

Main Idea: In John 1:14-18 we learn the amazing truth regarding the incarnation, that God became a man. There are two points that are vital for us to consider which we see in this passage.

I. The incarnation explained (14)

- A. When God became man, He was fully man.
 - 1. He became flesh.
 - 2. He set up tent among us.
- B. When God became a man, He remained fully God.
 - 1. He exhibited glory.
 - 2. He came from the Father.
 - 3. He is the source of grace and truth.

II. The incarnation applied (15-18)

- A. Jesus deserves reverence (15).
 - 1. It involves a proper view of yourself.
 - 2. It involves a proper view of the Lord.
- B. Jesus delivers grace (16).
- C. Jesus displays grace and truth (17).
- D. Jesus discloses the Father (18).
 - 1. He reveals the unseeable.
 - 2. He enjoys closeness with the Father.
 - 3. He's the One and Only God.

Make It Personal: Consider two implications.

- 1. If we want to know God, then we must get to know Jesus.
- 2. If we know Jesus, we can help others know Him through a life marked by grace and truth.

Who is this baby in the manger? We are exploring this relevant question by turning our attention to the prologue of John's gospel in John 1:1-18. As I shared last week, I'm concerned that there are thousands and thousands of people who will celebrate Christmas this year, who will sing, “Away in a Manger,” who know the story, yet who don't truly know the significance of it. So many don't know who this baby is, and why He came.

God wants us to know. He has given us a clear answer to this question in John 1. Last Sunday morning we explored verses 1-5. Last Sunday evening we pondered verses 6-13. This morning, we'll focus on verses 14-18, and next Sunday, December 31 we'll finish by taking a close look at the phrase “grace and truth” in verse 17.

Scripture Reading: John 1:14-18

The title of today's message is, “*Veiled in Flesh the Godhead See.*” Do you recognize those words? You've likely said them many times, actually *sung* them. They come from the second verse of a well known Christmas carol, written by Charles Wesley (which will be our closing song today). The song? “*Hark! the Herald Angels Sing.*” Here's the verse.

*Christ by highest heav'n adored
Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come
Offspring of a Virgin's womb
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see*

**Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

¹ This sermon has been adapted from earlier messages preached at WBC in 2005 and 2010.

*Hail the incarnate Deity
Pleased as man with man to dwell
Jesus, our Emmanuel
Hark! The herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!"*

Who is this baby? He is the *Godhead veiled in flesh*, and He has come for the world to see.

So many people don't know Him. That includes people who have never heard His name, for sure, but also people who may think they know Him. And we who do know Him have so much more to learn about Him.

Knowing Jesus, and making Jesus known to others, through the teaching of His Word. That's my calling in life. That's what this church is all about, teaching the Scriptures so that men, women, boys, and girls of all ages might know Jesus Christ and then get involved in making Him known to others.

That's what this morning is all about. So let's get to work. If we want to know Jesus ourselves, and help others come to know Him, we must come to grips with this statement in John 1, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." *Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; Hail the incarnate Deity.*

It's called the *incarnation*, which is Latin, from the prefix "in" plus "carnis" (flesh). It means, in the flesh, or the act of being made flesh. That's the definition. But we need more than a definition. And God has given it to us in John 1:14-18. We're going to see two points in this passage that are vital for us to consider if we want to know Jesus.

I. The incarnation explained (14)

In the 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."²

Perhaps no verse in the Bible is more significant when it comes to the doctrine of the incarnation than this one. The subject of the sentence is the *Logos*, the Word. The first time John referred to the Logos (in verses 1-3), he spoke of His relationship to God. But in verse 14, he examines a different relationship, the relation of the Logos to the world.

John says that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Those are staggering words, and John knew it. To a Greek-thinking world, that was impossible. One thing a Greek would never imagine was that God would take a body.

To the Greek, the body was an evil prison-house that shackled the soul. The Roman emperor, Marcus Aurelius, summed up this despising of the body, "Therefore despise the flesh--blood and bones and a net-work, a twisted skein of nerves and veins and arteries." The body was what the Greek sought to escape, not become.

To which John says, "Not the true God. The true God became flesh."

