

Christmas Light: The Creator of the World comes near

As we look at John 1, we will realize that Jesus was the greatest gift ever given. The language John uses at the beginning of his letter is almost overwhelming. There are many important themes that just seem to pile up together and leave us speechless.

Is it enough to say that we invited Jesus in our heart? Or should we be like Mary who had Jesus in her womb, in every part of her life. This means you care, you love, you nurture; you wake up at 5 in the morning... Is Jesus in your finances, your relationships, in all you do?

Text

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸ He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

⁹ The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹ He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵ (John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶ Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has

was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known". (John 1:1-18)

The Word became Flesh

The usage of the Greek word for "flesh" was very significant. The Philosophers of that time would have seen the usage of "word" as a removed force that held everything together.

John describes the "word" as a "he", a person, this turned everything in that culture on its head.

It must be noted that the in the Old Testament we read "the word of the Lord came to..." (Usually to a prophet) We do not see this phrase in the New Testament, because Jesus is the "Word".

He came to humanity, he was not this distant divine being out there removed from this world.

"The image of Christmas is God coming and sitting in the smoking section of this world"

The Right to become Children of God

The promise of Christmas is that when we believe and receive we then have a "*right*" to become children of God.

The truth of the matter is that God loves all people; but when we in response love God, its something different...we are designed to be his kids!

Witness and Knowledge

Our text identifies John the Baptist as a "*witness*". This original word was also used to describe a "martyr" in that time period. This is not by mistake or coincidence, this speaks about the cost, there will be a price for those who follow Jesus. This of course was very true for the Baptist who would be imprisoned and have his head cut off.

Our generation has more information at our fingertips than any other people. Even non-Christian experts agree the more knowledge (which is abundant in our day and age) a human obtains, the more depression is likely. In reality, humanity is not looking for an idea but God. Whether we know it or *not*, we are not hungry for more knowledge but our soul yearns for God himself.

The Light

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Christmas is a season of exposure by the light, it exposes darkness. It was a very dark world that the "light" came into. Our world is also very dark and God calls us as his church to let his light shine into the darkness. But his light affects more than a dark world. As God's light shines onto our lives, we need to open ourselves up to the light of God; it is the only way to be truly free.

"We weren't meant to shine in the light, but we were meant to shine in the darkness"

The picture below was taken during the "clean up" of Europe after World War II. The men in this picture are German Soldiers who were seated in a theatre and shown the atrocities that were occurring at the Auschwitz concentration camp.

God's light shining in us can be uncomfortable even painful as we see things that we don't want anyone to see. The light might uncover things that we were not even aware of, much like most of the men who sat in this theatre.



God left the "base headquarters of heaven" to be with us. He put aside the comforts of heaven coming to earth to die because he loves... believe in him then you will have the right to become a child of God.

"God came because of love, he put aside his dream; for love"

Discussion

- 1) As you look at our text we realize as A.J. pointed out that John's powerful themes almost overwhelm us as we read. What jumps out at you? Also in the introductory words on page 1 of your notes A.J. challenged us to let Jesus dwell more than in your heart. What does that mean? How do you think you can do that?

out at you? Also in the introductory words on page 1 of your notes A.J. challenged us to let Jesus dwell more than in your heart. Where have you allowed him to move into?

- 2) Thinking about “the **Word became flesh**”, (looking at your notes on page 2) when the Greeks of that time heard John use this word, what were they thinking? Also in the past, what was your view of God, was he a divine being out there removed...how do you view God today?
- 3) In verse 12 and 13 John talks about those who believe and receive. He gave them the right to become the children of God. Those who believe are “*born of God*”, A.J. pointed out that we are designed to be his kids; what does this mean to you?
- 4) Again take a look at your notes on page 3 and discuss how “*witness*” and “*knowledge*” are used in our text.
- 5) As we read and ponder how John spoke about the “Light” coming into the world, penetrating and overcoming the darkness, what are your thoughts? Also, what role does the light play in your life today? Lastly what does this quote say to you? “*We weren’t meant to shine in the light, but we were meant to shine in the darkness*”