



February 13, 2022

"God Pitched His Tent"

SS at 9:30. Service at 10:30 with King's Kids.

NEWS

Our dear sister Marian went home yesterday – please pray for her family.
Wednesday Night 6:30

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JOHN 1:14 ~ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

The "Pearl of Great Price," was an invaluable pearl. Augustine (354-430) one of the greatest _____ and Chrysostom (347-407) one of the greatest _____, both said that it was _____ that any human being could have written the first 18 verses of John.

It is a _____ to gauge our progress through God's Word by what chapter of John we're studying.

The moment the eternal takes on the mortal, _____ becomes a factor. That's why Jesus was born in Judea on _____ 25, 5 B.C. and was murdered there on _____ 3, 33 A.D. (Luke 3:23).

There were always the northern, southern, and eastern empires waring with and trading with each other across _____.

In 538 B.C., The Persian, Cyrus the Great, released the _____ captives from Babylon. Nearly 50 years later, Darius the Great launched an attack against Greece and was defeated at _____.

Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.

God Bless You!

Ten years later Xerxes attacked _____ and while defeated at Thermopylae, he did conquer northern _____ including Macedonia.

In 336 B.C. a young Macedonian named _____, the student of Aristotle, conquered the Greek city-states, and united them with a single Greek dialect for easier communication. What resulted was a simplified form called Koinê Greek, literally meaning _____ Greek.

He defeated the Persians conquering all of their former territory plus more. He forced Greek _____ and _____ on everyone, so for more than 600 years, Koine Greek was the lingua franca that everyone understood.

God set His Anointed Messiah into the physical world at the spatial coordinates called the _____ of the world and in the temporal coordinates of the middle of the age of a _____ tongue.

It doesn't say that the Word became a man, but that He became flesh - σάρξ (săřx). The Word was connecting with all of humanity as a whole, not just the _____ half of them.

"Dwelt" is the verb σκηνώω (skā-nō-ō), and the related noun is σκηνή (skā-nā). It is a _____ (Exodus 25:8&9, Revelation 21:3&4). God chooses to pitch His _____ among our _____.

Glory is δόξα (dō-xā), which derives from the verb δοκέω (dō-kē-ō), meaning to think, to imagine, to consider. It is to reach a conclusion that an object is _____. There are degrees.

Not only is God the only one who can _____ assess, He's the only one _____ glorious. What is the single-greatest thing that makes God most glorious? (Titus 2:11-14).

Glory came to man in the form of God becoming man. In that sense, Jesus is the Son. Here, it is not "The only begotten from the Father," it is μονογενής (mō-nō-gē-nās), meaning the one and only _____ one.

Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____



Alêtheia

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP



ΕΝΑΡΧΗ Η ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΑΙ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΗΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ
 ΘΕΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΘΕΟΣ Η ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΎΤΟΣ ΗΝ ΕΝΑΡΧΗ ΤΙΣ
 ΤΟΝ ΘΕΟΝ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΣΤΟ ΚΑΙ ΧΩΡΙΣ

Last week we finished with verse 14. Let's take a little closer look at this pivotal verse.




John 1:14, And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

The thought may have crossed your mind, that if we're going this slowly, we'll never finish John's Gospel. You may be right, but why would we want to finish it other than the sense of accomplishment we might get? It's not my intention to finish the Gospel, or even to lurch ahead to the good parts. The whole thing is the good parts, and none better than this.



In the old days, they called the Bible, and especially the New Testament, the “Pearl of Great Price.” A reference to Jesus’ parable in Matthew 13, where the kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant seeking good pearls, and upon finding a “Pearl of Great Price,” an invaluable pearl, he sold all he had to buy it. If the Bible was that pearl, it was said, then the Gospel of John was the pearl within the pearl. Further, it was said that if that was true then the first 18 verses of this Gospel was the pearl within the pearl, within the pearl. Why would we rush to leave it behind?

We abandoned the concept 150 years ago because the Mormons highjacked it as the name of a companion book of of their so-called Scripture that they use along with the Book of Mormon and The Doctrine and Covenants.



To touch God a little with
our mind is a great blessing,
to grasp him is impossible.

Saint Augustine



A comprehended
god is no god.

