

# “The Word (God) Became Flesh” – Pr Jim Sprenkle – Christmas Day December 25, 2024

- I. **John 1:1; 14** - <sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>14</sup>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.
- II. **Our celebration today is a miracle of grace.**
  - a. Each year, I take a moment to reflect on how to truly honor the incredible blessing and gift of Jesus’ birth—the miracle of God becoming human.
    - i. In some ways, it feels like trying to explain the mystery of God on Trinity Sunday—how the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three distinct Persons, yet together they are one God.
    - ii. The mystery of the ages is how God Himself would come down from heaven in the Christ Child – both God and man – to rescue humanity from sin, death, and satan.
    - iii. So, here we sit, considering our families, our traditions, our meals, and our gifts... and we also consider the way God rescued us by sending Jesus.
  - b. I’m reminded of the Nativity globe my family put out to decorate for Christmas when I was a kid.
    - i. It was a plastic dome set on a metal base that you could wind up and play Silent Night... as the whole scene spun around, I loved looking at the little people and animals.
    - ii. I remember the glow of the blue Christmas lights around the windows and the tree twinkling in the background, along with a warm fire burning in the fireplace... and spending lots of time thinking about the night Jesus was born.
    - iii. That was idyllic and wonderful... but have you ever been to a real farm or ranch... or inside a barn where animals sleep?
      1. We raised small farm animals like chickens, geese, turkeys, ducks, rabbits, and sheep... and I can tell you, a birth should never happen in the place they call home!
      2. The minute you walked into our barn or chicken house, you were hit with the stench of ammonia and feces... and you could barely help it, but your face would look like you just bit into a lemon when the smell hit you.
      3. It’s dusty, dirty, smelly, and nowhere to spend a long time... but most especially sleep overnight... or have a baby.
      4. The God of the universe, our Savior Jesus Christ, became man and dwelt among us... starting His human life in squalor... a stinky, fly infested stable.

- 5. I go back to all the wonderful nativity scenes... and I'm not sure that any of them do justice to the place that Jesus was really born... as we always make things warm and fuzzy rather than cold and harsh.
- iv. The point is that Jesus could have set Himself up to be delivered in much better circumstances – He was God after all.
  - 1. Yet, the beginning was a picture of His whole life... as He lived in humility and lowliness rather than in palaces and estates.
- c. The Bible has many references to the humility and lowliness of Jesus... for example:
  - i. Jesus says, “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” Mark 10:45
    - 1. God in the flesh serving us... and giving up His life to buy us back from sin and death.
  - ii. In John 13:14-15 Jesus says, “If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.”
    - 1. It didn’t matter what the lowest job was, Jesus would even wash feet to show the example of what God’s love looked like.
  - iii. In Matthew 11:29 our Lord says, “Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”
  - iv. And finally, we are reminded in 2 Corinthians 8:9 – “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich (He was God!), yet for your sake He became poor, so that by His poverty you might become rich.”
- d. These Scriptures all point to the humility of Jesus as He lived out His life struggling with all the things we struggle with in the trials and tribulations, but He never used His divine nature to get through it.

- III. **Jesus acting less than godly is the source of all kinds of bad teaching...**
  - a. People think that Jesus was just another man... that He cannot be God in the flesh... because why would God allow Himself to go through such poverty and suffering?
  - b. Others think that Jesus wasn’t God, but given special power by God... kind of like an angel... but that’s what Hebrews 1:7-8 addresses in our reading today, “[God the Father] makes His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire.” But of the Son [Jesus] He says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever...”
    - i. Jesus was not just a created being like the angels and given special power... it says that Jesus’ throne “O God” is forever.
  - c. People often ask why Jesus would pray to the Father or submit to Him if He’s God.

- i. The answer is simple: Jesus didn't use His divine power to avoid the hardships of life... instead, as one of us, He trusted the Father completely to guide Him.
  - 1. Jesus was never supposed to be "other worldly" and beyond the human standard... He was supposed to be our example of how a true human being lives... in complete submission and trust in God.
  - 2. Jesus was like a new Adam who never lost the image of God through sin or rebellion... but by living a perfect life, He became the perfect sacrifice for us on the cross.
- ii. Jesus is not just a created being—He is both fully God and fully human. Why does that matter?
  - 1. Because Jesus was human, He walked in our shoes and experienced life just as we do.... He knows our struggles, pain, and temptations, yet He lived a perfect life without sin.
  - 2. Because Jesus is God, His death on the cross was powerful enough to pay the full price for our sins.... His sacrifice defeated sin, conquered death, and overcame satan's plans to separate us from God.
  - 3. In Jesus, we find forgiveness, victory, and eternal hope.

IV. **John writes the Word was God, and the Word came to dwell with us.**

- a. There is probably no better place in the Bible to see that Jesus is the Word, and He was at the beginning of creation, but also when the time was right, came to be with us and dwell amongst us as a human being.
- b. In all the squalor and suffering, our God chose to come into this life and walk among us... to live in the worst that life has to offer... to know us.
- c. But it goes both ways, because...
  - i. Jesus wants nothing more than for you to know Him as well.
  - ii. He constantly pursues you with the Word... with people who know Him and are willing to share Him... and that above all things you might see Him as God and Savior.
  - iii. No one can possibly understand just how much Jesus gave up so that everyone may come to know Him, trust in Him, and receive the victory that He won over sin, death, and the devil.
- d. Open your hearts and minds to the Truth... to the Light that came down from heaven to be more than just a man... but to be our Savior and God.
- e. Go from here with the incredible truth that the Word (God) became flesh and dwelt among us.
  - i. Jesus, fully God and fully man, entered into the mess and brokenness of our world to save us.
  - ii. Our God, worthy of nothing but honor and glory and praise... born in a stable, raised in poverty, and died a criminal's death on the cross... all so that we might have eternal life.

- f. This Christmas... stand in awe of His love.... trust in His grace... and share the hope of His salvation with a world that so desperately needs Him.  
Amen.