

## *Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript*

### **The Word Incarnate John 1:14 Part 3**

When we think of the glory of God, what is the first thing that comes to our minds? I would think for many of us here this weekend the first thing that might come to our mind might involve spectacular visual displays. In fact so spectacular that anyone observing it would immediately conclude that God was present leading him or her to become prostrate before Him.

These visual displays could involve such things as light, fire, thunder, earthquakes, the heavenly hosts or perhaps the throne room of God itself.

But if this is all that we think of, when think of the glory of God then we are shortchanging ourselves and perhaps failing to see God in His fullness. With this thought in mind we are now ready to go back to our text. We are now ready to go back to the introduction to the Gospel of John.

The introduction answers the question "What makes Jesus qualified to reveal God to man?" In seeking to answer this question, what have we learned so far?

First of all, what we learned about the Word and God in John 1:1-2 makes Jesus qualified to reveal God to man.

Secondly, what we learned about the Word and Creation in John 1:3-5 makes Jesus qualified to reveal God to man.

Thirdly, what we learned about the Word and John the Baptist in John 1:6-8 makes Jesus qualified to reveal God to man.

And fourthly what we are learning about the Word incarnate in John 1:9-14 makes Jesus qualified to reveal God to man.

Let me read this passage that we have been studying one more time. I will be reading from the New American Standard Bible, "**There was the true light, which, coming to the world, enlightens every man. (10) He was in the world, and the world was made through Him and the world did not know Him. (11) He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. (12) But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, (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 beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.**"

This has been a great passage of Scripture and this weekend we will bring our study of this passage to a close. What have we learned so far about the Word incarnate?

## *Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript*

We learned that the Word, the true light, who alone is able to enlighten every man, chose to come into the world (John 1:9) Let us read **John 1:9**, "**There was the true light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.**"

We learned that the true light was rejected (John 1:10-11). Let me read for you **John 1:10-11**, "**He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. (11) He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.**"

We learned that though the true light was rejected by the multitudes there are some who choose to receive Him and become children of God (John 1:12) Let me read for you **John 1:12**, "**But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.**"

And last of all we learned that those who become children of God can only become children of God by the grace of God (John 1:13). Let me read for you **John 1:13** "**who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.**"

This is where we left off. But there is one more thing left for us to consider about the Word incarnate. I would hope as we pursue this particular study it would cause us to pursue a life of service rather than a life of self-indulgence or self-aggrandizement. I would hope because of the time that we spend together today that your life will become a greater source of blessing not only to others but also to the Lord Himself. What is the last thing that we learn about the Word incarnate in **John 1:9-14**?

We learn that though the Word became flesh, His glory was not hidden from those who had become His children (John 1:14). Let us read **John 1:14**, "**And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.**"

For the first time, since verse one, the term "the Word," reappears. And what does the Apostle John tell us about "the Word?" John tells us that "**the Word became flesh.**" The term "flesh" (SARX) in this context refers to the totality of all that is essential to be considered genuinely human. Though the incarnation of the word was alluded to in **John 1:9** it is now clearly stated in **John 1:14**.

The Word, who was both with God and who was God, became "flesh" or in other words the Word, became 100% man.

It is important to emphasize that when the Word, or in other words the Second Person of the Trinity, chose to become flesh, when He chose to become 100% man, He remained 100% God. Because Jesus remained 100% God when He chose to become 100% man He should be viewed as *a single person* possessing two natures. How difficult is this to grasp? It is impossible for us to fully grasp this truth but this is exactly what the Scriptures teach.

## *Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript*

The official position of the church was spelled out at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 AD. Let me read a portion of their statement to you, "We, then, following the Holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood ... as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy fathers has handed down to us."

Can people be saved and not believe that the word became flesh? Can people be saved and not believe that the word became 100% human? And the answer is absolutely not according to **1 John 4:2** this is one of the tests of orthodoxy. This is one of the tests God gives us to help us see if we have received Jesus as He is revealed in the Scriptures or another if we have received another Jesus who is not revealed in the Scriptures.

How does John begin **John 1:14**? "**And the Word became flesh.**" But how long did He stick around? Was He here for a day? Was He here for a month? When things became too uncomfortable for Him did he bail out? And of course the answer is stuck around for quiet a long time.

Let us continue to read **John 1:14**, "**And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.**" The word "dwelt" is helpful to us in understanding the depths of what John is trying to tell us when he says that, "**the Word became flesh.**"

The verb "dwelt"(SKENOO) is connected with the Greek word for "tent" (SKENE) which could easily be reminiscent of the tent of meeting in the Old Testament (Exodus 33:7-11). Let me read his verse for you, "**(7) Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, a good distance from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. And it came about, that everyone who sought the Lord would go out to the tent of meeting which was outside the camp. (8) And it came about, whenever Moses went out to the tent, that all the people would arise and stand, each at the entrance of his tent, and gaze after Moses until he entered the tent. (9) And it came about, whenever Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent; and the Lord would speak with Moses. (10) When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would arise and worship, each at the entrance of his tent.**"

In the Old Testament, God would periodically take up residence in the tent of meeting. This tent or tabernacle did not simply consist of poles draped with canvas it was far more elaborate, but it was also temporary and could be taken down and moved to another location.