Saint John Chrysostom

Augustine (354-430) is considered one of the greatest theologians in church history and Chrysostom (347-407) is considered to be one of the greatest preachers in church history. They both, independently, said that it was impossible that any human being could have written the first 18 verses of John. They, and many others since, have cited the divine character of these

few verses as proof that Holy Scripture is in fact God-breathed. Inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Why wouldn't we take our time? I was reluctant to go through John so soon after going through Matthew and then I John after that. Too much John, too much Gospel narrative. What I realized is that in the course of using John as a framework we can have sermons that cover every aspect of Christianity if we take enough time to allow forays into topics as they come up.

My only point is that it is a mistake to gauge our progress through God's Word by what chapter of John we're studying. Settle in - it will be a long road.



“And the Word became flesh.” The eternally existent, fully God, Word of God, through Whom everything was made was now Himself made flesh.

The moment the eternal takes on the mortal time becomes a factor. That’s why Jesus was born in Judea on December 25, 5 B.C. and was murdered nearby during the Passover April 3, 33 A.D. Best educated guess. It’s an educated guess because early Christians were not interested in such dates - they had bigger fish to fry. The Bible says in Luke 3:23, “When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age.” He was “about” that old because back then

normal people didn't celebrate birthdays or keep track of age.

What I'm getting at here, is once what is outside of time, enters the physical realm, they likewise enter the linear timestream. That's part of the Word taking on flesh - He became subject to our timeline. Why would God choose that specific point to enter the timeline? For that we need a little history review.



In ancient times, going back “Before Abraham was” there were always three great superpower empires vying for more territory and control. 1) The first was centered in northeast Africa in what is now primarily

Egypt, but at times, modern Libya, Sudan, and Ethiopia as well.

2) The second was in the region where Asia meets Europe and was mostly in what is now Turkey, Bulgaria, and Greece.

3) The third was centered in Mesopotamia around modern Iraq and extending east through Iran, sometimes as far east as India.

Whether it was during the time of the Egyptian, Hittite, and Babylonian Empires or at the times where other empires existed the reality is there were always the northern, southern, and eastern empires waring with each other and then in times of peace trading with each other.

No matter what empires and no matter whether it was war or peace, the Levant or the Land of Canaan was the crossroads of the world. There was for at least 3,000 years a non-stop flood of different people groups travelling through what is modern day Israel - the historic home of the Jews.

That is why God gave Abraham that territory - so that he and his descendants could proclaim the one true God to all those folks. It's why the Phoenicians settled on that coast. As a seafaring people of trade, they went to the best spot on the planet at that time to be successful. They were driven out by the greed of others jealous of their success. They moved to the North African coast and remade themselves as the Carthaginians, but that a story for another day.



Imagine all the different languages, religions, customs and ethnicities. As described in the Bible and confirmed historically and archeologically, in about 559 B.C. the Persian, Cyrus the Great, became king of a small area

of modern-day Iran. He began adding to his empire and conquered practically everything between the borders of China and Greece. In 538 B.C. in his first year as King of the Babylonians, Cyrus released the Jewish captives. They returned to Judea and rebuilt Jerusalem and the Temple.



Nearly 50 years later, Darius the Great, a subsequent ruler of Persia, launched a massive attack against Greece and was defeated at the Battle of Marathon in 490 B.C. The story goes that a messenger was sent from Marathon to Athens to announce the land victory and warn that the Persian navy was about to attack the city. That distance was 26.2 miles. The first marathon

run in the modern Olympics, held in Athens in 1896, was won by a Greek runner.

Ten years after that Darius' son Xerxes attacked Greece and was defeated in large part due to the heroics of the so-called 300 led by the Spartan King Leonidas in the Battle of Thermopylae. Even though the Athenians and Spartans repelled the Persians from southern Greece, Xerxes did conquer northern Greece including Macedonia.

Chaffing under Persian rule for nearly 200 years and in a continuous civil war with the other Greek city-states, the Macedonians were eager for change. In 336 B.C. a young Macedonian prince became the Persian puppet king of northern Greece. His name was Alexander. His personal tutor was Aristotle considered by many to be the greatest philosopher the world has ever known. Aristotle was the star-pupil of Plato, who was himself the star-pupil of Socrates (So-crates, if you're a time-traveling high school student failing history). Aristotle instilled in Alexander the notion that the reason for war was a lack of commonality.

If everyone were united as a single culture, by a single language, civilization could flourish in peace and tranquility.

After conquering the Greek city-states, Alexander had to unite them with a single Greek dialect for easier communication. What resulted was a simplified form of Greek using mostly the Attic and Ionic dialects. It was called Koine Greek, literally meaning common Greek.

