

THE GRAND MIRACLE

John 1:1-18

March 3, 2019

*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.*

John 1:14

Lent with John's Gospel

Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love

John 13:1

- 1) The cross reveals _____
- 2) Watch _____ to learn about God's love
- 3) _____ is how God loves this world

Creation and Incarnation

*In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

John 1:1 (with a nod to Genesis 1:1)

The You May Believe

*He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.
Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name,
he gave the right to become children of God*
John 1:12

Knowing grace and truth

*From the fullness of grace we have all received one blessing after another.
For law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at his Father's side, has made him known.*
John 1:16-18

Resources for further study of John 1

The Belgic Confession, Articles 18-21, at <https://www.crcna.org/welcome/beliefs/confessions/belgic-confession>
Deffinbaugh's study of John's gospel at <https://bible.org/series/you-might-believe-study-gospel-john>
Charles Alexander's work on John and the incarnation at <http://www.allbygrace.com/chasalexander.html>
Spurgeon's sermons "The Simplicity and Sublimity of Salvation" and "The True Tabernacle" at
<https://www.monergism.com/topics/sermon-manuscripts-mp3s-scripture/john/chapter-john/chapter-01>
Horatius Bonar's study on John 1:12-13 at http://grace-ebooks.com/library/Horatius%20Bonar/HB_Light%20%26%20Truth%20Gospels.pdf
The summary of Jonathan Edward's theology on the incarnation at <https://www.monergism.com/christs-incarnation>
Bruce Ware's work on incarnation at <https://www.biblicaltraining.org/library/incarnation/systematic-theology-II/bruce-ware>
Michael Horton's "Heaven Came Down" at
<http://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/heavencamedown.html>
James Packer's *Knowing God* (InterVarsity Press, 1993) has several
Deffinbaugh's study of the incarnation at <https://bible.org/seriespage/1-importance-incarnation>

Belgic Confession, Article 18

So then we confess that God fulfilled the promise
made to the early fathers and mothers
by the mouth of the holy prophets
when he sent the only and eternal Son of God
into the world at the time appointed.

The Son took the “form of a slave”
and was made in “human form,”³⁴
truly assuming a real human nature,
with all its weaknesses, except for sin;

being conceived in the womb of the blessed virgin Mary
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
without male participation.

And Christ not only assumed human nature
as far as the body is concerned
but also a real human soul,
in order to be a real human being.

For since the soul had been lost as well as the body,
Christ had to assume them both to save them both together.

Therefore we confess

(against the heresy of the Anabaptists who deny that
Christ assumed human flesh from his mother)

that Christ shared the very flesh and blood of children;³⁵
being the fruit of the loins of David according to the flesh,³⁶
descended from David according to the flesh;³⁷
the fruit of the womb of the virgin Mary;³⁸
born of a woman;³⁹ the seed of David;⁴⁰
the root of Jesse;⁴¹ descended from Judah,⁴²
having descended from the Jews according to the flesh;
descended from Abraham—

having assumed descent from Abraham and Sarah,
and was made like his brothers and sisters, yet without sin.⁴³

In this way Christ is truly our Immanuel—that is: “God with us.”⁴⁴

³⁴Phil. 2:7 ³⁵Heb. 2:14 ³⁶Acts 2:30 ³⁷Rom. 1:3

³⁸Luke 1:42 ³⁹Gal. 4:4 ⁴⁰2 Tim. 2:8 ⁴¹Rom. 15:12

⁴²Heb. 7:14 ⁴³Heb. 2:17; 4:15 ⁴⁴Matt. 1:23

J.I. Packer's *Knowing God*, excerpt from Chapter 5

It is no wonder that thoughtful people find the gospel of Jesus Christ hard to believe, for the realities with which it deals pass man's understanding. But it is sad that so many make faith harder than it need be, by finding difficulties in the wrong places. Take the atonement, for instance. ... Or take the resurrection, ... Or, again, take the virgin birth, which has been widely denied among Protestants in this century. ...

But in fact the real difficulty, because the supreme mystery with which the gospel confronts us, does not lie here at all. It lies, not in the Good Friday message of atonement, nor in the Easter message of resurrection, but in the Christmas message of incarnation. The really staggering Christian claim is that Jesus of Nazareth was God made man—that the second person of the Godhead became the 'second man' ([I Cor. 15:47](#)), determining human destiny, the second representative head of the race, and that He took humanity without loss of deity, so that Jesus of Nazareth was as truly and fully divine as He was human. Here are two mysteries for the price of one—the plurality of persons within the unity of God, and the union of Godhead and manhood in the person of Jesus. It is here, in the thing that happened at the first Christmas, that the profoundest and most unfathomable depths of the Christian revelation lie. 'The Word was made flesh' ([John 1:14](#)); God became man; the divine Son became a Jew; the Almighty appeared on earth as a helpless human baby, unable to do more than lie and stare and wriggle and make noises, needing to be fed and changed and taught to talk like any other child. And there was no illusion or deception in this: the babyhood of the Son of God was a reality. The more you think about it, the more staggering it gets. Nothing in fiction is so fantastic as is this truth of the incarnation.

This is the real stumbling-block in Christianity. It is here that Jews, Moslems, Unitarians, Jehovah's Witnesses, and many of those who feel the difficulties above-mentioned (about the virgin birth, the miracles, the atonement, and the resurrection), have come to grief. It is from misbelief, or at least inadequate belief, about the incarnation that difficulties at other points in the gospel story usually spring. But once the incarnation is grasped as a reality, these other difficulties dissolve.