

#3 – John 1:14-18

Need: To recognize the work of God on the behalf of men.

Aim: To provide information concerning the means of redemption.

Title: “God Became Flesh”

Prop: In Jn. 1:14-18, we find the **I. Central Truth – Jn. 1:14**, the **II. Witness of the Truth – Jn. 1:15** and as a result we experience the **III. Results of the Truth – Jn. 1:16-18** we should have a positive impact upon the way we live and do life.

Intro: The account of Jesus’ birth is recorded in the Gospel Luke chapter two, but in reality the Christmas Story began here in John 1:14, “**And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us...**” This statement was the central truth of the Gospel, the culmination of all God’s planning from eternity past. God took on the form of a man, His creature and engaged in all aspects of human life. Therefore we can have assurance that God knows exactly how we feel when the pressures of life coming crashing down upon us from outside forces often beyond our own control. God knows exactly how we feel in those times of deep darkness and distress when life seems to be spinning out of control.

We need to find great comfort and hope that God loved us so much that He became like us, and in even in the fullness of our sin Jesus went to the Cross to pay penalty for the fullness our sin, and now having been resurrected from the dead Jesus opens His arms wide for all who would believe in Him as Lord and Savior.

Life can be so complicated at times, but the solutions you seek, the purpose and meaning of life, the peace and the order you need in your life can only be found in Jesus. He has all the answers.

As I think of the Christmas season I cannot but think about the Cross, as in essence Jesus was born to die. For me Easter weekend is the holiest of all Christian holidays, as we contemplate the humiliation of the Son of God dying on a cross for the sins of others. It is incomprehensible! The idea of the eternal God taking on human form to die for the sins of others. We cannot imagine the double depth of humiliation of Jesus, the Son of God who laid aside all rights to deity as Paul said in Philippians 2, to become like us and then to die for our sin. That was all part of the mystery of the character and love of God for a sinful race. How can we but not but respond with love and gratitude? **“That while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”** He meets us at the point of our desperate need. There is no necessity for us get things in order as God meets us right where we are in the pit of our sin.

Prop: In Jn. 1:14-18, we find the I. Central Truth – Jn. 1:14-15, of the Gospel and the II. Results of the Truth – Jn. 1:16-18, which we can experience as it should have a positive impact upon the way we live and do life.

Transition: Let's begin our study with the great mystery of verse 14.

The Central Truth.

I. Central Truth – Jn. 1:14

A. Word Became Flesh

1. Review – In the first 13 verses of chapter 1 we found some interesting, foundational truths about Christianity. In the first 5 verses we found out that Jesus was the eternal God who created the universe and specifically this world. In verses 6-13 we find Jesus identified as the “**Light**” of the world and though Jesus offered life, the world rejected Him and killed Him. Jesus’ goal was to die for the sin of the world, and as a result of His resurrection He grants life and adoption into God’s family for all who believe.

Transition: Now in verse 14 we find the most incredible event, one that changed the course of human history for all time.

2. God Became Man (14) – In verse 14 this Creator God took on flesh, a human body and dwelt, or literally “**made His home**” with us and lived a human life. The theological term was called “**the incarnation.**” It was God becoming man. He was truly the God/Man, God in human form. How this can be, our minds cannot fully understand.

Why was this transformation so important? Only God could live a perfect life, and then offer that life for the sin of mankind.

When Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, we being his descendants inherited the effects of that sin. Thus we are all born into this world as sinners. God imposed a death sentence as the payment for sin. Jesus, being God took upon Himself His own penalty and paid it for all mankind. But, herein is the important fact: It is only appropriated to those who believe.

B. Evidence (14-15)

1. God's Glory (14b) - As we continue on in verse 14 the Apostle John was looking back upon all these events towards the end of his life. The “**glory**” John spoke about was when he and two other disciples saw Jesus in just a shadow of His glory. In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, we learn that Jesus took three of His disciples up into the mountains and there before their very eyes Jesus was displayed in blinding light, along with the appearance of Moses who represented the Law and Elijah who represented the prophets. This event was for the purpose of revelation that both the Law and the prophets had predicted the coming of Messiah, this display was to make that evident and that Jesus was indeed who He said He was, the Son of God and in Him the Law of God would be fulfilled in its entirety.