With his army unified he attacked the Persians and along the way conquered Egypt making himself Pharaoh and therefore a living god. Before he was finished Alexander had conquered all of the former Persian territory as well as anything worthwhile in north Africa and southeast Europe. He and those who followed him pushed Greek culture and language on everyone. For the 600 plus years, from 330 B.C. until roughly 330 A.D. Koine Greek was the lingua franca that everyone between China and Spain, and from Ethiopia to Hungary understood. When the Romans became the dominate Empire, a couple hundred years later, they simply left Greek culture and language in place rather than try and force everyone to change.

God set His Anointed Messiah, the Word made flesh into the physical world at the spatial coordinates called the crossroads of the world and in the temporal coordinates of the middle of the age of a common tongue. People had already had 300 years to become fluent and would have another 300 years after to ensure the full spread of the Gospel.

That's why there and that's why then.

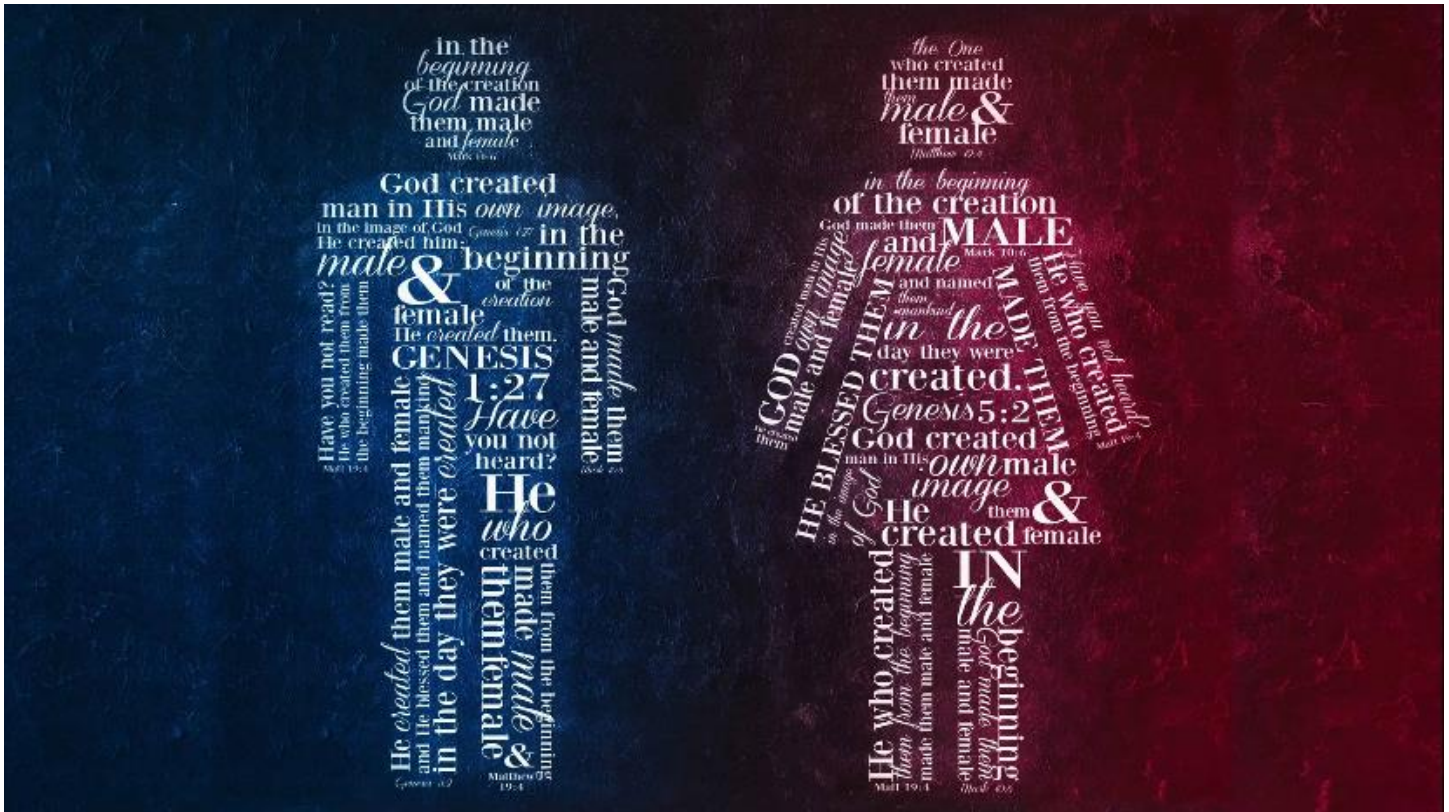


Next, notice that it doesn't say that the Word became a man, but that He became flesh. It's σάρξ (särx), which means the physical material that constitutes a living thing. Sarcophagus is σάρξ plus φάγω (fä-gō),

