“He Was In The World!”

(A Christmas Message based on John 1:6-18)

12-19-2021



Introduction:

****Christ came to this wicked earth for a special purpose!***

Why was Christ “in the World” (v.10)? Why was the Word “made flesh” (v.14)?

I. He Came that we might have the God’s <u>LIGHT</u> (v.7-10)

II. He Came that we might receive God’s <u>RE-BIRTH</u> (v.11-13)

III. He Came that we might see God’s <u>GLORY</u> (v.14-15, 18)

IV. He Came that we might be filled with God’s <u>GRACE & TRUTH</u> (v.16-17)

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INTRODUCTION:

If you were given this phrase, how would you complete it?

“All I need for Christmas is _____” ?

Some would say money, a better job, a spouse, a change of location, a new car etc.

If we asked John that question, he would respond, “All I need is Jesus Christ.”

On December 25, much of the world will celebrate the birth of Someone they don't know, don't believe in, and don't want in their lives.

It amazes me how the world methodically and consistently keeps Christ out of Christmas.

Satan has successfully tricked the world into accepting substitutes for Christ and His salvation.

The world honors a substitute Christ -
Santa Claus

The world engages in substitute gift-giving -
Each other rather than Christ (Mt. 2:11)

The world imposes a substitute emphasis -
A mere Babe in a manger, rather than the God who became flesh

The world proclaims a substitute message -
A time of hilarity, socializing, alcohol and exquisite food, wishing each other "Happy Holidays" rather than a time to remember what Jesus came to accomplish (I Tim. 1:15)

"Christmas" is summed up in the phrase: "He was in the world"

"He" - Christ's presence was personal

"Was" - Christ's presence was factual

"In the world" - Christ's presence was visible.

v. 6
"John" – from *Johanan* meaning "Jehovah is gracious."

This "John" is not the Apostle who wrote this Gospel, but "John the Baptist," the son of Elizabeth, the cousin of the Virgin Mary (Lk. 1:36).

"There was a man" – As great as John the Baptist was (Mt. 11:11), he was only a man. A man commissioned to a special task by God: that task was to be a forerunner of Jesus Christ, to prepare people's hearts for Christ's arrival (Mal. 5:1; Mt. 11:14; Mt. 1:17).

**Christ came to this wicked earth for a special purpose!*

Why was Christ "in the World" (v.10)? Why was the Word "made flesh" (v.14)?

I. He Came that we might have the God's <u>LIGHT</u> (v.7-10)

v. 7
"A witness" – One who testifies on behalf of someone else. John's purpose was to give public testimony about Jesus Christ (**"the light"**).

John would point people to Jesus Christ, in order that all might believe because of John's testimony.

"That all men" -

---God's <u>desire</u> is that everyone believe (2 Peter 3:9)

"Through him (John)" –
--God uses the instrumentality of men to bring about faith (belief) in people
v. 8
John was quick to point people away from himself (1:19-23), and to turn people to Jesus Christ **"the light"**. Is this your purpose?

John was not the light, even as we are not the light. We (as Christians) can reflect the light, just as the moon reflects the light of the sun (cp. Mt. 5:14). But the source of real spiritual light comes from the Son of God.

"John was a lamp, but not the light; a wick, but not the flame" (Swindoll, p. 17).

"Most of us have had a variety of lamps in our homes over the years: desk lamps, swag lamps, chandeliers. Some have probably been fancy, fashioned in brass or silver. Some have been made of stained glass; others, crystal. Some, too, may have been very common, like a simple porcelain closet fixture. Whatever, the important thing is the light, not the lamp. It's the glow in the bulb that lights up a room, not the shine on the brass or crystal. Are you exhibiting Christ in your life as the true light of the world, or is the ornamentation of your lamp the main thing people see? Is His light radiating through your life, or is it being obstructed by a cumbersome lampshade of sin?" (Swindoll, p. 18)

Notice several features about **"the light"**:

1) The Light is <u>singular</u> (there are not many lights, but <u>one</u> – Jesus Christ) (v. 8)

2) The Light is <u>real, genuine light</u> (not false) (v. 9a)

3) The Light <u>came into the world</u> (v. 9b-10)

4) The Light is <u>available to all</u> (but not all have the Light) (v. 7, 9)

v. 9

"The <u>true</u> light" - Christ is the authentic light; He is the real, genuine light. There may be others who appear to be light, but beware: they may be bright, but they are not the real light (2 Cor. 11:14 – Satan can even transform himself into an angel of light).