2. Evidence of Truth and Grace (14c) – In the latter part of verse 14, John gave yet further evidence based upon His portrayed experience with Jesus.

In his gospel the Apostle John will show (and prove) the person and character of Jesus as having come from the Father, full of saving grace and the truth of God's eternal plan to save all who will believe. The central truth of the Gospel was that God became man and dwelt among us. His mission was two-fold, to show us what God was like and then to die for the sin of the world. God's greatest gift was Jesus. So on that cold winter's night over 2,000 years ago, a baby was born of a virgin, conceived by the Holy Spirit (without a sin nature) in a simple stable to a poor couple was destined to become the Savior of the World.

Transition: We have seen one of the central truths of the gospel in that God became man and made His home among us.

II. Results of Truth – Jn. 1:15-18

A. Evidence (15)

1. Witness of the Apostle (15a) – In verse 15 the Apostle John wrote from the backside of what he presented here in the opening section of His gospel. These things he knew to be true as he spent 3 ½ years with Jesus, followed by a lifetime of ministry which included the writing of this gospel, 3 letters, first, second and third John and his opus, the book of Revelation. John saw firsthand the heavenly Christ and the glories of heaven.

He saw things that no words in any language which could fully explain or describe. There was no doubt in John's mind of who Jesus was, is and always will be. John saw Jesus suffer and die and then witnessed His resurrection. And through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, he came to a much fuller understanding of the truth of the Gospel of Jesus. In other words he was saying: **"I know this to be true,"** as he said in Jn. 20:31: **"But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you might have life in His name."**

2. John the Baptist (15b) – Continuing on in verse 15 the Apostle John once again gave the witness of John the Baptist as evidence. Even at this late date, the Baptist was remembered with fondness for his boldness of ministry. And as he was executed, he never wavered from the task for which he was commissioned from birth. John's the Baptist's witness was: **"This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'"** As great as John the Baptist's ministry and testimony were was, he clearly understood the nature of his calling: to bear witness of the coming of Messiah, One who was infinitely greater. John the Baptist clearly knew who Jesus was and that he, John the Baptist was the forerunner of Messiah nothing more than a messenger boy.

As great as John the Baptist was he clearly understood that Jesus was God in human form and that He had come to “**take away the sin of the world.**” It was his task to bear witness which he fulfilled.

Transition: Having come to an understanding of who Jesus was, in verse 16-17 we see the first of many gifts given, His fullness given to us in the form of grace upon grace, a double blessing.

B. Fullness of God (16-17)

1. Grace Upon Grace – Over the past several months I have been involved in a book study and have come to a clearer understanding of the nature of God’s grace. First there is saving grace. God called me, gave me the ability to choose Jesus as Lord and Savior, and even gave me the faith to believe. Now I have always understood it; but there is still some residual misconceptions from my past that I somehow deserved to receive God’s blessing of salvation. I came to Christ at a very early age; I was raised in the church my entire life. I was in an active church youth group. I avoided all the temptations of drugs, illicit sex and the party lifestyle. I spent 4 years in a Bible College, married the love of my life, have a great family, served in a thriving church as a lay leader, went to seminary for 4 years, pastored two churches; surely I **deserved** God’s grace!! I have clearly **earned** God’s saving grace through my many years of service!

But Paul clearly said, it is either works or faith, not both. I can never be good enough through my works to reach God, thus I must come by faith, just like everyone else. If it be by faith I am passive in the act of God's saving grace. I detest the phrase: "**I got saved,**" which to me makes the person central in the act. The correct rendering is "**God saved me,**" making God the central element. God chose me, saved me, and gave me eternal life.

The second aspect which I also found in this phrase, "**For of His fullness we have received, and grace upon grace,**" was the element of God's empowering grace. God not only gave me the grace to believe, but he also gives me the grace to live in obedience and service. God's grace is evident each and every day. Being empowered by the presence of the Holy Spirit I can make good and right choices in my own life and hopefully avoid the many pitfalls of this sin-infested world. He gives the ability and wherewithal to endure difficult challenges in life. In the HS's power live a life to serve others and be a "**light**" in my dark corner of the world.