meaning to eat, and so a flesh eater. Put a body in, come back years later, and it's just bones, the flesh is gone.

The Greek philosopher Epicurus in about 300 B.C. began using the term for the seat of human emotions as well. Since the strongest emotions are related to desire this developed into the Bible's negative use of the term "Flesh" as the human desire to serve self as opposed to serving God and so was seen, especially by Paul, as the depraved human sinful desire and inclination.

Here, it does not have that meaning – this is the classical usage simply meaning that the eternal Word became physical flesh and blood.



By saying it this way, it's clear that the Word was human, but not in a usual sense. As I said before, it is like the Word took upon Himself humanity. And that's additionally interesting because, while technically a male, the Word was connecting with all of humanity as a whole, not just the male half of them.



“And dwelt among us,” is also an interesting way to put that. “Dwelt” is the verb σκηνόω (skā-nō-ō), and it sure enough means to dwell. What makes it interesting is it is not at all the word we would expect. This word is specifically to dwell in a tent, a hut, or other temporary shelter. The related noun is σκηνή (skā-nā), and means just that, a tent, a hut, or other temporary shelter.

In the Old Testament Greek translation, it is used hundreds of times for a tent, but then in Exodus 25:8&9 God said to Moses, 8“Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them. 9“According to all that I am going to show you, as the pattern of the

tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture, just so you shall construct it.”

God wanted them to build Him a tent, translated as Tabernacle because it was for God, but a tent by any other name, is still a temporary portable structure. Why did He want a tent? So that He could dwell among His people.


The Tabernacle was the temporary, portable Temple of the Lord that the Israelites travelled with for 40 years during the Exodus before they took the Promised Land. One more bit of background... σκηνή appears 20 times in the New Testament and every time it is translated as tent. The verb σκηνόω that we have here in John 1, occurs only 4 other times, all of them in the Book of Revelation. All of them to do with residence in Heaven except for the final use in Revelation 21:3&4, 3And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle (or Tent σκηνή) of God is among men, and He will dwell σκηνόω among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, 4and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”

This concept that the Word “Dwelt” among us runs the whole Bible long. God chooses to pitch His tent among our tents and live together with us. From the very beginning God has shared Himself with us, He has camped in our encampment.

He created man by carefully fashioning him from the earth and intimately blowing life into his nostrils. He created woman by taking a rib from the made and carefully fashioning her into the man’s perfectly fitting companion and established human intimacy with the generation of subsequent men and women.

God walked in the Garden together with the humans He had created. God picnicked with Abraham outside his tent. God met with and spoke to Moses frequently and He spoke through the many prophets of old including Elijah. God encamped among Abraham’s select descendants in the Tent and then in the Temple. God came down and literally camped with us as one of us for more than 30 years approximately 2,000 years ago.

Through the Holy Spirit, God dwells within each of His children receiving the Word ever since. One day, sooner than you think, God will create a “New heaven and a new earth” and will forevermore camp with His people. That’s what “Dwelt” means, and just to finish it off, the “Among us,” bit is relational. Never miss the point that God isn’t living among us because it happens to be the location He likes – it’s the people. God is choosing to live where He does because of His neighbors, not because of the neighborhood. It does not say that the Word came to live on the earth, but that He came to live with us.



*GREAT
CLOUD OF
WITNESSES*

John the Apostle now adds himself and the other thousands of eyewitnesses including John the Baptist as the “We.” It is basically the same thing as in I John where the author sometimes uses “We” as he and his fellow Apostles, as he and a wider set of Christian leaders, and as he and all Christians. Here, context tells us that this is John the Apostle, John the Baptist to a lesser extent, and everyone in between those two, to the degree, that they physically knew the Word Who was dwelling among them in the flesh.



