

## **Who is the child in manger? Part 1**

**Text: John 1:1-14** “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth...”

**Purpose:** The purpose of this section is to articulate the incomparable identity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Proposition:** God wants us to understand who Christ is, and then to worship Him as God in flesh!

**Interrogative:** What truths about Christ identity are stated in this passage that should motivate us to worship Christ as God in the flesh?

**Truth 1: The child in the manger is the eternal God:** “In the beginning was...and the Word was God... all things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made...”

**Three important phrases in this passage:**

- **His relation to time:** “In the beginning was...”
  - Notice what is does not say “in the beginning the Words began” or “in the beginning God created the Word...”
  - The tense of the verb indicates that in the beginning, the Word was already in existence. The beginning was not His beginning, because He had no beginning.

**John 8:56-58** “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am...” (**Eternality and identified as the eternal I AM**)

- **His relationship to deity:** “The Word was God...”
  - Notice what is does not say: “the Word was a god...”

**Colossians 2:8-9** “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth (present tense) **all the fullness of the Godhead bodily...**”

- Everything that makes God, God, is fully possessed by Christ:
  - His Eternality
  - His Self-existence

- His-Omniscient
- His omnipotence
- **His relationship to the creation:** “all things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made...”

**Colossians 1:17** “he is before all things, and by him all things consist (**held together/sustained**)...”

- He is the creator and source of life for all creation.
- He is also the sustainer and sovereign over all creation.

**Key statements from the Gospels around the birth of Christ:**

**Luke 1:16-17** “And many of the children of Israel shall he **turn to the Lord their God**. And he shall go before **him** in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; **to make ready a people prepared for the Lord...**”

**Luke 1:31-35** “Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and **of his kingdom there shall be no end**. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also **that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God...**”

**Luke 1:46-47** “Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And **my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior...**”

**Luke 1:76-78** “Thou, child, shalt be called the **prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;** To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; **whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us...**”

**Isaiah 40:3** “The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, **Prepare ye the way of the LORD,** make straight in the desert **a highway for our God...**”

**Matthew 1:22-23** “Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and **they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us...**”

**Implications:**

- Because He is God, we must worship Him as God
- Because He is God, we must trust Him as the creator and sustainer of all things

**Truth 2: The child in the manger has an incomparable relationship with God the Father:**  
 “And the Word was with God and the Word was God...”

**Incomparable:** means without equal, you cannot fully comprehend this concept.

- **Egg:** shell, yolk, and egg white
- **Apple:** Skin, flesh, and the seeds
- **The clover:** three distinct leaves
- **Water:** Solid, liquid, and gas

**\*Every one of these four illustrations is flawed on some level with the water illustration being the most flawed, because it is an illustration of the false explanation of God existing in three distinct modes during history.**

**Three important phrases in this passage:**

- **The distinction between Father and Son:** The Father and Son are distinct in person: “The word was with God...”
- **The unity of Father and Son:** The Father and the Son are of the same essence/substance: “And the Word was God...”
- **The indescribable value of the Son:** “And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father...”

- **Jesus is described as the “only begotten” of the Father:**

**John 1:14** “We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father...”

**John 1:18** “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him...”

**John 3:16** “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son...”

**John 3:18** “He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God...”

**1 John 4:9** “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him...”

- **How is this phrase mischaracterized or misunderstood?**
  - Viewed as a term referring to biology or origins.
- **What does this phrase mean?**
  - The term is **not focused on Christ’s origin, since He is the eternal God** who was in the beginning with the Father,
  - It is also, **not it referring to a biological relationship between Father and Son within the Godhead, because this description is functional rather than biological.**
  - The term is **attempting to describe the indescribable**, uniqueness of the one of a kind relationship between Father and Son within the Godhead.

**Two Old Testament examples:**

**Psalms 22:20** “Deliver my soul from the sword; my **darling** from the power of the dog...”

**Psalms 35:17** “Lord, how long wilt thou look on? rescue my soul from their destructions, my **darling** from the lions...”

**1 New Testament Examples:**

**Hebrews 11:17** “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up **his only begotten son...**”

**Conclusion:** The purpose of this section was to show us the incomparable identity of the Lord Jesus Christ. God wants us to understand who Christ is, and then to worship Him as God in flesh!

- Let’s worship Him as God
- Let’s trust Him as the creator and sustainer of all things

- Let's run to him for comfort since He has experienced the weaknesses of living in a fallen world
- Let's trust in Him alone as the one who shed His blood to redeem us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.

## Part 2

**Truth 3: The child in the manger is the incomparable union of God and man: 1:14** “And the Word was made flesh...”

### Three important statements:

- **His relationship to time:** “In the beginning was...”
- **His relationship to humanity:** “And the Word was made flesh...”
  - Literally it means that at a point in time, the eternal God became a man while continuing to maintain His deity in its entirety.
    - **Colossians 1:15-16** “Who is **the image of the invisible God (the visible representation of the invisible God)**, the firstborn of every creature: For **by him were all things created**, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: **all things were created by him, and for him...**”
    - **Hebrews 1:3** “Who being the **brightness of his glory (the radiance of God's glory)**, and the **express image of his person (the exact imprint of His substance/essence)**, and **upholding all things by the word of his power (By His power His upholds the burden of keeping everything together)**, when he had **by himself purged our sins**, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high...”
    - **Philippians 2:6-8** “Who, **being in the form of God (He existed in the likeness of God, because He is God)**, thought it **not robbery to be equal with God (He did not need to take equality with God by force, because He was fully God): But made himself (He willingly emptied Himself of certain aspects of His divine nature for a period of time: omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence...)** of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was **made in the likeness of men (He exchanged the likeness of God for the likeness of a man, and not just any man, but a man of lowly estate): And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself**, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross...”
- **His relationship to the apostles:** “He dwelt among us...”
  - **Perhaps the most amazing thing about the ministry of Christ was the personal side of His life and ministry.** God dwelt among them, and they were witnesses of His life and ministry.
  - **The apostles knew Him personally:** “We beheld his glory...”
  - **John preached to the nation to prepare them to meet Him:** “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light...”

- **He left an unmistakable witness, of who He was, But:** “He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not...”

**Truth 4: The child in the manger gives people the right to be called God’s children: 1:11-13** “He came unto his own, and his own received him not. <sup>12</sup> But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: <sup>13</sup> Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

**Four Important Phrases:**

- **In General, Christ was rejected by the Jews:** “He came unto his own and his own received him not...”
- **But there were some who received Him:** “But, as many as received him...”
- **Those who received Christ rather than reject Him, are given the right by God to be called His children:** To them he gave the power (literally right has been given) to become the sons of God

**Revelation 22:14** “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city...”

- Receiving Christ is the same as believing on His name: “Even to them that believe on his name...”

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