Jesus is the **Light** of the world, and we are called to be a light in our own circle of influence. I liken this to the relationship between the sun and moon. The moon in the sky is brightened as it reflects the light of the sun; it has no light of itself. It is the same thing for us as Christians; we are to be a reflection of God's Light to the world and culture around us.

2. Fullness (17) – Continuing on into verse 17, not only was there the fullness of God’s grace toward me but also in verse 17 was the issue of a new agreement, a contract. The Law came from Moses who brought judgment and death. The Law was never meant to save us but to serve as a standard of the greatness of God’s holiness and the impossible task of us every reaching that level. No matter how hard I try, I can never be good enough. Now I have lived a good life, generally speaking, but I have lied, stolen stuff, dishonored my parents, but I have never killed anyone, nor committed adultery. I go to church almost every Sunday, put money in the offering plate... Nevertheless, Paul taught that one sin makes me guilty before God and thus deserving the full punishment of the Law. But Jesus paid that penalty and thus I am viewed as a Law-keeper because of my association with Jesus! In Jesus I am made righteous before God. In all fullness Jesus the Law-keeper has made me clean. Thus **“Grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.”** God deals with me on the basis of grace not law: **“Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus”** (Rom. 8:1). I am under a new contract called grace which is not dependent upon me and my performance; it is solely based on what Jesus did and what He has promised for all who would believe. And I know that God always keeps His Word.

3. Sealing the Deal (18) – Verse 18 was kind of a summation of all that was said in verses 1-17. John brought us full circle to the awesomeness of **“God in three Persons, blessed Trinity,”** as the songwriter wrote many years ago. God is pure spirit. We have no connection with Him, other than through Jesus, the God man who continues to serve as the **“Mediator.”** the go between God and Man. The Father sent the Son, who then sent the HS to live inside of us. All three are fully God, One God, three manifestations of God. Even my words are somewhat limited in explaining the unexplainable. To bridge that gap between God and man, it was Jesus who has explained Him as He described Him as His Heavenly Father. To doubting Thomas who requested to see the Father, Jesus replied: **“He who as seen Me has seen the Father.”** As the Son of God, Jesus has all the same qualities and rights as the Father. The Jews understood this as they tried to stone Jesus on several occasions when He claim to be God. Finally, in God’s eternal plan Jesus allowed them to crucify Him, but He came back to life. **“No one takes My life from Me, I give it up freely.”**

So we have seen the beginning of the Christmas Story in that **“the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”** Jesus, the Living Word of God has come, having been born, conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born as a babe, He lived among us. Because of His life, death and resurrection, He

has given us saving grace; and daily grace. empowered by the Holy Spirit to live a godly lifestyle.

Jesus fulfilled the Law of Moses in His personal behavior, which is applied to me. He has given me grace and truth through His life, death and life.

The Father is pure spirit and our connection to Him is through Jesus alone. He is the Mediator between man and the Father.

As I think about these truths, it is Jesus alone who gives me the balance I need in this life. When my relationship with God suffers, I pay a heavy price when I go my own way. Another thought is that I have in my possession the greatest news of all time: God's saving grace and His grace to empower me to live a godly life. Good news for all; that God loved us so much that He became like us, died for the sin of the world. He was raised from the dead and now offers eternal life to all who would believe. What greater way to celebrate the ultimate gift of Christmas, by receiving the Christmas child as the Savior of the world. But even more so as the Christmas Child who died for your and my sin that we might have eternal life.

“God Became Flesh” – Jn. 1:14-18

- **“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us...”**

- Central truth of the Gospel, the
- Culmination of all God’s planning from eternity past.
- God took on the form of mankind, His creature and engaged in all aspects of human life.

In Jn. 1:14-18, we find the I. Central Truth – Jn. 1:14-15, the and as a result we experience the II. Results of the Truth – Jn. 1:16-18, as it should have a positive impact upon the way we live and do life.

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1. Review

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B. Evidence (14-15)

1. God’s Glory (14b)

2. Evidence of Truth and Grace (14c)

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A. Evidence (15)

1. Witness of the Apostle (15a)

2. John the Baptist (15b)

B. Fullness of God (16-17)

1. Grace Upon Grace

2. Fullness (17)

3. Sealing the Deal (18)