They saw His glory. Glory is one of those words that most people don't really understand. They have some vague sense of a nebulous, esoteric, gloriosity... Yeah,

a new word. There are many such words that we just gloss over without really getting the point. Realize that Greek was chosen by God to be the language through which He would declare His Good News to all mankind. In Greek, words are not nebulous; they are well-thought out and defined. It was the language of intellectual philosophy... Words were important.



Glory is δόξα (dō-xä), which derives from the verb δοκέω (dō-kě-ō). That's where our investigation must begin. Δοκέω means to think, to imagine, to consider. It is to reason out from the information, from the experiential evidence, from all the available stimuli and reach a conclusion about something and believe that it

is true. It is closely related to the Greek word δόγμα (dōg-mä), from which we get – you guessed it – our English word dogma, meaning decree, opinion, ordinance, code of belief, or doctrine. What does all of that have to do with Glory?

True Glory is true. Someone considers another, whether it's God, or a person, or a thing, and they conclude, after their careful investigation of the facts, that that object is praiseworthy. The object is good, noble, right, beautiful, pure, whatever it is, that would earn it glorification, which is the quality of a thing that must be honored because it is deserving of honor, respect, admiration, dignity, splendor, and even praise and worship.

There are degrees. A dog learns a complicated trick and deserves a treat. A veteran has done a laudable thing in sacrificing to preserve the Union and deserves some recognition – such as the “Thank you for your service,” acknowledgement. God, well, does God deserve any praise or honor?

Truly He deserves our maximum praise and worship constantly. If we honored Him as He should be

honored, we wouldn't stop extolling, exalting and blessing Him even to eat or sleep. Each example is glorious to a different degree. The dog should not be assigned human dignity, neither the dog nor the veteran should be worshipped... Degrees.

Before I delve deeper into that God glory aspect that we're concerned about today, let me also say that only God can say what is true. Only He knows all of the particulars of any object or circumstance and only He can render a proper judgment of praiseworthiness. So, whatever God says is glorious is glorious regardless of what anyone else might think. Since it is really a personal opinion about what deserves praise, only God can truly say what that is and what the correct degree of praise would be – as humans we do our best in assessing and then following through with the appropriate honor, but unlike God, we're fallible.

It should be obvious that not only is God the only one who can perfectly assess, He Himself is perfectly glorious. He has, as we've already seen in this chapter, created everything and actively holds it all together. People curse God with the mind, mouth, and tongue

He created, and with the breath He allows to fill their lungs. He deserves all the Glory for that alone.

There is something revealed in the New Testament that is the highest action making God worthy of highest possible praise. What is the single-greatest thing that God has done, is doing, and will continue to do that makes Him most glorious?

