

"The Word Became Flesh"

Jesus is the Word, and the Word was God, and the Word became flesh. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders. And this is a Bible study, "In SEARCH of the Lord's Way." The Lord Jesus became flesh and became the greatest blessing this world has ever known. Stay with us!

Welcome to In Search of the Lord's Way. We're here to search God's word for the Lord's Will. We search through the Bible, because it has precious treasures on every page. It has the wisdom of God. God is sharing His heart with us through the Word. The Bible provides for us the greatest story of love ever written. God sent His Son Jesus into the world to bless our lives and to demonstrate His love. We know of this love, because of the record we have of His life, death, burial, and resurrection in the Bible. So we go again and again to its pages. We're grateful you spend this time with us. We want to be a part of your life each week.

The coming of Jesus into the world was an amazing event. The Bible predicts his birth in the 8th century BC in Bethlehem of Judah in Micah 5 and verse 2. His birth was marked with a special star that Wise Men followed for months from the East. His birth was marked with an angel announcing His birth to some shepherds and a multitude of the heavenly hosts praising God, telling them they will find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes.

God proclaimed through the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 9 verses 6 to 7, "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this." Oh it's exciting to recall the blessing of Jesus in His coming into the world.

Now if you want to study more about this topic, we offer the information on this program free. And if you'd like a printed copy of our study, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also stream this program on our website, searchtv.org.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from John 1:1 to 5, and see the blessing of Jesus becoming flesh.

Our reading today comes from the gospel according to John, chapter 1, the first 5 verses.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. And all things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it."

That's a reading from God's Holy Word about the word that is Jesus who came into the world. Let's pray together. "Father we're so thankful that Jesus came into our lives, came to this earth, and dwelt among us, and became flesh. And Father, we pray that our hearts will always center upon Him, to love Him that way that He has loved us. In Jesus name we pray, Amen."

This time of year many people focus on the birth of Christ, but did you know that Jesus has always existed? In fact, there's never been a time when Jesus did not exist. Jesus was no mere man. He was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. Jesus was Divine and became flesh. He's always existed and created all things, but He didn't always have flesh.

John 1 and verse 14 says, "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." You know, people are made up

of both flesh and spirit, and the eternal spirit of the Lord Jesus took on flesh and revealed to us the glory of God in heaven. Jesus Christ by becoming flesh gave us two immeasurably valuable gifts essential to our lives: grace and truth. We have the grace that forgives us and the truth that sets us free! Oh, be grateful for the Word that became flesh.

In John 1:15 to 18, John the Baptist testified about Jesus, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.' For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him." Well we know what God is like because we know Jesus. You remember the Lord Jesus said in John 14 verse 9, that "He who has seen Me has seen the Father."

The Hebrew writer also helps us to understand how the Father in heaven reveals Himself through the Lord Jesus. Hebrews 1:1 to 3 says, "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

I tell you, God today speaks to us through His Son; and Jesus His Son, who created the world and upholds all things by the word of His power, He gives us an exact representation of the nature of God. And the better we know Jesus Christ, the better we will know the Father in Heaven.

Jesus is the heir of all things. John 3 and verse 35 says, that "The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand." The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 28 and verse 18, "All authority has been given to Me." The Lord Jesus is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. And He upholds your existence and mine. He controls everything that exists. Colossians 1:15 to 17 says, "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."

Sometimes people hear the words "firstborn of all creation" and assume that Jesus was the first created being. However, if all things were created by Him and for Him, He cannot be a created being. The word "firstborn," here is misunderstood. The title "firstborn" here is speaking not of chronology but of preeminence. It's not that Jesus is the first created person, but that He has a place of authority over all creation. He has a superior status over creation and his existence is prior to creation. He was in the beginning and has always existed, and now God has given Him authority over all creation. Jesus prayed to His Father in John 17 (rather) and said in verse 5, "Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, and the glory which I had with You before the world was." My friend, Jesus was not created; He always existed.

Now Jesus existed before the world began, why then would He become a man? Why would a Divine Jesus become flesh? There are some very good reasons.

First, Jesus became a man to save us from our sins. An angel of the Lord told Joseph in Matthew 1 verses 20 to 21, he said "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." John the Baptist described Jesus as the "Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world" in John 1 and verse 29. Jesus had to take on flesh in order to be a sacrifice for your sins and mine.

Hebrews 10 verses 4 to 7 says, "For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Therefore, when He [that is Jesus] comes into the world, He says, 'Sacrifice and offering You have not desired, but a body You have prepared for Me; in whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You have taken no pleasure. And then I said, "behold, I have come (in the scroll of the book it is written of Me) to do your will, O God.'" Jesus had to take on flesh, so that He could give His body as a sacrifice for our sins. Jesus was born to die. 1 Peter 2 and verse 24 says, "and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed."

