

This Christmas Season our Worship Theme is ...
“The Story of His Glory”

For the past two years we have been focusing on **God’s Good News Story**. The Good News Story’s central plot is God’s actions to bring mankind out of the separation of sin and back into a right relationship with Him through Jesus Christ. So, Jesus Christ is THE KEY FOCUS of this Good News Story. So, this Christmas it seems proper to focus on the ‘story’ aspect of Jesus coming to earth at his human birth in particular the GLORIOUS nature of the Christmas Story. It is a story of spectacular Light & Glory.

Of course, the best place to begin any story is of course, AT THE BEGINNING.

Genesis 1:1-3... *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness covered the surface of the watery depths, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. ³ Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light.*

What a Majestic, GLORIOUS, yet simple beginning to our story... These brief verses answer so many questions that people have.

1st there was an actual beginning, not some chance, random, unplanned sequence of nuclear and chemical variations.

2nd there was an actual Creator, a Divine Intellect that had a purpose and plan for our existence.

3rd we see that this Divine Creator took a personal approach to our world and guided its creation.

4th we see that God initiated His creation with the entrance of Glorious Light, spoken into existence from His very core.

Our Story is one of Light, Majesty and Glory. We as His creation, therefore, are not products of accident or random chance, but are the beloved objects of His creative joy and love. We belong to the very Glorious Creator Himself. We were in essence made for His GLORY, to shine forth His Glory.

Sadly, we did not follow in the Light of His Glory, but decided to walk in our own light, which is actually darkness. With mankind’s fall into darkness, we no longer lived in the Light of His Glory. The Story could have ended there in tragedy and rejection, but God in His GLORIOUS LOVE, made a way to bring us BACK INTO THE LIGHT. We see from early on God putting His RESCUE PLAN into action and laying the foundation. **Listen to a few verses that lay out God’s plans from the Old Testament:**

Genesis 3:15...*“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”*

Numbers 24:17... *I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near: a Star shall come out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel;*

Isaiah 7:14...*“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call Him Immanuel.”*

Isaiah 9:6-7...*For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over His kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.*

Isaiah 11:1...*There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, a branch from His roots shall bear fruit.*

Isaiah 11:10...*In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.*

Micah 5:2...*O Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.*

These are just a glimmer of the coming RESCUE LIGHT SHOW, that we know as the Birth of Jesus Christ, the Glory & Light of God. Listen to **John 1:1-18**.

John 1:1-18.... 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 All things were created through Him, and apart from Him not one thing was created that has been created. ⁴ In Him was life, and that life was the Light of men. ⁵ That Light shines in the darkness, and yet the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through Him. ⁸ He was not the light, but he came to testify about the Light. ⁹ The True Light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was created through Him, and yet the world did not recognize Him. ¹¹ He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. ¹² But to all who did receive Him, He gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in His Name, ¹³ who were born, not of natural descent, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but of God.*

¹⁴*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed His glory, the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John testified concerning him and exclaimed, “This was the one of whom I said, ‘The one coming after me ranks ahead of me, because He existed before me.’”) ¹⁶ Indeed, we have all received grace upon grace from His fullness, ¹⁷ for the law was given through*

Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. The one and only Son, who is Himself God and is at the Father's side—He has revealed Him.

As I stated earlier, Jesus Christ is the genuine STAR of God's Good News Story. We see from this passage and so many others, that Jesus Christ is the Eternal Word of God, Creator, Life & Light Himself. He came to bring us back into LIFE with God and into the LIGHT of His Glory.

Truly, it is worth our time and effort to focus on the Story of HIS Glory. There has never been or ever will be anyone like Jesus Christ.

1)Pre-existent 2)Co-existent 3) Self-existent

Listen to this quote from one of the most powerful man in history:

"I know men, and I tell you that Jesus Christ is not a mere man. Everything in Christ astonishes me. His spirit overawes me, and His will confounds me. Between Him and anyone else in the world there is no possible term of comparison. He is truly a being by himself. I search in vain in history to find a parallel to Jesus Christ, or anything which can approach the gospel. Neither history, nor humanity, nor the ages, nor nature offer me anything with which I am able to compare it or to explain it. Here everything is extraordinary".

“Those words were spoken by Napoleon Bonaparte during a conversation with one of his generals at the end of his career. At the time he spoke

these words, Napoleon was in exile on the tiny island of St. Helena in the Atlantic. There are other remarkable statements about Christ that the exiled leader of France made in his final years. It is my opinion, and the opinion of many who have studied Napoleon's life, we can hope that he became or reaffirmed his salvation during his exile.

Even the most amazing and forceful personalities in history-the Napoleons of past and present ages-are driven to their knees in awe and humility by the amazing reality of this one Man, Jesus Christ. Something within us instinctively responds to the words and the life of Jesus. Something within us is touched by His love. by the force of His personality, by the purity of His character. Something within us is magnetically drawn to the One who made us-and men was made like us”.

(Stedman.God's Loving Word. Discovery House Press. P. 23)

(The Following Outline adapted from Herschel Ford. Simple Sermons from the Gospel of John. Pp. 43-46 & (Carter & Wredburg. Christ-Centered Exposition: John. pp.21-28).

Let's look at some GLORIOUS TRUTHS about Jesus Christ from John 1 with supporting texts from other passages.

1. He became a man to show us what God is like.

Few statements in Scripture are as profound as the first statement of **verse 14: "The Word became flesh."** The Word is the preexistent, divine Creator of the universe. The Word is the uncreated Son of God. To say the Word became flesh is amazing! How could God become a man? Some have

suggested the Word (Jesus Christ) came to dwell in a man. He did not himself *become* a man.

