



HICKORY GROVE

BAPTIST CHURCH

The Glory of His Coming

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John 1:1-18

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1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

9 The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. 15 (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") 16 For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

(Pastor prays)

I love this passage at Christmas time and so should you, especially this Christmas. Of all the beautiful and clear descriptions of Jesus in the Bible, this is the one that gives me the most strength when I am weak and the most hope when I am worried. Majestic in its language and glorious in its prose, here in this passage all the hope and glory of Jesus shines at its brightest!

Here is why we worship Jesus supremely and in Him are saved eternally. John 1 comforts me when I hurt, strengthens me when I'm weak and sobers me when I doubt. John 1 presses us to the mission, pushes us to witness and calms us in the chaos. Here in these few verses, we find the reason behind our worship and the joy in all of our songs. Here is Jesus identified in all of His glory and majesty, in all of His grace and truth. Here John tells us that Jesus is the unique son of God who has come to us from all eternity to save us.

By calling Jesus "the Word" in verse 1, John is stating that Jesus was active in creation, is shown in Revelation and singular in redemption. John shows us that there is no other name given under Heaven by which we must be saved. Here in this Christmas passage, John is clearly identifying Jesus as God. Here is King Jesus. He is eternal, separate and equal with God. This is what makes us Christians. Jesus. He is the creator of all things, the giver of all life, and the true light that enlightens every man. In the Old Testament, He was prophesized and predicted. On earth He was shunned and rejected. Christmas tells us He is the hope bringer that is full of grace and truth. From His miraculous birth to his finished work on the cross, John will show us that Jesus is the only real savior. And He is worth your life and love and affection and devotion. And today, I don't want to show you ways to *be* better, I want to show you the one who *is* better. Here is Jesus, the last Adam, who's come to redeem you from the pit and restore the image of God in you.

This sermon is not filled with lots of application. I want to see you find forgiveness and hope and stability. I want you to see that you can have joy by God's grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone!

Christmas is the Glory of God Coming to Us

I can't preach this whole passage this morning but I'd like to point out a few highlights that have been helpful to me and hopefully will be to you.

When the world is chaotic, Christ centers me

You see this in the first three verses. When you read that very first sentence, you get a feel for what John is doing. Let's read it and see that John 1:1 sounds just like Genesis 1:1. **1** *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* The first three words of John 1:1 are identical to the first three words of Genesis 1:1. John is doing this on purpose, telling us before there was any time or matter or Corona or elections or racial strife, there was the Word. There was Jesus Christ the son of God. And in this one beautiful verse, John is making several astounding affirmations about Jesus, affirmations that help me live my everyday life!

The first one is:

Jesus is forever, and forever goes both ways. **1** *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* However far back you set the beginning of things, Christ was there before that. And however far into the future you can imagine things, Christ is there. The rock that is Christ is the rock that has always been and the rock that always will be. If you are in Christ, if you have looked to the crucified resurrected Messiah, then it is good for you to be reminded that His love is infinite, His forgiveness is bottomless and His grace has no end. And today I'm asking you to trust Him.

Jesus is God. When you read verses 1-3 again, you will see two distinct persons but one God. **1** *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* **2** *He was in the beginning with God.* **3** *All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* We are a trinitarian people, believing in one God who has revealed Himself in three distinct persons: God the father, God the son and God the Holy Spirit.

Here is why you can know you are saved and be secure in it. Think of it like this: God the father planned our Salvation, God the son accomplished our Salvation, and God the spirit applies our Salvation. Or you can think of it like this. When we pray, we pray to God the Father on the merits of God the Son in the power of God the Spirit. God the Father adopts us through Jesus the Son and then seals us by the power of the Holy Spirit. Our triune God saves us, sanctifies us and seals us through the eternal work of Jesus the Son who was slain before the foundation of the world.

All of this to say, when the world is chaotic, we come back to the cross of Jesus and anchor our lives there, in Jesus who is God forever. He created all things, sustains all things and in Him all things hold together. He heals the sick, He calms fears, He removes shame, He forgives sin, redeems the past and protects the future and raises the dead. He is worthy of our worship, our suffering, our struggles and is the captain of our hopes. And today I want you to take confidence when the world is chaotic, Christ centers me. I'd like to give you a second point to consider. To see it we will need to go to verse 14.

When I'm a Sinner, Christ saves me

I said that in the first person, hoping you would write it down like that and believe it for yourself. Look with me at this beautiful statement. Many would say that verse 14 is the most concise statement of the incarnation and the clearest picture of the “why” behind Christmas. Look at it with me. ¹⁴*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.* The word became flesh. In this passage, Jesus is called “the word” - *logos*. He is the Word, and as the Word, Jesus would reveal God's mind, make known God's perfection, and display God's plans. He would express God's will; He would meet God's expectations, and He would keep God's law. He would show God's power, He would lay bare God's heart. He is the Word, His divine title in John 1:14.

The Word became flesh. This is a strong, almost crude way of referring to human nature. John didn't say that Jesus became man or that He took a human body. John is speaking bluntly here. He is abundantly clear on two things. Jesus is God. Jesus is man. As man He would be tempted in every way and yet without sin. Where Adam failed, Jesus wins. Hebrews 2:18 says, *For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.* As a man, He lived as an example. We aren't saved by following His example, but if you are saved, you do follow His example! As a man, He came to die for sins. You often hear me use the terms 1st Adam and 2nd Adam. Jesus came as the 2nd Adam to save us from the inherited curse that we all have from the 1st Adam.

That's what Paul taught us in Romans 5. Sin and death came into the world in one man Adam, so the free gift of grace comes to us through one man, Jesus Christ. It's the good news of Christmas. The Word became flesh and as the Word, He is the son of God. And as the flesh He is the son of man. And as A.W. Pink said, the infinite became finite. The invisible became tangible.

The unknown became touchable. The unspeakable became the Word and dwelt among us. That word *dwelt* is *tabernacled*. He pitched his tent. What the Old Testament Tabernacle was in the wilderness, Jesus is, "God with us." He came into the human condition of weakness and sin and chaos. God pitched His tent in the person of Jesus Christ.

In the Old Testament, the Tabernacle is where God met with His people and now John teaches us the true Tabernacle is here. The only son from the father, the mono-Genesis. That is unique, one kind, the only one in existence. And John 3:16 tells us that God so loved the world that He gave us his mono-genesis, unique son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life. The cross is what He gave His son to. If you are a Christian, this text reminds us that we have been purchased and the currency is the blood of Christ. As a Sinner, this is how He saves us. As a saint, this is how He sustains us.

Let me close by reading verse 14 and place our weight on the end of that verse. ¹⁴ *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

"Grace and truth" here is "grace upon grace" in verse 16. "Grace and truth" again are in verse 17. The grace of God is the dominating theme of the New Testament, and that theme is set side-by-side with truth. Grace and truth. Grace without truth is universalism. Truth without grace is judgmentalism.

But the Gospel is grace and truth. Hear them both as an explanation of the Gospel. The truth is God is holy. The truth is man is a Sinner. The truth and grace is that Christ died on the cross for our sins. And our response to His death is the grace we receive. Christmas is the glory of God coming to us. When the world is chaotic, Christ centers me. When I am a Sinner, Christ saves me.

(Pastor prays)