

Sunday July 16, 2023 | John 1:14-29

The beginning of the gospel of John is so incredible. He backs up to eternity past, before anything began, to introduce us to the Word (v.1). Everything was created through Him (v.2). The Word is light and life (v.3-4). The world rejected the light, and His own people rejected Him (v.5; 9-11). The tremendous hope offered is that if we believe in the light, we can become children of God (v.12). This is not by blood line, human effort, and cannot be chosen for someone else. It is a work of God (v.13). And then comes the giant reveal that this Word that is God became flesh. God came and tabernacled with man.

John 1:1 ESV

(1) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14 ESV

(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.

Notice the parallels between verse 1 and 14. The Word that was became flesh. The Word that was with God now came and tabernacled with Man. The Word that was God came and revealed to us who God is. When Jesus came and took on flesh a true miracle happened. It is beyond our comprehension to understand how Jesus was able to be fully God and fully man. Often as we read the gospels we tend to think of Jesus as fully God. We tend to think Of course He can do that miracle He is God. **We lose sight that He was fully man.** He walked as a man. He relied on the power of the Spirit as He was in the flesh.

1 Timothy 3:16 NLT

(16) Without question, **this is the great mystery of our faith: Christ was revealed in a human body** and vindicated by the Spirit. He was seen by angels and announced to the nations. He was believed in throughout the world and taken to heaven in glory.

We hear the phrase, that Jesus was fully God and fully man and it can become common place. It is one of the great mysteries of the Word of God. **The Word that always was, now had a physical body and had the ability to die.** He could experience, pain, suffering, and loneliness. Because He took on humanity He knows how to abide with God and walk in the power of the Spirit. He knows firsthand the weakness of the flesh and the temptations that come with it.

Hebrews 4:15-16 ESV

(15) For we do not have a high priest **who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.**

(16) Let us then with confidence **draw near to the throne of grace**, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Jesus fully knows what it is to struggle and be weak. He was tempted in every respect as we are. Nothing was left out. We can have such a confidence to come to God and share what we are struggling with because Jesus knows what it is like. He knows us and what it is like to be us.

Don't hide what you're dealing with from Him, bring it to the one who can sympathize with every part of it.

John 1:14 ESV

(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.

Jesus in His humanity had a tremendous glory to Him. As He was in a physical Body, He had to keep His heavenly glory controlled. The God who dwells in an unapproachable light was living on the earth. Jesus let it shine through to Peter James and John.

Matthew 17:1-2 ESV

(1) And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and **John** his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves.

(2) And He was **transfigured** before them, **and His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became white as light.**

Jesus was transformed in front of their eyes and let His divine glory show through for a moment. This was such a tremendous thing to see, they became terrified. His face was like the sun. His glory was so intense even His clothes became like light. **This is what makes the glory of His flesh so incredible. This blindingly bright glory was in Human flesh.** Through Jesus God could be revealed. He deserved so much honor and worship. John the Baptist made this clear.

John 1:15 ESV

(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.**'")

John the Baptist was 6 Months older than Jesus (Luke 1:36) and started His public ministry before Jesus. Jesus by age (of His flesh) and ministry came after John, but Jesus had more glory and out ranked John because He was the Word in flesh. Jesus was before John. Even John the Baptist taught the deity of Jesus. John the apostle keeps describing who Jesus is.

John 1:16 ESV

(16) For **from His fullness** we have all received, **grace upon grace.**

John 1:16 Wuest Expanded NT

(16) for **out of His fulness** as a source we all received, and **grace in exchange for grace.**

I love this verse. We can have a confidence to face tomorrow because of this verse. Out of who Jesus is. **Out of His fullness. We receive grace, that is constantly replacing grace.** It is the daily manna. It is why "what if" scenarios are so hard for us. We don't have the grace for the situation yet. As a believer you will never run out of His grace for you. It is constantly replacing itself and staying fresh. Remember this is the Word who has taken on flesh. **He knows our weaknesses perfectly and out of His fullness supplies us the grace we need for every situation.** One example John gives of this grace is that we are not under the law anymore.

John 1:17 ESV

(17) For **the law** was given through Moses; **grace and truth** came through Jesus Christ.