Second, Jesus took on flesh so that we might learn humility and obedience. The Bible says in Philippians 2 verses 5 to 8 "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but [He] emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." Jesus became human in order to die on the cross. This was not easy. And though Jesus existed in the form of God, He had to empty Himself, to make Himself nothing.

And He left Heaven's glory out of love to bless humanity. 2 Corinthians 8 verse 9 says, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich." Jesus thought nothing of Himself so that He could bless you and me with eternal life. I can't imagine all the glory and majesty of heaven, but Jesus left it all to be born in a stable. He endured all the hardships of mankind. He never knew the joy of a family, never owned a house, never had a hot shower, and did not grow old. He became poor so you and I might have an imperishable, undefiled home in heaven.

Third, Jesus came into the world to bring us the truth. Jesus told Pontius Pilate in John 18 verse 37, "For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. And everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." Jesus embodies truth. He said in John 14:6, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and no one comes to the Father but by Me." If you wish to know the truth, listen to Jesus. If you wish to know right from wrong, listen to Jesus. God once spoke from heaven to Peter, James and John about Jesus. And God said in Matthew 17 and verse 5, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!" And so we must pay close attention to everything the Lord Jesus says.

Carefully listening to Jesus brings a blessing. The Lord Jesus said in John 12 verse 46, "I've come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness." The Roman Empire in the days of Jesus was filled with confused pagans, who felt enslaved by morally corrupt gods that they invented. The Roman gods didn't understand love. Pagans were cruel and oppressive. And it had little appreciation for human life or freedom.

The Bible teaches the Gentile world in Ephesians 4:17 to 19, "So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that's in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness." The Lord Jesus taught morality and lived righteously. He demonstrated by his life and his death on the cross what love and forgiveness truly are. Jesus is the Light in a dark world, true healing in a suffering society, and real comfort for a confused culture. God knew what we needed. And what a blessing Jesus is to us!

The Lord Jesus said in John 10 and verse 10, that “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” Yes, He gives us His grace, forgiving us of our sins. God gives us the right to be His children through Christ. John 1:11 to 13 says, that “He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him [that is, took Him in], to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”

As God’s children, we can pray to our Father in Heaven. God promises us in Philippians 4:6 to 7, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all [understanding or all] comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” God our Father sets a guard around our minds and hearts to keep us in perfect peace in times of anxiety.

More than that, the Lord protects us in time of temptation. 1 Corinthians 10:13 says, that “No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.” God loves and watches over His children. And when we draw near God, He truly draws near us.

Jesus doesn’t bless us only in this life; He brings us eternal life. 1 John 5:11 to 12 says, “And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; and he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.” Jesus has prepared a home for us in heaven so that we can live with Him and the Father, and we can live with them forever and ever. Why do we speak about this? Because Jesus’ coming into the world is no small matter. Our lives are richer and fuller because of the Son of God, and how He became flesh. Thank God, that He did!

Let’s pray together. “Heavenly Father, we’re thankful for Jesus our Lord, who came to this earth and became flesh, so that we might live with You forever and ever. And Father, we’re thankful for the grace and the truth that He brought. Help us to do Your Will always. In Jesus name, Amen.”

While it’s wonderful to consider how the Word became flesh, we must do more than talk about it. We must make it personal. Jesus didn’t come to save the world from sin; He came to save each of us as individuals. Jesus became flesh so that each of us could come to know God, could have the forgiveness of sins, could enjoy the blessings of a relationship with God, and could have eternal life with God in Heaven forever.

What does that mean for you? Well Jesus was born so He could die for you. Jesus became flesh knowing from the beginning that He would be crucified. And He willingly emptied and humbled Himself in order to bear a cross for you. Don’t think of this as trivial, because it wasn’t trivial to the Father or to Jesus Christ. No one has ever done more to bless your life than Jesus did on the cross. No one but Jesus could give you forgiveness or eternal life. Do you take the Lord seriously?

If you do, what have you done about it? Have you committed yourself to follow Jesus and His teaching? Have you placed your trust in Him and confessed Him as the Christ, the Son of God? Have you turned away from sin? And have you been baptized into Christ? According to Romans 6 and verse 3, being baptized into Christ means being baptized into His death. Well, Jesus shed His blood in His death, so baptism into Christ puts us in contact with His blood that forgives us. Baptism is also the time when the Lord adds us to His church. We need to come to Christ, we need to be baptized, and to get involved in the church. And I pray that our time together will encourage you to act.

We hope today's study about the coming of Jesus into the world has stirred your heart. If you want a free printed copy of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org.

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But we do ask that you please get involved regularly with a church of Christ in your area. They're our brethren who support us. And if you're looking for a church home, we'll be happy to help you find one. Churches of Christ love and want guests, and if you go and worship with them you'll be glad you attended. We'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about the program. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.