

to think we get to the sublimest meaning as we take the simplest and remember that a word is an expression. A word is that by which one person expresses a thought to another. So that the other may be able to understand it. A word spoken by one person to another is a revelation of something in the mind. That the other does not know. A word is a revelation made; a thought communicated. The word was in the beginning.

We inquire as to whether the word was a person. Then we might ask the question, "What do you mean by a person?" Until you have defined your term "person" which by the way never occurs in the scriptures, we cannot answer you. If you tell me that man is a person, I'd say yes. Undoubtedly he is. But he is finite. And a finite person is incomplete.

The word became flesh. That is where the help begins. When the infinite person, and I do not quite know what that means, becomes a finite person, whom I can understand, we have a little appreciation. And the word was with God. That which was the method of divine speech manifestation was with God.

He pitched his tent among us. That kinda baffles us and perplexes us. A

And finally when I read the great introductory words, "the word was God" - both with God and God, we'll just simply overwhelmed. This is a simple statement but it is full of mystery. And it absolutely defies explanation.

Introduction -

Yea, Lord, we greet thee. Born this happy morning. Jesus, to thee be glory given. Word of the father, now in flesh appearing. O come, let us adore Him. Christ, the Lord.

There is a story that is told of a little boy whose father was away from home. And as he stood before a picture of his father at Christmas time, he turned to his mother and said wistfully, "I wish father would step out of the picture." That little boy expressed in his own way the deepest hopes of the deepest souls who lived for Christ. For truly men down through the ages have been praying, prophesying for and looking for Jesus to step out of the picture and become a reality. They had looked at him in prophecy. They had heard about him from the saints of old. But they wanted to see him. And I can fancy that in their hearts they were saying, "I wish that he would become real to us. I wish that he would step out of the picture."

When you look at the world, that is the big question still. The relationship with Jesus Christ. The biggest question is not just what is happening but why it happens. What it is that makes this world go round. And what is it that we are looking for in the longing in our hearts. This Christmas we come to realize that Christ did step out of the picture according to our text. The word became flesh. The method of the advent it is impossible to

deny. That now for two thousand years (it happened.) And it completely revolutionized human life.

Students of history have always been interested in tracing back the sources such as the rise and fall of dynasties. The great discoveries, revolutions. All of them are important and interesting. But Jesus coming out of the picture into the world; out of prophecy; out of the past has certainly changed our lives even this day.

We come to this statement of John, the mystic, in order to consider what it teaches. Concerning the facts of the birth of Jesus. And what resulted in it. It's a simple statement but its sublime. The word became flesh and tabernacled among us. Full of grace and truth. The statement of fact which this verse contains can be understood only as we remember that in this prologue of the gospel of John, the verse in which the text occurs is intimately connected by way of declaration of the first verse of the chapter. Consequently we bring these two verses together.

In order that we might understand the facts declared in our text. In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God. And the word became flesh and tabernacled among us. This is one continuous statement.

There are three first statements - in the beginning was the word", next, "the word was with God", and third, "the word was God."

Now there are three second statements - "the word became flesh", second, "and dwelt or pitched his tent among us", and thirdly, "full of grace and truth". You take these two series and you bring them together. And we can see the whole declaration of the hidden mystery. In the beginning the word and the word being made flesh.

At first, when we look at this, it defies us. Every word is beyond our comprehension.

In the beginning. We may only reverently declare that the thought transcends a possibility of our understanding. It is one of these matchless sweeps of inspiration that goes beyond all the thinking of man. In the beginning. I lay my hand on anything in this world and I begin to ask questions concerning its origin. I begin to track it through a long and tedious processes back to the point of its iniation. No man has ever been able to do this successfully. We have never been able to say the final thing concerning origins by the process of investigation and discovery. Man has more than once formulated a philosophy; has more than once suggested a solution. But as surely as he has done so, he has discovered that his philosophy has passed away. And the phrases have been initiated perhaps have come from things that are material.

The expression "the world" I'm equally conscious of our disability to comprehend its full meaning. I'm personally inclined

And the word was God. Full of grace and truth. All that men saw and heard in Jesus was an unveiling of deity. The attractiveness of his grace.

If that is the fact of the incarnation. What is this inclusive revelation that it has brought to us? God is love, full of grace and truth. God is light.

We do not want to rob the word grace of its beauty by putting human ideas into it. We behold him full of grace, full of tenderness, gentleness, pity. Meeting the needs of needy men, sinful souls. And he gathered the children up in his arms, put them in his midst. No cripple ever crossed the vision of Jesus without Christ feeling the pain of all the cripple's limitations. Full of grace towards sinners.

Take the New Testament and read it once more and see if you cannot find one harsh thing he said to a sinner.