"Which lighteth every man" - This does not mean that everyone is enlightened, but that every man who <u>is</u> enlightened is illuminated by that One Light which came into the world.

The Light is not automatically beneficial to all, but it is <u>available</u> to all.

Christ's Light shines on <u>every man</u>. This does not mean that all men embrace His light.

"Those who hate the light respond as the world does (1:10): they flee lest their deeds should be exposed by the light (3:19-21). But some receive this revelation (1:12-13), and thereby testify that their deeds have been done through God (3:21)." (Carson, p. 124).

"This light 'shines upon every man' (whether he sees it or not)." (Barrett, cited by Carson, p. 124).

The phrase **"That cometh into the world"** can refer to "man" or to "the true light" (NASV; NIV). Verse 10 seems to indicate that the reference is to Jesus Christ, who came into the world.

The word **"cometh"** is a singular word and is best understood as neuter, referring to the "Light" (D.A.Carson, p. 121).

Verse 9 is best understood as "That was the true light...that cometh into the world."

Why does every man need light?

1) Apart from light, man is in the darkness about God (His nature and character) and His plans

2) Apart from light, man is in the darkness about God's way of salvation

3) Apart from light, man is in the darkness about God's purpose for his or her life

If you want "light" as to which way to go with your life, you had better come to Jesus for it (the same goes for light regarding your marriage, parenting, and other interpersonal relationships).

Jesus is the Light who illuminates our minds to the nature and character of God, the way of salvation, the way to abundant living. We need His light to survive spiritually, just as we need the sun's light to survive physically.

v. 10
The Light (Jesus Christ) visited the earth (cp. 1:14), and created the earth (cp. 1:3), yet despite all that, the earth-dwellers did not recognize Him for who He was (cp. 1:5 – the darkness did not comprehend [grasp] Him).

II. He Came that we might receive God's RE-BIRTH (v.11-13)

v. 11
Not only was Christ unrecognized by the world He made and visited (v. 10, but John goes a step further and shows how He was rejected by the nation He chose and blessed.

Jesus came to His own people (those related to Him – the Jewish people), and His own, by and large, did not welcome Him. They did not take Him to be their Light.

Isaiah 65:2-3
I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts; A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick;

v. 12
"As many as" – To all who receive Him, to everyone who welcomes Him.

"Received" – *lambano* – to accept unto one's self, to welcome into one's life. To "take" or receive as one would receive money offered to him (Mt. 10:8; Acts 20:35).

The word is used of the disciples' receiving Jesus into the ship with them (John 6:21).

"Power" = Authority, or the right.

Jesus, who has all the authority in the universe (Mt. 28:18), gives authority to all who receive Him to become a child of God.

"Sons of God" – Children of God (not natural children, but adopted children).

There is only One "only begotten Son" (unique, one of a kind, divine Son) (John 3:16). All other sons of God are made sons by means of spiritual adoption into the family of God (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5). This is the "new birth."

"Even to them that believe" – This phrase is added to explain what it means to "receive Him." God is saying that "receiving is believing" and "believing is receiving."

"On His name" – The "name" represents the specific person who is named. The new birth only comes to those who sincerely trust upon the specific Person of Jesus Christ.

Acts 4:12
Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

v. 13

"Not of blood" – Lit. "Not out of bloods" (plural) – the new birth is not the result of a genealogical blood line, such as the Jews, who would feel secure because of their blood line to the patriarchs – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The plural "bloods" may also be referring to the blood of a father and mother.

"Nor of the will of the flesh" – The new birth is not the result of corrupt flesh. It does not come as a result of man's seed. Man's human nature is in no way responsible for the new birth.

1 Peter 1:23-24
Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. [24] For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

"Nor of the will of man" – *andros*, which often refers to a mature male, or husband.

The point: the new birth does not stem from a husband, but God supernaturally produces it.

Flesh gives birth to flesh (3:6), but only God's Spirit gives birth to spirit.

A summary of verses 12 – 13; teaching on sonship.