Notice that the law was given through Moses. It was not Moses' law; He was the messenger of it. The law showed the exacting demands of truth and revealed the justice of God. It was a grace that God gave the law, **it showed our tremendous need for a savior**. Then it was exchanged for more grace through Jesus. Grace and truth came through Him. **He is able to show grace based on truth.**

Romans 5:17-21 NLT

(20) **God's law was given so that all people could see how sinful they were.** But as people sinned more and more, **God's wonderful grace became more abundant.**

(21) So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, **now God's wonderful grace rules instead,** giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The law exposed the sinfulness in our hearts. As the Law showed our great sin, it also revealed how incredibly deep God's grace is. As deep as sin goes His grace is more. Instead of being ruled by sin, as believers it is God's grace that rules. We are in the age of grace. **The law demanded righteousness of humanity, but instead grace gives righteousness to humanity.** The standard has not changed. The truth of what righteousness is, has not been altered. **When Jesus brought us grace it did not violate the truth.** By showing us grace Jesus revealed to us parts of God that the law could never show.

John 1:18 ESV

(18) No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, **He has made Him known.**

Jesus came and made God known to us. This word to **make known** means **to relate in detail, expound.** It is a combination of the words **out and to lead.** Jesus led out who God is to man. Jesus explains who God is to us. This can sound incredible but as a believer in the New Testament with the Holy Spirit **you know more about the character of God than the Old Testament saints did.** They were looking forward to the coming messiah. We have the word detailing to us who He is. He made God known to us in incredible ways. The Jews of the day knew the scriptures well but most didn't see who the messiah truly would be. Look at how they question John the Baptist.

John 1:19-23 ESV

(19) And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, **"Who are you?"**

(20) He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, **"I am not the Christ."**

(21) And they asked him, "What then? **Are you Elijah?"** He said, **"I am not."** **"Are you the Prophet?"** And he answered, **"No."**

(22) So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

(23) He said, **"I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said."**

The religious leaders came and questioned John. At this point in his ministry John had a following of disciples. These leaders wanted to know who He was. John clearly tells them that He is not the Christ meaning Messiah. John would not be the savior. They ask if he is Elijah to fulfill **Malachi 4:5-6**, who will come before the day of the Lord. John denies this and says that He is not Elijah. Then they ask if he is the prophet to fulfill **Deuteronomy 18:15-18**. Again, John says no. Each time His answers shorten. Finally, they are fed up and ask who are you? John quotes from Isaiah 40. They had been trying to figure out what scripture he fulfilled.

Isaiah 40:3-5 ESV

(3) **A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.**

(4) Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.

(5) **And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed**, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

John was called to prepare the path for the coming messiah. The glory of the Lord was to be revealed and John was called to get the people ready. He was to go before and prepare the road. He was the last Old Testament Prophet. He called to the Jews to repent and prepare for the King who was arriving (Luke 3). Jesus was the Word and John was the voice trying to get people ready for Him.

John 1:24-25 ESV

(24) (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.)

(25) They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

These religious leaders, then want to know why John is baptizing people, what has given him the authority to do this? Ceremonial washings were practiced by the Jews, and immersion was practiced by Greek proselytes who were converting to Judaism. But what John was doing was unique. He was baptizing Jews, the implications of why a Jew needed to be baptized would have been offensive.

John 1:26-27 ESV

(26) John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know,

(27) even He who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie."

John is practicing a water baptism to show the repentance of the people. Again, he is trying to get them ready and clean things up before their king arrives. **At this time, they were still under the law.** John points to the Messiah who is coming. John knows that He is about to be revealed. We will see in the coming weeks that John has already baptized Jesus but He had not started His public ministry yet. John does not see himself as worthy to untie Jesus' sandal. A disciple would serve a teacher in everything except for untying a sandal that was reserved for the lowliest slave. John says he is not worthy to even be considered the lowliest slave to Jesus. John understood the glory of Jesus and the honor He deserved.

John 1:28-29 ESV

(28) These things took place in **Bethany across the Jordan**, where John was baptizing.