That was such a staggering thought that even some church members didn't believe it in John's day, as in ours. There arose in the Church a group of people called *Docetists*. The term *docetist* comes from the Greek word which means "to seem to be." Docetists believed that Jesus in fact only appeared to become a man. In reality he was a phantom,

² In the NIV, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."

his human body wasn't real. That meant he couldn't feel hunger and pain and weariness. God would never succumb to that, said the Docetists.

Were they right? No, and John had some pretty blunt things to say to docetic thinking people in 1 John 4:2-3, "This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come *in the flesh* is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of antichrist..."

Let's be clear. Is every person who says he or she believes in Jesus a Christian? The answer is *no*. Why not? The question is, *what Jesus?* Some people believe in (and teach) a very different Jesus than the Jesus of the Bible. Are they Christians? They say they are. They may think they are. But the sad, yet biblically correct answer is, *no*. No matter how sincere they/we may be.

This issue is this. *What* you believe about Jesus is as critical as believing in Him. Some people are lost because they refuse to believe in Jesus. Other people remain lost because they believe in a "Jesus" who is not the real Jesus.

Suppose I said, "I'm feeling tired and want to rest. I'm going to sit in a chair. It will hold me. I believe it will." And suppose I approached a "chair" that was not a real chair but merely a 2 feet by 2 feet piece of paper being held up at the corners by four pencils. You'd say to me, "You'd better not trust your weight to *that*!" And if I said, "Why not?" you'd respond, "It won't hold you because it's not a real chair." And if I insisted, "But I believe it is a real chair and I believe it will hold me," you'd say, "You'd better check out that 'chair' before you sit on it because merely believing something to be true and reliable doesn't make it true and reliable."

You get the point. The question, then, is what is true of the real Jesus? John 1:14 answers the question for us and reveals two truths regarding the God-man.

A. When God became man, He was fully man. He didn't simply *appear* to be a man. He was indeed fully man, and John substantiates this with two vital statements.

1. *He became flesh.* The second person of the Godhead became "flesh." Again, "Veiled in flesh the Godhead see," as the hymn writer put it. *Sarx* is the Greek term. *Sarx* is the same word Paul uses over and over in his letters to depict what he calls "the flesh," human nature in all its weakness and proneness to sin.

There are other words John could have used. He could have said, "The Word became *man*," or "The Word took a *body*." But instead, he used *sarx*. According to commentator Leon Morris, *flesh* is a strong, almost crude way of referring to human nature. It's the most blunt term John could use, with Greek thinkers in mind, to make the point that Jesus, indeed, was fully man.

And the verb "became" is significant, too. As William Hendriksen observes, "It's not 'became' in the sense of ceasing to be what He was before. When the wife of Lot *becomes* a pillar of salt, she ceases to be the wife of Lot. But when Lot *becomes* the father of Moab and Ammon, he remains Lot."³

So it is here. When the Logos became a man, He didn't cease being what He was before. He remained the Logos, God Himself. He assumed His human nature without laying aside His divine.

That's the first vital statement. *He became flesh.* Here's the second.

2. *He set up tent among us.* That's what the verb, "dwelt" (NIV, "made his dwelling") actually means: "to pitch tent." It appears only five other times in the New

³ William Hendriksen, *John*

Testament, here and four times in Revelation. But in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, this word is often used to refer to the tabernacle. And what was the tabernacle? It was a tent, a temporary structure where God "dwelt" with His people Israel in a very special way.

On the day that Mary bore her firstborn son, that's precisely what God did. In the person of Jesus Christ, God pitched His tent and, we might say, *camped* among us.

Do you like to camp? One of the things about camping is the realization that your dwelling is temporary. I can't help but think about what happened on the second night of our family camping trip in the summer of 1998. Sherry, our daughters, and I stopped for the night in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and set up camp. In the middle of the night, a fierce electrical storm hit, which quickly turned to fifty-plus mile-per-hour winds. As our pop-up rocked back and forth, I was reminded of the temporary nature of our dwelling!

So the God-man set up tent among us. Although His stay was brief, it was real. It was no phantom, smoke-and-mirror illusion. God really became a man and visited the earth. He walked this planet for 33 years, and then returned home to glory.

Is the humanity of the Christ important? Indeed, it is. In order to do what He came to do, and that is to rescue sinful human beings, the Son of God had to become a man. And this He did. When God became man, He was *fully man*.

But there's more, explains John, a second truth.