--Sonship is offered to all (**"as many as"**)

--Sonship is available to all who receive Christ (**"receive Him"**)

--Sonship is conferred upon people by the authority of Jesus Christ (**gave He power"**)

--Sonship is not attained through natural birth or human achievement (v. 13)

III. He Came that we might see God's <u>GLORY</u> (v.14-15, 18)

v. 14
"The word was made flesh" – implied: The Word pre-existed, and then entered the human race. He became what He was not prior (Heb. 2:14).

"Dwelt among us" – The Word made His home in this world for 33 ½ years.

"And we beheld His glory" -
John and the other disciples were eye and ear witnesses of Christ's splendid glory.

They saw His perfection, His brilliance, His shining, glowing radiance.

Everyone could plainly see that He was different than everyone else. No one else ever talked like Jesus, conducted Himself like Jesus, taught like He did, worked like He did, cared like He, forgave like He, performed wonders and signs and miracles like He, lived sinlessly like He did, etc.

His glory surpassed all, because His glory was that of the **"only begotten"** (one of a kind or unique) Son of the Father.

The visible manifestation of God the Father radiated from Christ's life.

"full of grace and truth" – Christ was completely full of grace and truth.

His every act demonstrated grace, and His every word was filled with truth.

Man can at times demonstrate grace, and can frequently speak truth (but not to perfection).

Jesus was absolutely, 100% of the time gracious and truthful.

v. 15
John the Baptist shouted out the pre-eminence of Christ.

Although John was born six months before Christ and began His public ministry before Christ, yet Jesus who came after is infinitely superior because He (as God) existed "before" John.

John the Baptist frequently uses the phrase **"preferred before me"** (1:15, 27, 30) to emphasize how Christ was of surpassing rank, surpassing power, surpassing honor, and surpassing everything!

v. 18
Since **"no man hath seen God at any time,"** every appearance of God in the Bible had to be an appearance of Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, all visible forms of God (who is Spirit) were Christophanies (or appearances of Christ).

All Old Testament references to someone seeing "God" (Elohim) or "the LORD" (Jehovah), must refer to God the Son.
Why? The reason is simple. The Bible states that no one (that is, no mortal human being) has ever seen God the Father (Ex. 33:20; Jn. 1:18, 6:46).

Jesus appeared in the Old Testament as a "Theophany" or a self-manifestation of God.

Such appearances of Christ (specifically called "Christophanies) describe Him as "The Angel of the Lord" (Lit. "the messenger of Yahweh").

1) **Jesus was manifested to Hagar**
He claims the prerogatives of God -- "I will multiply thy seed" (Gen. 16:10).
He is called "LORD" (Yahweh/Jehovah - this name was treated sacredly and used with honor).
He is called "God" (El) - "Thou God seest me" (Gen. 16:13).

2) **Jesus was manifested to Abraham** (cp. John 8:56).
He is called "LORD" and appears in the form of a man along with two other angels (cp. 18:1, 2 with 19:1).
---He reveals omniscience -
(He, being LORD, knew Sarah "laughed within herself")
Abraham stood before the LORD (Gen. 18:22).
---He is reverently honored as King or Master (Adonai) (Gen. 18:27).
---He judged Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24)
NOTE: two persons in view - both called "LORD" (Jehovah): "The LORD (God the Son) rained down fire from the LORD (God the Father).
---He speaks as God (Gen. 22:11-12, 15, 16)
In Hebrews 6:13,14 the "Angel" speaking to Abraham is identified as God.
The "Angel of the LORD" (v.15) speaks as "LORD" (v.16) and is not quoting the Father as some might assume by the phrase - "saith the LORD."
[Note: The word "saith" means to "affirm" The phrase "saith the LORD" is never used to introduce a quote, but is always used to affirm (or emphasize) the statement that precedes the phrase. See Jeremiah 49:13 for the same sentence structure. Compare with Numbers 14:28.]

3) **Jesus was manifested to Isaac**
--He "appeared" to Isaac and directed him (Gen. 26:2-5).
--He "appeared" to Isaac and gave assurance of blessing (Gen.26:24-25).

4) **Jesus was manifested to Jacob**
--He spoke to Jacob in a dream as the "Angel of God" (Gen. 31:11) and as God Himself (31:13).
--He wrestled with Jacob in the form of a man (Gen. 32:24-30) (This One who wrestled with Jacob is called "the Angel" of God in Hosea 12:3-5).
--He redeemed Jacob (Gen. 48:15, 16).
(NOTE: The "Angel" (v. 15) is directly linked to "God" (v. 15)

5) **Jesus was manifested to Moses**
--He appeared to Moses out of a "burning bush" (Exodus 3:2-6).
--He identified Himself as the "I AM" (Ex. 3:13-15) (cp. Jesus is the "I AM" - Jn. 8:58, 18:5).

