (truth).

This grace and this truth came through Jesus Christ, who by his redeeming life and death merited the grace and furnished the reality (truth) to which the types and shadows of the Mosaic law had been pointing.

Let me share this with you again, it is so important and so wonderful what Christ has given to us. We are told, “**And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.**” John 1:16-17.

May we learn to receive grace upon grace, so our lives will become richer and more beautiful and more joyful through grace!

May we be people who receive grace upon grace and who then give out grace upon grace in response to the effects of sin, misery, and horror in this world!

God wants us to be filled with all his fullness and to possess it.

Grace is ours. May God help us to appropriate this power!

- R. Kent Hughes, John – That You May Believe, p. 40

GRACE AND TRUTH MANIFESTED!

VERSE 18

I have called this verse – ***GOD MADE KNOWN!***

And what I mean by that is that God the Father is made known to us through Jesus Christ.

Remember what Jesus said to Philip when Philip asked Jesus to show him the Father, and we are told in John 14:9-11, **“Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, “Show us the Father”? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.”**

In other words, if you want to know what the Father is all about, look to Jesus, He is the perfect representation of the Father! To know Jesus is to know God!

In fact, in Revelation 1:5 we are told that Jesus is **“the faithful witness”** of the Father.

Also, in Hebrews 1:1-3 Paul tells us, **“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; 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 at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”**

Paul tells us here in Hebrews that He is **“the express image of His person”** or that He is an exact likeness to God the Father. In other words, Jesus is God!

Look at how a few Bible versions translate this thought:

NEW KING JAMES VERSION - the express image of His person

NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION - the exact representation of His nature

AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION - the very image of his substance

TODAY'S ENGLISH VERSION - the exact likeness of God's own being

COMPLETE JEWISH BIBLE - the very expression of God's essence

As clear as that is I think the Greek makes it even clearer to us.

First of all, the Greek word for "**express image**" is CHARAKTER, (khar-ak-tare') and this word is used "***of an engraver, one who mints coins, a graving tool, a die, a stamp, a branding iron, a mark engraved, an impress, a stamp on coins and seals.***"

In other words, Jesus Christ is the exact imprint or image of God the Father in His essence or core, His attributes and His character.

The idea is of an exact likeness as made by a stamp. Jesus exactly represents God to us because Jesus is God!

Paul put it like this in Colossians 2:9, "**For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.**"

If you want to know what the Godhead is all about, not just God the Father, then look to Jesus!

And please understand, we are not talking about three Gods, but One God manifested in three distinct persons!

John is going to continue expounding on this, that if you have seen Jesus, you have seen the Father!

We see this in I John 1:2 where we are told, as John is speaking of Jesus in the Incarnation, **“the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us.”**

The word **“manifested”** in I John 1:2 is the Greek word phanerao and means *“to cause to become visible, to make appear, to cause to be seen.”*

What do we see in Jesus?

We see what God the Father is all about!

Remember what Paul said in Colossians 1:15 about Jesus, that, **“He is the image of the invisible God . . .”**

In other words, if you want to know what God the Father looks like, look to Jesus because He is a picture of what the Father looks like.

But here is a problem for some. In John 1:18 we are told, **“No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.”**

How can that be?

What does John mean?

He means that no one has seen God in all of His fullness and glory.

You see, the Bible tells us that no man can look upon God and live. His holiness, His purity is just too much for us.

Remember when Moses asked to see the Lord and God said, **“... ‘You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.’ And the Lord said, ‘Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen.’”** Exodus 33:20-23.

Moses wanted to see the glory of God, the CHABOD in Hebrew. He wanted that which had substance, weight to it and not just fluff, like so many want today!

May we desire that close relationship with the Lord, to see His glory, that which has substance to it!