B. When God became a man, He remained fully God. Notice John's testimonial as verse 14 continues, "And we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."⁴

The Greek word for "seen" ["beheld" in the KJV, *etheasametha*] contains the root word "theater" and suggests more than a casual glance. It involves a careful scrutiny of what is in sight in order to grasp significance. It indicates that John studied the Logos, as did eleven other men, as did many others. And what conclusions did he draw?

In verse 14, John mentions three conclusions, each highlighting the deity of Christ.

1. *He exhibited glory.* "We beheld His glory." It's as if John is responding to a potential critic. "Right, John. God visited and became a man. Prove it." Okay, let's start here. We have seen His glory!

Are you familiar with the term *Shekinah*? It comes from the Old Testament, and provides the backdrop for John 1:14. *Shekinah* is a Hebrew word which means, "that which dwells." There were certain times in OT history when God allowed His people to see His *Shekinah* glory.

For instance, He did so before the manna came. Exodus 16:10 says that the children of Israel "looked toward the desert, and there was the glory of the LORD appearing in the cloud."

He also did so before Moses received the Ten Commandments. "The glory of the LORD settled upon Mount Sinai (Exodus 24:16)."

The next *Shekinah* reference is especially important. Remember what happened after the Tabernacle was finished? Exodus 40:34 says, "The glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle."

Later the same thing happened after Solomon finished building his temple for the Lord. 1 Kings 8:11 says, "The glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD."

⁴ The NIV says, "We have *seen* his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."

Several years later, when Isaiah the prophet saw the Lord in his vision in the temple, he heard the seraphim announce, "The whole earth is full of His glory (Isaiah 6:3)."

Barclay is right, "In the Old Testament the glory of the Lord came at times when God was very close." And there was no time in earth's history when God was any closer than this: "We have seen His glory."

John's study of the Logos led him to a second conclusion.

2. *He came from the Father.*⁵ The NIV reads, "The glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father." The KJV renders it, "The glory as of the only begotten of the Father."

New Testament scholar, Merrill Tenney, comments: "A number of the oldest and most reliable manuscripts read *God* instead of *Son*. If the term originally [was] written as an abbreviation, a change of one letter would make the difference...The evidence for 'only begotten God' is so strong as to be practically conclusive. If this reading be accepted, 'only begotten God' makes an unequivocal affirmation of the deity of Christ, though the term 'Son' is hardly less strong."⁶

Whichever reading we choose, the conclusion is the same. The deity of Christ is supported by the fact that He came from the Father. A third conclusion...

3. *He is the source of grace and truth.* At the end of verse 14, John seems to pick up the last phrase of Exodus 34:6. That's when Moses was up on Mount Sinai receiving the ten commandments, and heard the Lord Himself say these words, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in *steadfast love and faithfulness*." "Steadfast love" is the Hebrew word *hesed* and "faithfulness" is *emeth*. The phrase could well be translated, "abounding in grace and truth."

Where do you go to find grace and truth? Where do you look if you need the gift of God's unmerited favor and reliability? You look to Jesus. He's the source of grace and truth. Indeed, He's full of grace and truth.

Those are two virtues that we struggle to keep in balance, don't we? We tend to sacrifice one for the other. Sometimes we champion grace, but at the expense of truth. At other times we stand for truth, but aren't very gracious.

But not Jesus. John says He's full of both grace and truth. How can He keep the balance? He can because He's fully man and fully God.

You say, "Pastor Brad, this is deep stuff."

That may be true, but it's essential if we're going to know the real Jesus. We won't get to know the real Jesus if we settle for the cliff notes version of the Bible, or fifteen word inspirational posts on Facebook. God gave us the Bible, the whole Bible, every word of the Bible, so that we might know His Son.

Many want to experience Jesus without truly knowing Him. That's like trying to have a great marriage by carrying around a photo album. To have a great marriage, you must truly know the other person, and that takes work.

John wants us to know Jesus. Hence, this book. Hence, this verse. And in this amazing verse he makes it clear that when God became a man in the person of Jesus, He was fully man and fully God.

⁵William Hendriksen offers a helpful discussion of the "sonship" question: "To what sonship does the term *the only begotten from the Father* refer? Religious sonship..., Messianic sonship..., nativistic sonship..., or trinitarian sonship...?" Hendriksen favors the latter.