--He was enveloped in a cloudy pillar (Ex. 14:19; cp. with Ex. 13:21).
--He stood upon a rock that provided water for the entire nation (Ex. 17:5, 6; cp. I Cor. 10:4).

6) **Jesus was manifested to <u>Joshua</u>** (Josh. 5:13-6:5)
--He appeared to Joshua as the "Captain of the LORD's (Yahweh's) host (army)."
--He is <u>worshipped</u> as God 5:14).
--He demands honor because He is <u>holy</u> (5:15).
[NOTE: Joshua is confronted and commissioned with the <u>holiness</u> of God as was Moses - cp. Ex. 3:5.]
--He is called "<u>LORD</u>" (Jehovah - 6:2)

7) **Jesus was manifested to <u>Israel</u>**
(Judges 2:1-7)
[Note: The first person pronouns "I . . . my" (v. 1-3). "The Angel of the LORD" claims responsibility and authority that belonged only to Jehovah God - cp. v. 7.]

8) **Jesus was manifested to <u>Gideon</u>**
(Judges 6:11-26)
He bears Jehovah's <u>name</u> (v. 14); claims Jehovah's <u>authority</u> (v. 16); and demonstrates Jehovah's <u>power</u> (v. 21).
Gideon feared death (v. 22-23), knowing that no man could see God's face and live (Ex. 33:20).

9) **Jesus was manifested to <u>Samson's parents</u>**
(Judges 13:3-22)
His name is "a secret" (v. 18) -- lit. wonderful or indescribable (cp. Is. 9:6).
Seeing Him was seeing "<u>God</u>" (v. 22).

v. 18 cont.

"Finally, Jesus Christ revealed God to us (John 1:18). As to His essence, God is invisible (1Tim. 1:17; Heb. 11:27). Man can see God revealed in nature (Ps. 19:1-6; Rom. 1:20) and in His might works in history; but he cannot see God Himself. Jesus Christ revealed God to us, for He is "the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15) and "the express image of His person" (Heb. 1:3). The word translated "declared" gives us our English word *exegesis* which means "to explain, to unfold, to lead the way." Jesus Christ explains God to us and interprets Him for us. We simply cannot understand God apart from knowing His Son Jesus Christ." (Wiersbe, p. 286)

IV. He Came that we might be filled with God's GRACE & TRUTH (v.16-17)

v. 16
The only way to be fulfilled in life is to receive Christ's fullness. He fulfills all who come to Him. He satisfies every desire and need.

"I must at all costs avoid the deadly delusion of self-fulfillment. I am hounded on all sides to be the person I was meant to be, to realize my full potential, and to explore the capabilities of the possible me. . . (to be self-fulfilled by the world). . . The error in all this is that the Bible nowhere talks of self-fulfillment. The only fullness the Bibles knows about is the fullness of Christ. He is the fullness of God (Col. 1:19; 2:9); He is the fullness of the Church (Eph. 1:22-23); and He is the fullness of everyone who draws fullness from Him" (W. Glyn Evans, Daily With the King, p. 196).

"And grace for grace" - lit. "grace in the place of grace."

The idea: Grace is piled on grace; God's grace through Christ is full. It is "one blessing (of grace) after another" (NIV)

Just as God's mercies are new every morning, so is His grace.

v. 17
John is not saying that grace did not exist in the Old Testament. God's grace has been demonstrated ever since the Fall, and anyone who has ever been saved was saved based on God's grace.

What John is saying is that Moses did not bring grace, but the Law. Grace can only come from God.

Moses delivered a Law which condemned by pointing out man's sin and lawbreaking nature, but Christ (in contrast) gave grace which saves us from sin, and truth which enlightens (illuminates) us to God's nature, character, ways, and plan of salvation.

If anyone wants God's grace, they must go to Jesus Christ to get it; and if anyone wants God's truth, it comes from the same source.

For Jesus is the "way, the truth, and the life..." (John 14:6).

"The truth is in Jesus" (Eph. 4:21).

"If God dealt with us only according to truth, none of us would survive; but He deals with us on the basis of grace and truth" (Wiersbe, p. 286).

