

THE WORD BREAKING THROUGH THE SILENCE

Welcome to **Week 1 of The Word Made Flesh!** Today we begin part 6 of our 8 part journey Through the Bible where we will now begin to transition from the OT portion of God's word to the NT. It is here in the NT that God is going to reveal to His people and the world, once and for all, the long awaited Messiah that had been promised for hundreds of years going all the way back to the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. Last week we concluded our OT journey with the book of Malachi where we took a look at God's final rebuke of Israel for questioning His love and engaging in half-hearted worship. This was the last word God would speak to His people for the next 400 years. Even though God may have been silent during this extended period of time it doesn't mean that God was not diligently at work behind the scenes preparing for the revelation of His son Jesus. Here is a glimpse of God intimately working behind the scenes during the latter part of the 400 years of silence.

Luke 1:5-17 (NIV) **5** In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. **6** Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. **7** But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old. **8** Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, **9** he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. **10** And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside. **11** Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. **12** When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. **13** But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. This is John The Baptist, the one God is going to designate as the one who will identify the Messiah when He begins His public ministry. Notice what the angel says about him. **14** He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, **15** for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. **16** He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. **17** And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Luke 1:26-37 (NIV) **26** In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, So while John The Baptist is still developing in his mother's womb God identifies the young woman by which the Messiah will be born into the world. God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, **27** to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. **28** The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." **29** Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. **30** But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. **31** You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. **32** He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father

David, **33** and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end." **34** "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

God might have been silent, but He is very much at work behind the scenes setting the stage for the unveiling of His promised Messiah. And that brings us to today and John's gospel account of the unveiling of Jesus as the Messiah. (A little side note here. The John who is writing this gospel is not the same person as John the Baptist. Remember as we just read in Luke, John the Baptist was a cousin of Jesus. His mother was Mary's sister. The John who writes this gospel is John the Beloved, one of Jesus' faithful disciples. He is also the same John who writes 1, 2 & 3 John as well as the Book of Revelation found at the end of the Bible.

This morning as we take a look at **John 1** (the chapter that breaks 400 years of God's silence) I want us to see **TWO VITAL REALITIES** concerning Jesus and the important implications these two realities have for our lives. **(PRAY)**

Vital Reality #1: JESUS IS A DIVINE BEING

This is important to recognize because Jesus is more than just a great prophet or good teacher who has come to deliver some more information about God and to confront the brokenness of mankind like all the others before Him. We have seen plenty of that already with what we have read up to this point in the OT. **We don't need any more revelation about what's wrong.** That's why God has been silent for these 400 years. There's nothing more to say! **What Israel needs and what the world needs is a solution! We need a cure for sin!** And Jesus can give us that because He is much more than just a man! In fact, Jesus is the answer for all that has plagued mankind concerning sin and brokenness. He is the solution to our problem! And the reason He is different is because He is more than just mere flesh and blood. **He is DIVINE! He is GOD in the flesh!!!** He can accomplish what no one else has been able to accomplish to date. Being DIVINE means He is perfect and without sin. Because He is without sin He alone is the only one who can offer a sacrifice to God that is acceptable enough to cover the sin of all mankind. In fact, this was God's plan from the very beginning.

John 1: 1-5 (NIV) 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was with God in the beginning. **3** Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. **4** In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. **5** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

The first 5 verses here in Chapter 1 is where John sets the context for how we are to see Jesus as the WORD in the rest of the Gospel of John. First of all we need to identify what John is referring to when he says "the WORD". The Greek term used here is the word "logos". To the Greeks this term referred to the abstract conception that lies behind everything concrete. The concept of the logos as far as the Greeks were concerned is very similar to what we would refer to as wisdom. Although the Greeks did not attach wisdom as something that comes from God,

the Hebrews did. When John refers to the “WORD” or in the original language “the LOGOS” he is basically saying that God is the genius who created all things therefore He is the WORD Himself. If we read on down to verse 14 we come to understand that the WORD John is referring to is none other than Jesus Himself.

John 1:14 (NIV) The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John is basically saying this,

He is saying that **Jesus is ETERNAL** - meaning before all things began Jesus was there with God the Father. Read vs.1 and this time substitute “Jesus” for “the WORD”, **In the beginning was (Jesus), and (Jesus) was with God,.....2 He was with God in the beginning.** This means that Jesus was not created. He has no beginning. He has no limitations. Whatever human limitations He had while on earth He chose for himself for a limited time and He did that so He could dwell with us. In essence the eternal put on human flesh so that we could comprehend Him. Therefore, Jesus existed before He was born to Mary thus He is eternal in nature without a beginning

John is also saying that **Jesus is EQUAL with God** - Not only was He there at the beginning He is in fact God. **1 In the beginning was the Word (Jesus), and the Word (Jesus) was with God, and the Word (Jesus) was God.**

- a) If Jesus is equal with God then **He is equal in POWER regarding creation!** **John 1:3 (NIV)** Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. Who has that kind of power? Only God does! And with this kind of power is there anything that he can't do. Especially when it comes to making things new
- b) If Jesus is equal with God then **He is full of LIGHT and LIFE!** **John 1:4 (NIV)** In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. **5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.** He fills the world with light and life. He dispels the darkness and it cannot overcome Him. He brings life out of death thus death is always defeated. Listen to how Paul describes Jesus in **Colossians 1**.