I like the way Lloyd-Jones put it when he wrote, “We may have been Christians for many years, but have we ever really longed for some person, direct knowledge and experience of God? Oh, I know, we pray for causes, we pray for the Church, we pray for missionaries, we pray for our own efforts that we organize, yes, but that is not what I am concerned about. We all ask for personal blessings, but how much do we know of this desire for God himself? That is what Moses asked for: ‘Show me they glory. Take me yet a step nearer.’”

May we draw near to God, to have that kind of passion for Him!

Now here in Exodus I believe this is God the Father and the reason I feel this is God the Father is because He said, “**No man shall see Me and live.**”

It is as John tells us here in John 1:18, “**No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.**”

And in John 6:46 Jesus said, “**Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father.**”

Obviously Jesus has seen the Father, they have always existed together and thus, Jesus is able to say in John 10:30, “**I and My Father are one.**”

If you want to know the Father, then get to know Jesus because He is an exact representation of the Father, if you have seen Jesus then you have seen the Father!

And what Moses saw, literally, was the afterglow of God the Father, for anything more would have been too much for him.

One writer put it like this, *“Jesus Christ reveals God to us (John 1:18). As to His essence, God is invisible (1 Tim. 1:17; Heb. 11:27). Man can see God revealed in nature (Ps. 19:1–6; Rom. 1:20) and in His mighty works in history; but he cannot see God Himself. Jesus Christ reveals God to us, for He is ‘the image of the invisible God’ (Col. 1:15) and ‘the express image of His person’ (Heb. 1:3).”*

And notice the intimacy that God the Father and the Word, God the Son have. John tells us that the **“Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, has declared Him.”** John 1:18.

Not only do that have that close intimacy, but the word denotes love and knowledge that exists between them!

Also, the word translated **“declared”** gives us our English word exegesis, which means *“to explain, to unfold, to lead the way.”*

Jesus Christ explains God to us and interprets Him for us.

How in the world can we know God apart from what Jesus reveals to us? We can't!

And keep in mind that purpose for John to write this Gospel. He wants to convince people that Jesus is the Son of God. In fact, some nineteen times, maybe more Jesus is referred to as **“the Son.”**

Now some may wonder about the Old Testament appearances of God that we see. If no one can see God the Father, then what about when God appeared to Abraham, to Gideon, and-so-on?

I think in the Old Testament, when we see God, it is Jesus, because no one has seen the Father. That is what the Scriptures tell us, that no one has seen God the Father, only Jesus and He reveals to us what the Father is all about.

Make no mistake about it, Jesus is a perfect representation of the Father and thus, to know Jesus is to know the Father!

So we have seen this morning – ***THE WORD IS MADE FLESH!***

God almighty, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us!

We have seen that – ***JOHN BORE WITNESS!***

John the Baptist bore witness of who Jesus is and John understood that Jesus is superior to him in that Jesus is Almighty God!

We saw – ***GRACE AND TRUTH MANIFESTED!***

Yes, grace and truth is seen in Jesus and it is full, and it never runs dry!

And lastly, we saw – ***GOD MADE KNOWN!***

And we saw that Jesus has declared God the Father to us and He is an exact representation of God the Father. So if you have seen the Son, you have seen the Father!

And here in John 1:18 John concludes his introduction of this Gospel and, like I have said, he wants us to understand who Jesus is, Almighty God who became flesh and dwelt among us. If we get that wrong, then the rest of the Gospel is going to be off center, and it is Jesus that keeps things in line!

One writer put it like this regarding John's conclusion. He wrote,

John concludes his prologue with the sentence, "No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known" (v. 18).

Jesus is the explanation (the exegesis) of God the Father.

The greatness of Christ explains the greatness of the Father.

The greatness of Christ's love explains the greatness of the Father's love.

And the greatness of Christ's grace explains the greatness of the Father's grace.

May we continue to have our concept of God raised!

- Source Unknown

And may the Lord grow in our lives more and more as we see Him revealed to us in
Jesus! To be like Jesus is to be like the Father!