

PASTOR'S SERMON NOTES · PULPIT COPY

The Word Became Flesh

The Gospel of John: Why Should I Believe? · Week 03 · September 27, 2026

Scripture:

John 1:14–18

MOTIVATION (WHY YOU NEED THIS)

Anyone watch Sesame Street growing up?

Remember when Grover teaches kids about the concepts of near and far by running back and forth until he is completely exhausted.

From a very young age we begin to understand what it means for someone to be close to us, and for someone to be far away.

It's really about distance.

When someone is far away, it's complicated to really know them. However, when a person is near, it makes that relationship more tangible/possible.

Today, we're going to be looking at the concept of God, who seemed far away, coming to live among people.

Although we've already learned about His eternal nature, this still makes Him feel distant, so John tells us how Jesus came near.

INFORMATION (WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW)

What did Jesus do in coming near to us?

Jesus took on human flesh and dwelled among people

John 1:14 (ESV) 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.

- Jesus became human (flesh), but did not stop being God

Philippians 2:6 (NLT) Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. ⁷ Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being.

John MacArthur tells us what privileges Jesus set aside to come to earth...

- **Heavenly glory** – he gave up the glory of a face-to-face relationship with God
- **Independent authority** – submitted himself to the will of his Father
- **Divine prerogatives** – set aside the independent use of his divine attributes and submitted himself to the Spirit's direction
- **Eternal riches** – on earth Christ was poor and owned very little
- **Favorable relationship with God** – felt the Father's wrath for human sin while on the cross
- Jesus chose to dwell among people (Greek – pitched His tent)

"In the past, God had manifested his presence to his people in the tabernacle and the temple. Now God takes up residence among his people in the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ. Thus, the coming of Christ fulfills the OT symbolism

for God's dwelling with man in the tabernacle and the temple. Later, through the Holy Spirit, Christ will make into a temple both the church and a Christian's body." – ESV Study Bible

Jesus brought with Him grace and truth

John 1:16 (ESV) 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.

- John says that they (John and all Christians) had received grace upon grace

"When one supply of grace is exhausted, another is available." – Expositor's Bible Commentary

- Grace is a gift from God that we don't deserve and can't earn
- Grace upon grace means God's grace keeps coming, one gift after another
- We never reach the end of God's grace
- Grace proves God wants to be near us
- Moses gave the law (which only exposes sin), but Jesus brought grace and truth
 - The law tells us what God expects from us; it can't fix us
 - Grace gives us what we couldn't earn; Jesus gives us what the law couldn't
 - The law points out the problem; Jesus is the answer

The law is like a check engine light. It tells you something's wrong but can't fix it. Only Jesus can fix what sin has broken, and His grace doesn't run out.

Jesus made God (who and what He is like) known to the world

John 1:18 (ESV) No one has ever seen God; God the only Son, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

- John simply states that before the coming of Jesus to earth, no one has seen the fullness of God
- Moses asked to see God's glory and only saw His back (Exodus 33)...in Jesus, we see God's face
- The Greek for "made him known" is also where we get the word "exegesis," so Jesus is literally God's explanation
- When Jesus came, God could finally be seen, known, and believed

This is all about nearness. Jesus didn't keep God at a distance; He brought God close. Most religions are about keeping an angry god happy. But our God throws the door wide open and invites us into a relationship. How do we get in? By doing better? No. By grace. God sent Jesus to make a way for us when we didn't deserve it.

APPLICATION (WHAT YOU NEED TO DO)

So, my challenge to you is to **come near to the God who came near to you.**

You can't earn your way to God, and you don't have to. Jesus already crossed the distance that was between God and man.

Whatever you've been trying to fix on your own, stop staring at the check engine light and bring it to Jesus. Only He can fix what sin has broken. His grace doesn't run out.

Remember Grover?

Grover spent the whole show running back and forth between near and far until he was exhausted. A lot of us live that way with God: close one week, distant the next, trying to close the gap on our own.

But Jesus closed it for us. He came near, He brought grace that doesn't run out, and He stayed.

You don't have to run to God. In Jesus, God ran to you.