Colossians 1:15-20 (NIV) **15** The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. **16** For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. **17** He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. **18** And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. **19** For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, **20** and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

As a result, Jesus brings resources to the problem we face that no one else can. He is able to accomplish what no one who came before him could. Abraham couldn't. Moses couldn't. David couldn't. Sin was always an issue. None of them were eternal in nature, None of them had the power to defeat death and hell. None of them were filled with life and light and they couldn't dispel the darkness like Jesus the Messiah can. Why? Because He is DIVINE and they were not and He is able to conquer sin and all principalities through the cross.

Colossians 2:13-15 (NIV) "13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. 15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross."

Vital Reality #1: JESUS IS A DIVINE BEING

Vital Reality #2: JESUS IS THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN MAKE NEW LIFE POSSIBLE

Sin has placed a stain on all of our lives. Since Adam and Eve the stain of sin has given us a death sentence. More laws and more regulations will not solve our problem. If that was the case the commandments God gave His people would have sufficed. Unfortunately, the only thing the law can do is show us that we are sinful and that we need a SAVIOR.

Galatians 3:23-26 (ESV) 23 Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. 24 So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. 25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, 26 for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.

So the only hope we have is to be born anew.

John 1:6-13 (NIV) 6 There was a man sent from God whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. 8 He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. 9 The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

John the Baptist's sole mission was to point people to Jesus so that they could be born anew. As **2 Corinthians 5:17** reminds us, anyone **who is in Christ is a new creation. The old is done away with and the new has now come" (paraphrased)**. The only One who could give us the opportunity to be born again is the One who became an acceptable offering for our sin thus fulfilling the righteous requirement of the law.

Romans 8:3-4 (NIV) 3 For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so

he condemned sin in the flesh, **4** in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Notice how being born again is even possible. First we must **RECEIVE and BELIEVE**. Receive the gift of salvation Jesus offers us through His sacrifice for our sins and **believe** that Jesus is who He says He is. Secondly, we must have a **NEW BIRTH**. Not a natural birth but one where we are born of the Spirit.

John 1:29-34 (NIV) 29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! **30** This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’ **31** I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.”

32 Then John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. **33** And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’ **34** I have seen and I testify that this is God’s Chosen One.”

To be baptized with the Holy Spirit is to be born again. Just like when a baby is born, a new person emerges into the world and the new life grows, so it is with one who is born again. When a baby grows and matures, it comes to resemble his or her parents. When we are born of the Spirit, a “new person” arrives but rather than a physical being emerging, it is a new spiritual life that grows and begins to resemble the spiritual character of their Father in heaven. Note this is a work of the Holy Spirit that is only made possible through faith in Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross. Until your sins are cleansed the Holy Spirit cannot inhabit your life.

The only hope we have to escape our life of sin is JESUS! He is DIVINE and He is the only one who can make new life possible. That is why He came to earth in the first place.

John 1:14-18 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. **15** (John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, “This is the one I spoke about when I said, ‘He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’”) **16** Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. John emphasizes here the superabundance of grace that God has displayed toward mankind and especially to those who have trusted in Jesus. **17** For the law was given through Moses; The Law that God gave through Moses was to highlight God’s demand for holiness. This would only show us our sin and our desperate need for a Savior. In essence the Law was only a partial truth paving the way for Jesus who would establish the full truth. **17** For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. **18** No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known. In other words, all that Jesus is and does interprets and explains who God is.

Worship Team Comes Back Up

Invitation:

So what are the implications for our life if these two realities are TRUE?

First of all, if Jesus is divine and He is the only one who can make new life possible will you **Receive and Believe in Him?**

John 1:35-37 (NIV) The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. **36** When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" John the Baptist is pointing to Jesus and basically saying, "He is the designated offering for your sin and He is completely accepted by God the Father. As a result, you would do well to give your life to Him." **37** When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. Which means they surrendered their lives to Him. He became their Lord and Master. They gave up the right to live the way they wanted to live and they decided they would live as Jesus called them to live. Why? Because they believed Him to be the SON of GOD and the only one who could take away their sin and make them acceptable to God. They were in that moment born again and are now wanting to live for God not against Him. Their life now belonged to God and they were willing to now allow God to fulfill His purpose in them as a result.

Has there ever been a time in your life where you have received Jesus as your Lord? If not, would you RECEIVE HIM and BELIEVE in HIM today?

Romans 10:9 (NIV) **9** If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. **10** For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. **11** As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame." **12** For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, **13** for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Would you RECEIVE and BELIEVE in Jesus right now!

Secondly, if Jesus is divine and He is the only one who can make new life possible then are you willing to **Tell others about Him?**

John 1:40-42 (NIV) Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. **41** The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him. "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). **42** And he brought him to Jesus. I want you to notice that before Andrew could tell his brother about Jesus he had to first be willing to follow Jesus. I also want you to notice that he didn't just tell him about Jesus he brought him to Jesus personally. If you have been changed by Jesus you will be compelled to tell others also. Why? Because He is the only one who can rescue us from sin's control. Notice, we are not talking about introducing someone to church or religion. We are talking about introducing someone to the person of Jesus Christ. The one who is the DIVINE Son of God and the only one who can give us a NEW LIFE.

Romans 10:14-15 (NIV) 14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? **15** And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

If your life has been changed by Jesus and you have RECEIVED Him and BELIEVED in HIM then are you TELLING OTHERS about HIM? If not, why not?

Let's Pray!