⁶ Merrill Tenney, p. 72.

How the two natures of the God-man relate to each other is indeed a mystery. We're talking about something our finite minds cannot fully explain. Thankfully, the Lord has given us help along the way. Others have wrestled with these thoughts, and we can benefit from their insights.

For instance, this in part is what brought about the Council of Chalcedon in 451 AD. Perhaps no document says it any better than the Symbol of Chalcedon which reads:

"We, then, following the holy fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood...to be acknowledged in two natures *inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably*; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy fathers has handed down to us."⁷

You say, "Do I have to say it like that to be a Christian?"

Thankfully, no. But we must believe in this Jesus and none other. We must believe that when God became man, He became fully man and yet remained fully God. To believe otherwise, according to John 1:14, is to believe in a different Jesus, which is a deficient Jesus, because to reconcile man to God, Jesus must be both man and God.

This is verse 14, the incarnation explained. And this brings us to John's second point.

II. The incarnation applied (15-18)

There are huge implications to the incarnation, and John gives us four of them right here. If God became a man (and He did), then four take-aways follow.

A. Jesus deserves reverence (15). You can't get to know the truth about Jesus and remain unaffected by that knowledge. When you know Him as He is, you give Him what He deserves, or you don't. But you cannot remain neutral, not with this knowledge in mind.

Case in point? John the apostle points us again to John the Baptist. Listen to verse 15, "John [that's John the Baptist, mentioned back in verse 6] 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.''"

You can't help but admire John the Baptist. He lived a short life and by no means an easy life. He was beheaded around the age of thirty. But he was a man who knew his role and purpose.

His goal wasn't to live a long life. I wonder if that isn't what gets us into trouble at times. It did King Hezekiah. In Isaiah 38, he wanted years added to his life rather than simply investing what God gave him, and in the end he stumbled. But for the Baptizer, all that mattered was living a life that fulfilled God's purposes for him.

Is that how we are living our lives? Every time I hear the words of missionary, Jim Elliot, I'm greatly challenged: "He is no fool who gives what He cannot keep to gain what He cannot lose." And of course, Jim Elliot was speared to death by the Auca Indians in 1956. He was 28 years old. A waste of a young life? Not in the eyes of God.

⁷ Hendriksen, p. 84.

Nor in the eyes of Bob Litteral. This coming Saturday we will have the memorial service for our dear friend. Bob told me he was a student at Wheaton College in the late 1950s, and that the Lord used the martyrdom of Jim Elliot and his four friends to mobilize a host of new young missionaries to go to the nations, including Bob.

When we listen to the message that John the Baptist preached, recorded here by John the apostle, what stands out is *reverence*. True reverence is marked by two elements.

1. *It involves a proper view of yourself.* "He who comes after me has surpassed me." Jesus, obviously, outranks John the Baptist. And John knew that. And so he gave Jesus the reverence He deserves through a humble admission of his own place.

2. *It involves a proper view of the Lord.* "Because he was before me." The NASB says that the One coming after me "has a higher rank than I." Jesus was six months younger than John (read Luke 1-2). But not really. In terms of existence, Jesus had always been, and therefore was in a class all by Himself.

This explains why His death on the cross is sufficient to pay the penalty for our sins. What is the penalty for our sin? Death, eternal death. That's what we deserved. And that's what the eternal Savior endured on the cross. Because the God-man is eternal, He was able to endure in those six hours on the cross the eternal punishment we had coming to us.

And this means you have a decision to make, my friend. As a sinner, you can spend your eternity paying the eternal penalty for your sins, *or* you can trust Christ and believe that He did it in your place. And if you trust Christ, the only fitting response to His salvation is *reverence*. You will want to spend the rest of your life bringing honor to Him rather than yourself. Jesus deserves reverence.

That's the first implication of the incarnation. In verse 16 John mentions a second.

B. Jesus delivers grace (16). "For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace." This is a difficult verse to translate. The NIV says, "From the fullness of his grace, we have all received one blessing after another."⁸

What does that mean? It means that through Jesus we have received something, not only have grace, but literally *grace upon grace*.