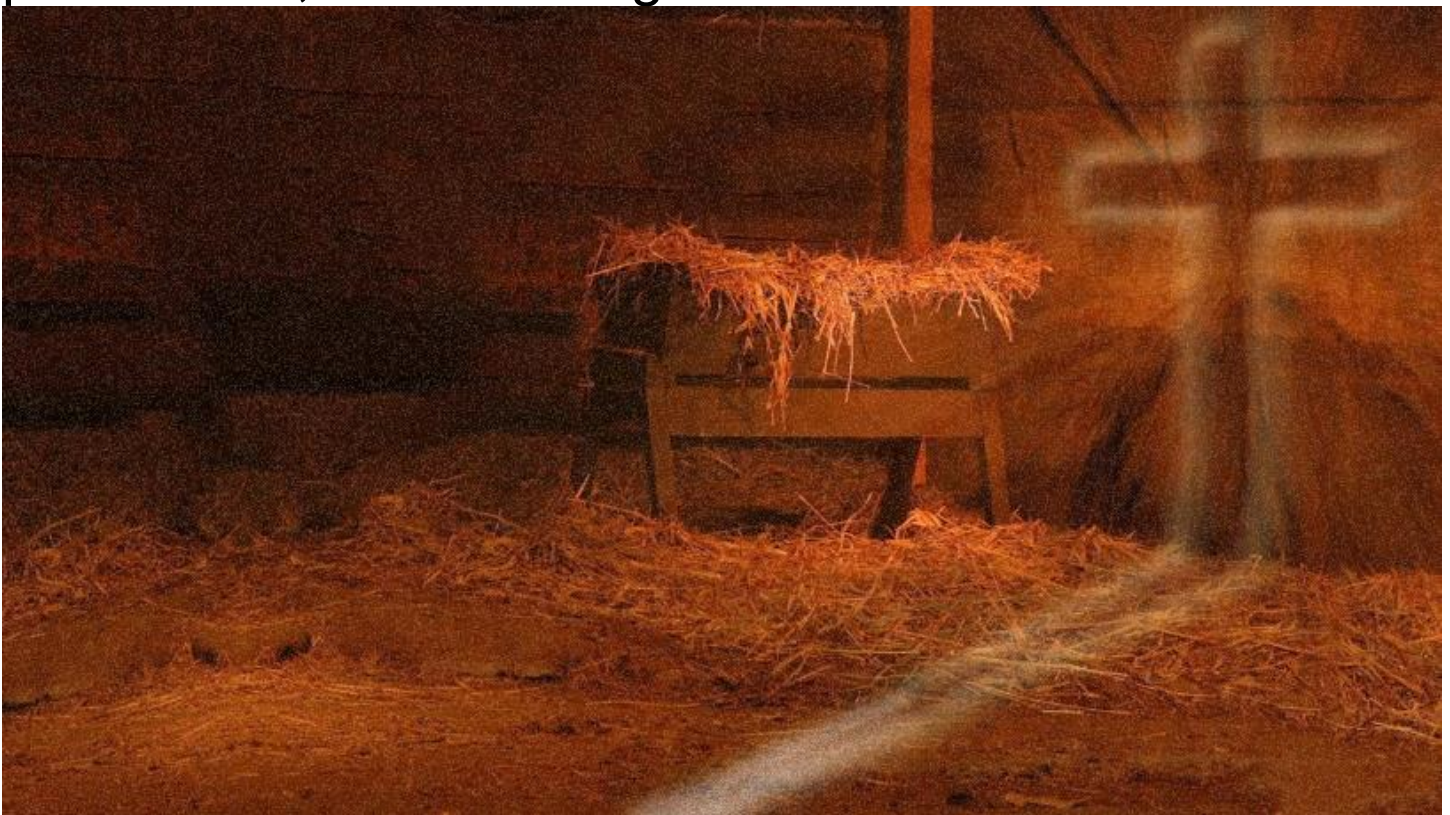
Greater than is perfectly pure existence. Greater than His creation of the physical and metaphysical realms and all the creatures therein. Greater than His establishment of a Garden where He dwelt with mankind. Greater than His honest judgment in shuttering that Garden.



The greatest thing worthy of the greatest of possible praise, is His sacrificing of Himself to save His creatures who had chosen to reject Him out of hand.

It is the Word becoming one of us and living among us as one of us and then, after earning His return to Heaven, allowing the sins of the world, your sins and my sins to be placed upon Him as though they were His sins and paying for them with His life. That is the greatest selfless sacrifice imaginable, and it deserves the greatest honor and worship – which is Glory. Titus 2:11-14, 11For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12instructing us to deny

ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, ¹³looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, ¹⁴who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.



Glory came to man in the form of God becoming man. The eternal, coexistent, coequal Word of Almighty God, became one of us, just as we become one of us, through a birth as a helpless infant after a 9-month-long human pregnancy. In that sense, the Word was

“Begotten from the Father” and is the Father’s Son... In that sense as the result of the incarnation.

Many people investigating these matters with far more imagination than intellect have come up with all kinds of ridiculous heresies and blasphemies concerning this Father/Son relationship including Joseph Smith the founder of the Mormon religion and an untold number of other halfwits and the false doctrines they taught and false Christianities they founded.

Yes, in this sense, Jesus is the Son, and therefore the Will of God, becomes His Father, but in this place it is wrongly translated anyway. It is not “The only begotten from the Father,” it is μονογενής (mō-nō-gě-nās), a two-part word. The mono part means one and only one. The end bit was assumed to be related to generation and so birth, but it was really genus and so uniqueness, not birth. The word actually means the one and only unique one.

The “From the Father,” bit is really closer than that, and literally means to come from beside, or alongside, the Father. Beyond that, there was always in Greek a sense of beloved for such a one as being the only

unique one. The point is that the Word of God came from alongside the Will of God, not to mention the Breath of God as well and as He came to take on humanity, He became the one and only unique one to ever do such a thing and as such is the beloved. We put that into understandable human terms and say the one and only unique and beloved Son of God.



That He was sent, that He came is to God's everlasting Glory because He came with what? He came "Full of grace and truth." He came full of the Salvation of the Lord. And how will you respond?