

Our Humble Redeemer

Descended From The Realms Of Glory

John 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it...⁹ That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. ¹¹ He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. ¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* ^(NIV)

INTRODUCTION

- The Gospel accounts of Matthew and Luke are generally referenced for information concerning Christ's first coming.
- The Gospel of John, while not taking a conventional approach, does speak thematically and theologically about the issue.



BACK TO THE BEGINNING

- John parallels Genesis, explaining that the God who existed before creation is one in essence, yet a plurality of Persons.
- In the first verse we discover that the Word was:
 - *eternal and uncreated, by definition, God (1:1a).*
 - *distinct from the Father and yet in full-faced relationship with Him (1:1b).*
 - *God in the sense of a unity of essence (1:1c).*
- John says the Savior is no less than the eternal God who by whom all things were made.

LIFE AND LIGHT

- The eternal Word is the source of both life and light which are inextricably connected.
 - *John describes eternal life as knowing God (17:3).*
 - *Christ Himself is "the" life and "the" truth (14:6).*
- This Light shines into a dark world of sin that sustains a twofold relationship to that Light.
 - *The world in darkness cannot comprehend the Light.*
 - *This world of darkness is antagonistic to the Light.*
- The darkness cannot extinguish the Light and the Light continues to shine (1:5).

THE LIGHT COMES

- When the Light came, the world (mankind) He had made did not recognize Him.
- Christ came to His own (the covenant people of God), but they did not receive Him.
- Those who did receive Him were granted the right to become the children of God.
- The theme of Advent is that the Eternal Word invaded creation to bring life and light to those in death and darkness, redeeming all whom the Lord our God would call.

THE HUMBLE INVASION OF LIGHT INTO DARKNESS

- The Light invaded this world of darkness when God the Son, the Eternal Word, stepped out of eternity and into the realm of created men.
- The Eternal God does not simply come to humanity in some spectacular manifestation that retains the fullness of His heavenly glory; He assumes humanity.
- God came in humility, identifying with frail humanity that He might redeem them.

THE NECESSITY OF THE INCARNATION

- God must come to man. Only God incarnate could accomplish so great a salvation.
- At the same time, He must also be man; man must answer justice for the sins of man.
- The Promised Redeemer must be both God and man.

THE CONDESCENSION

The incarnation is referred to as the condescension, not simply because God came down to man but because the eternal God of glory also assumed lowly humanity.

NO WAY BACK

- The Creator became one with the creature to reunite the creature with the Creator.
 - *Sin destroyed the fellowship of life enjoyed by our first parents.*
 - *Insurrection plunged the human race into darkness.*
- Human beings are already utterly dependent upon their Creator for life and breath. They have nothing on their own to offer God.
- Human beings are fallen creatures, radically corrupted by sin in their entire being.
- There is no hope of reconciliation from “the bottom up.” Only God could rescue us.

THE DEPTHS OF THE CONDESCENSION

- The Word’s humility extends far beyond simply assuming humanity. He humbled Himself by submitting, not simply to death, but the horrific death of the cross.
- Christ’s coming into the earth was not marked by great fanfare or noble privilege.
- Jesus was born to a lowly family under the poorest of circumstances.
- God descended from the highest heights of glory to the lowest dregs of creation in order to save His own.
- The story of the incarnation strips away human pretense revealing the dark depths of the human condition.
- Christ subjected Himself to the lowest depths that He might rescue and raise us to the highest heights.
- The eternal Word lifts us from a ruined world of sin and darkness to sit with Him in heavenly places.
- God became flesh and dwelt among us that we might behold the glory of the only begotten, full of grace and truth.

“In the Christian story God descends to re-ascend. He comes down; down from the heights of absolute being into time and space, down into humanity; down further still to the very roots of the Nature He has created. But He goes down to come up again and bring the whole ruined world up with Him. One may think of a diver, first reducing himself to nakedness, then glancing in mid-air, then gone with a splash, vanished, rushing down through the green and warm water into black and cold water, down through increasing pressure into the death-like region of ooze and slime and old decay; then up again, back to color and light, his lungs almost bursting, till suddenly he breaks surface again, holding in his hand the dripping, precious thing that he went down to recover. He and it are both colored now that they have come up into the light: down below, where it lay colorless in the dark, he lost his color too.” C.S. Lewis