Obviously there were other times that God manifested Himself in the Old Testament but in this passage John seems, in a very subtle way, to be drawing a parallel with the tabernacle, the tent of meeting.

In the Old Testament, God chose to tabernacle with men in the tent of meeting. In the New Testament, God chose to tabernacle with men by becoming flesh. The time that God spent among men at the tent of meeting was very sporadic. The time that God spent in the flesh during his incarnation was a constant and lasted over 30 years.

## *Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript*

God's choice to become incarnate and to dwell among men gave mankind the opportunity to observe His glory. Let us once again read **John 1:14**, "**And the Word (who was with God and was God) became flesh (100% human), and dwelt (tabernacled) among us and we beheld His glory.**" What does John mean when he says, "**beheld His glory?**" It is not referring to the transfiguration of Christ. If John wanted us to think that he was referring to the transfiguration of Christ he would have had to somehow introduce this event in the immediate context. And if not in the immediate context certainly he would have had to introduce this event somewhere in his gospel but he does neither.

This leaves us to understand the phrase "**beheld His glory**" in the context of the topic at hand, which is the incarnation! But what was glorious about the incarnation? What was glorious about the Word becoming a baby? What was glorious about the Word growing up in a poor carpenter's family? What was glorious about Him trudging about Palestine with no place to call home speaking to crowds who were not quick to embrace Him and when they did often times would later desert Him? What was glorious about the growing hostility toward Him by those in leadership? And what was glorious about His crucifixion? This is a good question.

In the LXX, the word 'glory' (DOXA) commonly is used to denote the visible manifestation of God's self-disclosure. In the Old Testament, God tended to disclose Himself in a particular way and in the New Testament He tended to disclose Himself in a different way. But whether God was disclosing Himself in a particular way in the Old Testament or disclosing Himself in a different way in the New Testament, both disclosures were truly glorious, but glorious in different ways.

In the Old Testament, God is disclosed as majestic and powerful, worthy of adulation and service (Exodus 33:7-11). There was never any question in the Old Testament when God disclosed Himself who was on the throne of the universe and those people to whom God disclosed Himself certainly, by and large, did not have any difficulty knowing that they were in the presence of God.

When the pillar of cloud stood at the entrance of the tent of meeting, letting the Jewish people know that God was present, it was a glorious display of God. In fact so glorious that the whole of the nation of Israel when they saw it would disperse to the entrance of their own tents and worship when He appeared. It never crossed their mind to ignore Him. But the way God disclosed Himself in the New Testament, after His incarnation, was quite different.

In the New Testament, God in His incarnation is disclosed as the supreme servant (Mark 10:45). Listen to **Mark 10:45**, "**For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.**" When the word became flesh and chose to disclose Himself as the supreme servant this certainly was an incredible change of pace. And this new way of disclosing Himself to His creation proved problematic for some people in recognizing His true identity but it wasn't as if His flesh provided an insurmountable obstacle.

When God chose to become flesh and dwell among us, the glory that He enjoyed in heaven was veiled but there was another glory that became visible to those who had eyes to see. This is what John is talking about when he tells us that he "**beheld His glory.**"

## *Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript*

But it was not just anybody's glory that he was beholding it was the "**glory of the only begotten from the Father.**" What is the significance of this phrase?

The Greek term (MONOGENES) translated "only begotten" simply means "unique." Those who receive the Word according to **John 1:12** become the children of God but they are not children in the same way as the Word who became flesh is God's Son.

The Word who became flesh was in the beginning with God and was God. We have become sons by receiving the Word. We have become sons by believing in His name. But the Word who became flesh has always been uniquely God's Son. And it was His glory, the glory of the only begotten from the Father that John tells us he beheld in **John 1:14**.

If John were here this weekend and we were to able ask him what particularly stood out to him as he viewed the glory of the incarnate Christ what would you think he might say? I would have to believe that it would be His death on the cross.

Certainly John saw the cross of Jesus as glory (John 12:23-24). In introducing a teaching on His death, John in **John 12:23** says, "**The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified.**" What was Jesus talking about? Listen to the very next verse, "**Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.**" What would John say particularly stood out to him as he viewed the glory of the incarnate Christ? I would have to believe that he would say, "His death."

Apart from the glory of the death of Christ there would be no grace or truth available for us. There would be no hope of salvation for us or others but because of His death John is able to refer to the incarnate Word as "full of grace and truth." How does John conclude **John 1:14**, "**And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.**"

### CONCLUSION

As the disciples of Christ it would seem only right that we would continue along the path of His incarnation and set our minds not on serving ourselves but the Lord and those for whom He died. Even today the glory of the incarnate Christ can still be seen in His church. Is the glory of the incarnate Christ being seen in and through you? Or is your life full only of yourself and your wants and desires?

When you think of the glory of God, hopefully will not limit yourself to thinking of God on His throne but hopefully you will also think of God on His cross.