I take *all* to mean *all* in verse 16. "For from his fullness we have *all* received, grace upon grace." Even people who don't believe in Jesus receive grace, *His* grace. It's not saving grace, but "common grace." The sun shines on them. They enjoy the blessings of family, and work, and friendship. Do they deserve these blessings? No, none of us do. We have all transgressed our Creator's instructions. But every day we receive from Him what we don't deserve. Colossians 1:17 says, "In him (the Christ) all things hold together."

But for those of us who have been saved, it truly is grace upon grace. We have received grace for salvation (Eph. 2:8), but also grace for living (2 Pet. 3:18), and grace for giving (2 Cor. 9:8), and grace for serving (1 Pet. 4:9), and grace for suffering (2 Cor. 12:8), and grace for persevering until our Savior returns (Rev. 22:21).

Grace is like an ocean. When we receive Jesus as our Savior, we begin drawing from the ocean of grace. And as we do, it's as if one wave of grace is constantly replenished by another. There is no limit to the supply of grace in Christ Jesus!

⁸ The NASB gives a more literal rendering, "For of his fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace."

Beloved, in Christ we have everything we need to live a life that pleases God, *everything*. Ephesians 1:3 says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with *every spiritual blessing* in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

Peter tells us in 2 Peter 1:3 that God has given us [that's grace] everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him. Everything! We have grace upon grace.

The problem is, we don't naturally want to live by grace. In our pride, we're prone to live by our strength and wisdom rather than His. We kid ourselves with the notion, "I'm making it just fine all by myself." But we're not. Apart from grace, we cannot live lives that please God, nor produce the joy that our souls crave.

The truth is, we need grace in order to receive grace! And Jesus Christ provides it. Jesus delivers grace. Indeed, grace upon grace.

How do we experience His grace? We must admit we need it, and this means we must admit we need *Him*. To put it plainly, the Son of God did not enter this world as a man so we can sort of add Him to our cluttered lives. No, no. He invites us, He calls us, He commands us to live in total dependence upon Him.

This brings us to a third implication.

C. Jesus displays grace and truth (17). "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." John was a Jew, and he's talking about the law that God gave to the Jews on Mount Sinai, through Moses. There was nothing wrong with the law. It had a good purpose. It was God's gracious gift to show His chosen people how to live in the promised land.

Even today, the law shows us what's *right*, and what's *not right*. And the law also shows us that *we are not right*. The law reveals our lost condition, and our need for Someone to seek and save us.

So the law was (and is) good. But, as Hendriksen observes, there were two things the law did not supply: "*grace* so that transgressors could be pardoned and helped in time of need, and *truth*, i.e., *the reality* to which all the types pointed (think of the sacrifices). Christ, by his atoning work, furnished both."⁹

It's not that grace and truth were missing from the way made known to Moses. Even an Old Testament text like Psalm 86:15 says, "But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness."

But John wants us to see the old order in contrast with the new. Notice the contrasts he uses in verse 17, between law and grace, between Moses and Jesus, and between "was given" and "came." At His coming, Jesus made all things new.

When you compare an acorn with an oak tree, yes there's continuity. But there's also something noticeably different, and far better.

This is the first mention in John's gospel of Jesus by name. And throughout his gospel John is going to emphasize that Jesus brought something new, amazingly new, a new order that fulfills, surpasses, and replaces the old.

New Testament scholar F. F. Bruce explains: "The wine of the new creation is better than the water used in Jewish religion (John 2:10), the new temple supersedes the old (2:19), the new birth is the gateway into a sphere of life which cannot be entered into by natural birth, even natural birth into membership of the chosen people (3:3, 5), the living water of the Spirit which Jesus imparts is far superior both to the water in Jacob's well

⁹ Hendriksen, p. 89.

and to the water which was ritually poured out in the temple court at the feast of Tabernacles (4:13f.; 7:37ff.), the bread of heaven is the reality of which the manna in the wilderness was but an adumbration (6:32f.). Moses was the mediator of the law; Jesus Christ is not only the mediator but the embodiment of grace and truth."¹⁰

My friend, if you want to see *grace*, look at Jesus. If you want to see *truth*, again look at Jesus. When God became a man in the person of Jesus Christ, He gave us the perfect flesh and blood display of grace and truth.

There's a fourth implication.