(29) **The next day** he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, **“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!**

This is happening after the baptism of Jesus and His temptation in the wilderness. The religious leaders had come to question John. The next day after this questioning, John sees Jesus walking up and makes a tremendous announcement. What we miss is that something happened during the baptism of Jesus that confirmed for John that Jesus was the Messiah. John will let us know this latter in the chapter. But notice how important this statement is. John says to behold, this word means **look, see, take notice, here is**. We can't miss this. Jesus is the Lamb of God who will take away the sin of the world. The entire Old Testament has been pointing forward to this. All the way back to the garden after Adam sinned.

Genesis 3:21 ESV

(21) And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife **garments of skins** and clothed them.

This was the first death. The first time Adam and Eve saw an animal bleed out. Their sin had to be dealt with by death, by blood. An animal sacrifice was given, so that it wasn't Adam who died physically that day. This started to reveal God's plan for a future perfect sacrifice.

Genesis 4:2-5 ESV

(2) And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground.

(3) In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD **an offering of the fruit of the ground,**

(4) and Abel also brought of the firstborn **of his flock** and of their fat portions. **And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering,**

(5) but for Cain and his offering He had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell.

At this point humanity did not eat animals yet. God won't give them the freedom to do that until after the flood (Gen 9:3). Cain brought His absolute best to God. Cain brought the most exquisite, perfect, and costly offering. It was giving of their food. **Cains offering cost him something**. Abel kept the flock which at this time was only used for worship and clothing. Abel was accepted because He brought blood. Abel brought the sacrificial death of an animal. **Our best will never make us acceptable to God**. You and I could never put together enough of anything to make a sacrifice that would be pleasing to Him. **The only sacrifice God accepted was the blood of an animal** that pointed forward to the perfect sacrifice. This thread continues to Abraham and Isaac. God has asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, and they head up the mount to make the sacrifice.

Genesis 22:7-8 ESV

(7) And Isaac said to his father Abraham, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” He said, “Behold, the fire and the wood, but **where is the lamb for a burnt offering?**”

(8) Abraham said, **“God will provide for Himself the lamb** for a burnt offering, my son.” So they went both of them together.

Isaac knows how the sacrifices are supposed to work. He sees the fire and the wood. Only one thing is missing, they don't have a lamb. Isaac will have to get on the altar. Abraham makes a fascinating statement; God will provide for Himself the lamb. It is God's true justice that demands sin be dealt with by death. It will be God's tremendous grace that will provide the solution. **God will provide a perfect lamb, a perfect sacrifice once and for all.** That day God provided a ram to take the place of Isaac (Gen 22:13). Isaac's question becomes the question of the entire Old Testament. **Where is the lamb? Where is the perfect sacrifice that we need?** Abraham's answer was the hope throughout the Old Testament, **God will provide.** We continue to see this at the Exodus in the Passover. God instructed every family to take a lamb.

Exodus 12:5-7; 13 ESV

(5) **Your lamb** shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, (6) and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel **shall kill their lambs** at twilight.

(7) "Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.

(13) The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And **when I see the blood, I will pass over you,** and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

As death came to every firstborn in Egypt, God's people were to be covered by the blood. They were called to sacrifice a perfect lamb. They had to take the blood of that lamb and spread it over their door. When the angel of the Lord went through giving the judgment only one thing mattered. Was the blood of the lamb on the door or not. It didn't matter what family you were; it didn't matter how nervous or at peace the family was who was in the house. **Acceptance was based on the blood of the lamb.**

All these animal sacrifices were temporary, they couldn't solve the problem. We needed the one who was full of grace and truth. We needed the Word who became flesh. His grace kept refreshing and replacing grace. **"Where is the lamb?" became "Behold the Lamb of God!" and it will one day be "Worthy is the Lamb!"**

Revelation 5:6-10 ESV

(6) And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders **I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain,** with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

(7) And He went and took the scroll from the right hand of Him who was seated on the throne.

(8) And when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four **elders fell down before the Lamb,** each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

(9) And they sang a new song, saying, **"Worthy are You to take the scroll and to open its seals, for You were slain, and by Your blood You ransomed people for God** from every tribe and language and people and nation,

(10) and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and **they shall reign on the earth."**