But John says, "***The Word became flesh.***" Others have said Jesus Christ just *appeared* like a man. He didn't actually take on human form and become a man. He must have been an apparition because it's impossible for God who is Spirit to take on bodily form. While it's difficult for us to understand *how* this could happen, we can understand *what* John writes- "The Word became *flesh*." Still others have suggested God simply *chose* a man and made him His Son. But this ignores what John wrote earlier. The same one who ***became flesh*** (v. 14) is also the one ***who was in the beginning with God, who was with God, and who was God*** (v. 1). In a small manger in Bethlehem the eternal Son of God *became* a man. We can hold to this truth-called the incarnation-even if we cannot comprehend all it means. We can affirm that Jesus has always existed (v. 1, He was in the beginning) and that there was a definite point in human history when he was born as a baby (v. 14, He **became flesh**). Jesus is both fully God and fully human. Anyone who denies either the full deity *or full* humanity of Jesus Christ is a false teacher (1 John 4:1-2). Affirming the full humanity of Jesus in no way diminishes his deity. Listen to these supporting scriptures...

John 14:7-11...⁷ "If you know Me, you will also know My Father. From now on you do know Him and have seen Him."⁸ "Lord," said Philip, "show us the Father, and that's enough for us."⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have

I been among you all this time without your knowing Me, Philip? The one who has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?

¹⁰ *Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words I speak to you I do not speak on My own. The Father who lives in Me does His works.* ¹¹ *Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me. Otherwise, believe because of the works themselves.*

Colossians 2:9... "For the entire fullness of God's nature dwells bodily in Christ".

1 Timothy 3:16...⁶ *And most certainly, the mystery of godliness is great: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.*

Hebrews 1:1-4... ¹ *Long ago God spoke to the fathers by the prophets at different times and in different ways.* ² *In these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son. God has appointed Him heir of all things and made the universe[a] through Him.* ³ *The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact expression of His nature, sustaining all things by His powerful word. After making purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.* ⁴ *So He became higher in rank than the angels, just as the name He inherited is superior to theirs.*

2. He Became A Man That He Might Understand Our Problems And Sympathize With Our Sorrows.

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed His glory, the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

- **Jesus knew poverty:** “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head” (Matthew 8:20).
- **Jesus knew frustration:** “He scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.... ‘Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father’s house into a market!’” (John 2:15-16).
- **Jesus knew weariness:** “Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well” (John 4:6).
- **Jesus knew disappointment:** “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks,...but you were not willing” (Luke 13:34).
- **Jesus knew rejection:** “After this many of His disciples turned back and no longer followed Him” (John 6:66).
- **Jesus knew sorrow:** “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death” (Matthew 26:38).
- **Jesus knew ridicule:** “Again and again they struck him...and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid [mocking] homage to him” (Mark 15:19).

➤ **Jesus knew loneliness:** “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46).

3. He Became A Man So He Could Be Tempted And Not Fail.

¹⁶ Indeed, we have all received grace upon grace from His fullness, ¹⁷ for the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

“Apart from his human nature, Jesus could not have experienced temptation. The incarnation provides us with an advocate before the Father's throne who knows *exactly* what we're going through and *exactly* how it feels. God became man so he could sympathize with our weakness and so he could assure us that victory over sin and temptation is possible through his strength”. (Ford)

Mark 1:13... *“He (Jesus) was in the desert forty days, being tempted by Satan”*

Hebrews 2:18... *For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.* (NASB)

Hebrews 4:14-16... *¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens—Jesus the Son of God—let us hold fast to the confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tested in every way as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Therefore let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us at the proper time.*

4. He Became A Man So That He Could Die For Us And Bring Us Salvation.

¹² But to all who did receive Him, He gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in His Name.

“We should never look at Bethlehem without seeing Calvary. We should never contemplate the incarnation without our thoughts drifting to the crucifixion. J. I. Packer reminds us,

“The crucial significance of the cradle at Bethlehem lies in its place in the sequence of steps down that led the Son of God to the cross of Calvary, and we do not understand it till we see it in this context ... the taking of manhood by the Son is set before us in a way which shows us how we should ever view it-not simply as a marvel of nature, but rather as a wonder of grace”.
(*Knowing God*, 58-59)

The incarnation is amazing because of *why* God became man: so he could die for our sin. He renounced the glory due him, becoming poor, so that through his poverty we might become rich”.

Grace & Truth

John 3:16,17...¹⁶ *For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

¹⁷ *For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.*

- **The Good News story is a rescue story, and Jesus is the rescuer.**

- The Good News story is a promise, and Jesus is the fulfillment.

- The Good News story is all about Jesus Christ and the grace & truth that He has made available to all.

Closing: “Jesus came as the Light, but the world was blind, living in the darkness. The One who created the world was in the world, yet the world did not recognize Him:
(Carter & Wredburg. Christ-Centered Exposition: John. P. 16)

- **Jesus made our eyes**, yet so many refuse to See His Glory.
- Jesus made our ears, yet so many refuse to Listen to His Words.
- Jesus made our heads, yet so many refuse to Bow Before Him”

As we come to a close of this 1st part of ***The Story of His Glory***, don’t be like the world who is missing out on the Light & Life of Jesus Christ.

I BEG OF YOU...
SEE HIS GLORY
LISTEN TO HIS WORDS
BOW BEFORE HIM