D. Jesus discloses the Father (18). "No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known."¹¹

This is a stunning verse. John says that Jesus has "made known" ["declared" in the KJV] the Father. He uses the Greek verb *exagiasato*, which means "to explain, to expound, to interpret." We get the word "exegesis" from it.

Exegesis is what I do (or at least attempt to do) when I prepare to preach the Word of God to you. During the week I study in order to be able to *explain* and *expound* what the text says.

That's what the Son of God did when He came to earth. He *exegeted* the Father.

Be careful now. This doesn't mean that Jesus reveals to us *all* there is to know about the Father. God is infinite, and we do not have minds large enough to grasp Him in His fullness.

But it does mean this. In the person of Jesus, we have sufficient revelation to know God, and to know Him accurately and personally. And because this is true, we can now fulfill the purpose for which we were created, to glorify Him as He deserves.

Let's go deeper. When Jesus came to earth, what did He reveal? What did His *exegesis* demonstrate? In verse 18, John says that Jesus made three realities very clear.

1. *He reveals the unseeable.* "No one has ever seen God." Not even Abraham, the friend of God. Nor Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face according to Deuteronomy 34:10. Yes, Moses saw the "afterglow" of God's glory (Ex. 33:22ff), but even this majestic experience was veiled.

But know this. The glory that Moses could not see and live to tell about, we have seen, says John. We've seen it because Jesus revealed the unseeable.

Here's a second reality that Jesus made clear when He came.

2. *He enjoys closeness with the Father.* The ESV and NIV say He's "at the Father's side." The KJV says that the Son "is in the bosom of the Father." To be in the bosom of someone is a Hebrew phrase which expresses the deepest intimacy possible in life. It's what a mother does with the child she loves. It speaks of closeness in the highest degree.

This is what God the Son had with God the Father before He left heaven to come to earth. But our text is present tense, indicating this is what He enjoys right now. Hebrews 1:3 says, "He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

Thirdly, in coming to earth Jesus also made this perfectly clear.

¹⁰ F. F. Bruce, pp. 43-4.

¹¹ "No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known."

3. *He's the One and Only God.* Jesus, says John, is “the only God.” Not a god, not one of many gods, but the only God. No one's ever seen God, but “the One and Only” God, Jesus, the Son of God, the One who right now is intimately close to Him, has *exegeted* Him.

The critic may say, “Well, this was John’s opinion. John said that Jesus was God, but he was wrong.”

But it’s not only John who said this. Jesus Himself said this. Remember His words to Philip in John 14:9? “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.”

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see.

So let it all sink in. This morning we’ve seen the *incarnation explained*—Jesus is fully man and yet remains fully God. And the *incarnation applied*—with four *implications* of God becoming a man. Jesus deserves reverence. Jesus delivers grace. Jesus displays grace and truth. And Jesus discloses the Father.

Explanation leads to application. So let’s apply what we’ve learned.

Make It Personal: Consider two implications.

1. *If we want to know God, then we must get to know Jesus.* The real Jesus. The Jesus revealed in the Bible. I urge you to make a personal study of John’s Gospel. Get to know Jesus. Get to know about His perfect life, His miracles, His teaching, and most of all, about how He chose to die on a cross to bear sin’s penalty. He didn’t die for His own sin for He had none. He died for the sins of every person who would ever repent and receive Him as Savior and Lord.

And of course, keep reading and learn about His victorious resurrection from the dead, and His parting promise to return.

Let me say it again. If we want to know God, we must get to know Jesus. And once we discover the truth about Jesus, the proper response is to believe in Him, receive Him, and entrust our lives to Him. Have you? If not, why not now?

You say, “What if we do know Him?” If we do, here’s the second implication.

2. *If we know Jesus, we can help others know Him through a life marked by grace and truth.* In other words, let’s live as He lived. Jesus was known for grace and truth. We just learned that He was full of grace and truth. Ought not the same be true for us if Jesus lives in us? Shouldn’t the world see the beautiful balance of grace and truth when they look at our lives? Indeed, they should.

And next week, the Lord willing, we’re going to return to this point with a topical message I’ve entitled, “*Learning from Jesus about Balancing Grace and Truth.*” I invite you to come back and continue to grow in the knowledge of Christ with us.

Closing Song: #133 “*Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*” (all three verses)

December Benediction: 2 Corinthians 2:14