

Week of December 4, 2011

Recognize God's Gift

Passages Outline:

1. **Jesus Is Completely God** (John 1:1-4)
2. **Jesus Is Completely Man** (John 1:10-11,14)
3. **Jesus Is Completely Necessary** (John 1:12-13,16-18)

What Our Study Is About:

This session is about the identity of Christ. It addresses the fact that God's greatest gift is more than a baby.

How Can this Study Impact Your Life:

This lesson will help us understand and value *the complete story* of Jesus.

John 1:1-4

¹ 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 men.

1. Jesus Is Completely God - John 1:1-4

- A. The beginning of John's Gospel is one of the greatest passage in the Bible. It details the Eternal Word entering a finite world, being both **fully God** and **completely human**. His purpose was to bring the message of everlasting life through His self-sacrificing love.
- B. Both John's Gospel and the Book of Genesis starts with the same words "In beginning," not in ***the*** beginning. Both Genesis and John are saying "here is where it all begins."
- C. The next word to follow "In beginning" for Genesis is "God." For John, it is *logos* "the Word." John is making an intentional connection between these two words. **God is Logos; Logos is God.**
 - i. For the Greeks, "*logos*" was the eternal principle of order in the universe.
 - ii. For the Jews, "*dabar*" meaning *word*, was God's divine self-expression in creation, in revelation, and in deliverance of His creation.
 - iii. Like the old TV commercial, "when E.F. Hutton speaks, people listen." In the Bible, when God speaks, creation appears, listeners are humbled, and nations are delivered!
- D. Genesis 1:1-3
 - ¹ In the beginning God created (**the Father**) the heavens and the earth. ² Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God (**the Holy Spirit**) was hovering over the waters. ³ And God said, "Let there be light," (**The Son**).
- E. John 1:1-4
 - ¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God (**the Father**), and the Word was God (**the**

Son). 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 men.

- F. John believed and claimed Jesus was completely God.
 - i. Unique to Christianity is the belief that **Jesus is completely God.**
 - ii. One cannot call him or herself a Christian and at the same time deny the deity of Jesus.
 - iii. This means that **the swaddling-clothed baby** that we welcome at Christmas **was fully God.**

John 1:10-11, 14

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....
¹⁴ 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.

2. Jesus Is Completely Man - John 1:10-11, 14

- A. For John, Jesus has always been and is completely God, but this is only half the story.
- B. John says this divine Word was completely man as well.
- C. John used the word “world” three times:
 - i. “He was in the world” - John stresses the eternal nature of Christ. He was not created nor was He part of creation, but existed even before the world was created.
 - ii. “The world was created through Him” - John reasserted the role Christ played in the formation of the created order. He was the agent of creation.
 - iii. “The world did not recognize Him” – John says the general response of humanity is a rejection of its own Creator.
- D. Sadly, Christ “came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him.” Jesus entered this world as a baby, came to His own people, the Israelites, but they rejected Him.
 - i. We should not be surprised when our message of the Good News is also rejected.
 - ii. Jesus’ own people rejected Him, and still do, unfortunately.
 - iii. Our job is simply to be faithful in telling others the message that God entered our world in human form to enable human beings to have an intimate, personal relationship with Him.
- E. John reached the climactic in saying “the Word,” Jesus “became flesh.” He took on human form, fully participating in everything human.
- F. Not only did Jesus become flesh, He “took up residence among us.”
 - i. A more literal translation would read He “tabernacled with us.”

- ii. This is the Old Testament imagery of the tabernacle, where God’s presence would rest and be visible among His people.
 - iii. By taking up residence among us as a baby born in Bethlehem, Jesus embodied the meaning of “Immanuel,” that is, “God is with us” (Matt. 1:23).
- G. We observed the glory of the One and Only Son from the Father – This is the incarnate Son of God, Jesus the Christ.
- i. He came into our midst with grace and truth;
 - ii. Grace – the unmerited favor of God;
 - iii. Truth – that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself;

John 1:12-13, 16-18

¹² Yet to all who received 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.... ¹⁶ From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; [but] grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God, but God, the One and Only, who is at the Father's side [the Son], has made him known.

3. Jesus Is Completely Necessary - John 1:12-13,16-18

- A. Only Jesus makes us Children of God;
- i. There is still hope – some will believe;
 - ii. Becoming God’s children is not something we earn, only granted!
 - iii. God gives the right to be called His sons and daughters based on grace, not on our good works.
 - iv. People are adopted into God’s family “not of blood” or “a husband’s will.” While God is the Father to all humanity from the point of Creation, only those receiving Jesus, and who believe in His name are truly children of God.
 - v. John 3:6 - Jesus will tell Nicodemus, “Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh, and whatever is born of the Spirit is spirit.”
- B. Only Jesus reveals God to humankind; John cited the common truth that no individual has ever seen God.
- i. It is true Moses caught a glimpse of God’s presence. But God Himself told Moses “You cannot see my face, for no one can see Me and live” (Ex. 33:20). To see God in all His holiness and perfection would be an instant death sentence!
 - ii. But Jesus, God’s One and Only Son, has seen God and came to reveal God.

iii. **John 14:9** - Jesus said to Philip, "The one who has seen Me has seen the Father."

C. Only by believing and receiving Jesus do we become children of God.

i. Such an exclusive message does not sit well in our pluralistic society.

ii. Jesus is completely God and completely man and is the only way to the Father.

iii. **Acts 4:12** - "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

Biblical Truths in Focus from this Study:

1. Jesus as God's Word was and is completely God, existing from eternity, but distinguished from the Father.
2. Although completely God, Jesus took upon Himself human flesh, becoming completely man, so He could identify with humanity and become our Savior.
3. No one can become a genuine child of God apart from placing complete and explicit faith in Jesus for salvation.