Jesus had a great deal of harsh things to say to those that opposed. And that opposed the sinners in particular. But to someone who had been taken in an act of sin, Jesus had but an overwhelming sense of grace. Never an angry word; full of grace, winsome, full of beauty. The simplicity of his life.

Full of truth. He was capable of anger. Capable of severity as well as blessing. For many times he says, "Woe!". And he uttered terror as well as blessing. Great tenderness. Truth acting in grace became his because it is truth. Here is the

*And stopped out of the picture*

When we read full of grace and truth, we unveil the nature of God. Perhaps no explanation of the method. I have seen one who is flesh and pitches his tent (by my side) in the valley I dwell. It is here that one is full of grace and light. And through the veil, in the beginning was the word.

The more you pass over this ground - "in the beginning was the word and the word became flesh" what does this signify? Eternity, the ageless age, coming into time, expressing itself in language of time. Manifesting itself in the method of time.

Now we sometimes quote the words of Jesus uttered to John in Patmos. As though they were full of dignity. So they were. But they have another tone also. I am the alpha and the omega. The first and the last. There is some sense in which God, in God there is not first and no last. And consequently that is not a figure of completeness. It is a symbol of simplicity. It is the figure of the alphabet. "I am the alpha". And the omega. The alphabet which the little child may learn, yet remember that all literature lies within the compass of the 26 letters of the alphabet. Now we should not talk to children about a thing being as easy as "ABC". It's the hardest thing in the world we have to learn. Ye have forgotten the task. But it was such. You did not know it. But in that task you were beginning to climb up to that literature which you loved.

So when the word became flesh, infinite wisdom expressed itself in an alphabet. That began 19 hundred centuries ago. There had been attempts to fathom this truth and to interpret it. But the word was with God. There are those who can explain it perhaps. But I cannot. It's tremendous. But take for example this word "he tabernacled among us".

We do not know the true meaning of this. But we know that on the mount Peter had gazed upon Jesus. And all the rest had seen him. And he wanted to build a tabernacle there. And spend the time up there. We beheld his glory, the glory as of the begotten of the father.

He pitched his tent by us and he came to live where we lived. He pitched his tent down by the side of my tent. It is the figure of the Arab nation and of one who is going to take the same journey with me, be under the same rule with me. He tabernacles among us. Perhaps many of you have seen the tents down at Nags Head people pitching their tents in order, row after row. This is something of the idea. We are pilgrims in this world. Jesus came and tabernacled, put his tent down by the side of our tent.

Which has its explanation in the religious mystery of the past. That we see the word tabernacle, met sometimes a witness and then sometimes again for the congregation. The tent of (meeting); the tent of (testimony). In the Old Testament we read. But this was the place where God and man met for fellowship. The

tabernacle of meeting was the place God appointed where he met with man. And to which man came to meet with him. It was the tent of testimony. Which did not mean that it was the place where men proclaimed the truth of God but the place where God spoke to men and where men listened.

Now wrote John who had been brought up in that religion, that the word pitched his tent among us. Tabernacled for which we had been waiting. Jesus became at once a tent of (meeting) between God and man. A tent of testimony through which God spoke to man. And he is all we need. Man who pitched his tent among the Galilean fisherman. And looked into his eyes. Truly knew what he was talking about in tabernacling the tent of meeting. Because they found God in Christ as no where else. We cannot find God in nature. We see his goings, we hear the thunder of his power, we see him in the beautiful flowers. But we cannot find him until we find him in Jesus.

Thus the (spirit of Christmas) came in Christ. He pitched his tent by men. With all of his sympathy we found God. And if you take that away, then we've lost God. He tabernacled among us.

Through that life, God spoke so that I might hear. And so that I might understand.

In (Christ) the long, long silence became speech. But in Christ we discover what we've been longing and waiting for. We have never had our needs met but in him every need has been met.

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Resp. R. 36

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Christmas 1931 - Geo. Tomsett

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Meditation "He is Here"

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Resp. R. 38

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revelation that surprises. We have put these into two compartments. We often still speak of the grace of God and the righteousness of God as though they were opposed asunder. They are never separated. They cannot be separated. If there be no severity in God, he is incapable of tenderness.

Why should he be angry for a small thing like that? It is not a small thing to keep a child away from Christ. It is a misunderstanding of God and the child. And the man who misunderstands God and the child is a curse to society. Whoever he is. Jesus was angry because they did not have tenderness toward the children.

We can see great values in ~~the~~ incarnation. As God's grace joined men ~~Jesus~~ man found God. In ~~him~~ man finds himself. It's only in Christ and we cannot underestimate the infinite value of the meaning of the incarnation of the word becoming flesh. ~~EX~~ And dwelling among us.

Christmas Day - Rayford since  
Dec. 25/63 - good attendance.