ILLUS: John Newton, and "Amazing Grace."

THE ART COLLECTOR'S SON

Author Unknown

Years ago, there was a very wealthy man who, with his devoted young son, shared a passion for art collecting. Together they traveled around the world, adding only the finest art treasures to their collection. Priceless works by Picasso, Van Gogh, Monet and many others adorned the walls of the family estate.

The widowed, elder man looked on with satisfaction, as his only child became an experienced art collector. The son's trained eye and sharp business mind caused his father to beam with pride as they dealt with art collectors around the world.

As winter approached, war engulfed the nation, and the young man left to serve his country. After only a few short weeks, his father received a telegram. His beloved son was missing in action. The art collector anxiously awaited more news, fearing he would never see his son again. Within days, his fears were confirmed. The young man had died while rushing a fellow soldier to a medic.

Distraught and lonely, the old man faced the upcoming Christmas holidays with anguish and sadness. The joy of the season, a season that he and his son had so looked forward to, would visit his house no longer.

On Christmas morning, a knock on the door awakened the depressed old man. As he walked to the door, the masterpieces of art on the walls only reminded him that his son was not coming home. As he opened the door, a soldier greeted him with a large package in his hand. He introduced himself to the man by saying, "I was a friend of your son. I was theone he was rescuing when he died. May I come in for a few moments? I have something to show you."

As the two began to talk, the soldier told of how the man's son had told every one of his, not to mention his father's, love of fine art. "I'm an artist," said the soldier, "and I want to give you this."

As the old man opened the package, the paper gave way to reveal a portrait of the man's son. Though the world would never consider it the work of a genius, the painting featured the young man's face in striking detail.
Overcome with emotion, the man thanked the solider, promising to hang the picture above the fireplace.

A few hours later, after the soldier had departed, the old man setabout his task. True to his word, the painting went above the fireplace, pushing aside thousands of dollars of paintings. And then the man sat in hischair and spent Christmas gazing at the gift he had been given.

During the days and weeks that followed, the man realized that even though his son was no longer with him, the boy's life would live on because ofthose he had touched. He would soon learn that his son had rescued
dozens of wounded soldiers before a bullet stilled his caring heart.

As the stories of his son's gallantry continued to reach him, fatherly pride and satisfaction began to ease the grief. The painting of his son soon became his most prized possession, far eclipsing any interest inthe pieces for which museums around the world clamored. He told his neighbors itwas the greatest gift he had ever received.

The following spring, the old man became ill and passed away. The art world was in anticipation! Unmindful of the story of the man's only son, but in his honor, those paintings would be sold at an auction. According to the will of the old man, all of the art works would be auctioned on Christmas Day, the day he had received his greatest gift.

The day soon arrived and art collectors from around the world gathered to bid on some of the world's most spectacular paintings. Dreams would be fulfilled this day; greatness would be achieved as many would claim, "I have the greatest collection."

The auction began with a painting that was not on any museum's list. It was the painting of the man's son. The auctioneer asked for an opening bid. The room was silent.

"Who will open the bidding with $100?" he asked. Minutes passed. No one spoke.
From the back of the room came, "Who cares about that painting? It's just a picture of his son."
"Let's forget it and go on to the good stuff." More voices echoed in agreement.
"No, we have to sell this one first," replied the auctioneer. "Now, who will take the son?"
Finally, a friend of the old man spoke, "Will you take ten dollars for the painting? That's all I have. I knew the boy, so I'd like to have it."
"I have ten dollars. Will anyone go higher?" called the auctioneer.
After more silence, the auctioneer said, "Going once, going twice. Gone."
The gavel fell.
Cheers filled the room and someone exclaimed, "Now we can get on with it and we can bid on these treasures!"
The auctioneer looked at the audience and announced the auction was over. Stunned disbelief quieted the room.

Someone spoke up and asked, "What do you mean it's over? We didn't come here for a picture of some old guy's son. And what about all of these other paintings? There are millions of dollars of art here! I demand that you explain what's going on here!"

The auctioneer replied, "It's very simple. According to the will of the father, whoever takes the son gets it all."

Just as those art collectors discovered on that Christmas Day, the message is still the same - the love of a Father, a Father whose greatest joy came from His Son, who went away and gave His life rescuing others. And because of that Father's love, whoever takes the Son, gets it all!