

John 1:14-18

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Preacher: Pastor Wolski

[0 : 00] and the Jewish people rejected him. They received him not. And therein is really the two choices.

You either receive Jesus Christ or you reject him. And I remember standing on a porch with some young man one time and trying to witness to him, tell him about the Lord, and tell him that he allowed me to go through the whole thing of Jesus Christ and his death and his sins and the whole deal of the gospel.

And it came down to the end, and the guy was just like, you know, maybe another time. Maybe, you know, I'll think about it. And generally I don't, like, push somebody too hard, but this time it just felt right.

I remember saying, listen, you can either receive Jesus Christ or you reject him. That's the two choices. As God sees it, he's offering you eternal life, and he brought somebody to your doorstep to tell you the truth, and you either receive it or you reject it.

And if you reject the free gift of eternal life, you're going to be damned to hell if you die in that state. And it just said that just to shake him up a little bit, and maybe the Lord used it. I don't know.

[1 : 12] But that's it. And the Jews rejected him. But, verse 12 says, as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God. And I pointed out last week that it's in the past tense, the receiving, it's as many as received him.

John writing in the past tense there, referring to the ones that did believe on Christ. But then he says at the end, even to them that believe, present tense, not believed on his name, but that carries forward, and that carries forward into my life and yours.

And verse 13, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And there's the new birth that we talked about last week. And John's the only one that really writes about this stuff.

His gospel is on such a higher plane than the other writers. He's so insistent upon getting the reader to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

And that's what we're going to see over and over again. So we'll pick it up in verse 14. Before we do that, let's pray together and ask God's blessing. And so, God, I thank you that we can come together. I thank you that we have the ability, the health and the freedom and liberties to gather this morning.

[2 : 25] Thank you that you've given us your words. And Lord, we don't deserve to be able to do this. There's others all around this world who've tried to get together, and they're trying even now to get together, and it's not easy.

And some are sneaking around. Some are doing it in secret. Some are probably doing things online. And here we have the liberty just to show up. And so, God, thank you for that. Help us not to take it for granted or take it lightly.

But to give you glory and to take full advantage of it. And then this morning, I ask that you help us to understand the Word of God and understand the teachings in this book and in this chapter.

And help us to see some things and to learn some things and to apply where we can to our lives today. We ask it in Jesus' name. And amen. All right, verse 14.

You see the Word with a capital W again. That takes us back to chapter 1 and verse 1. And you see what we are already discovered that that Word is the second person of the Godhead.

[3 : 25] It's the eternal Word. He's called the Word of life. He's called the Word of God. And we know Him as Jesus. But in the moment, He's not known yet as Jesus.

That name's not yet been revealed. And so, He's the Word. And that God, from verse number 1, the Word was God. That God, in verse 14, the Word was made flesh.

And so, last Sunday, those of you who came back for the doctrines class, you got a pretty good dose of some Bible verses that describe that Jesus is God. And we got some Old Testament stuff. We've got some New Testament things. There were some comparisons to show you that the Lord Jesus Christ is God. And He's God that showed up on earth in the form of a man.

Come to 1 Timothy. This is a verse you ought to know. 1 Timothy chapter 3. It's a mystery.

[4 : 28] And it's a hard thing to really grasp. And the blessed thing is, you're not required to grasp and to describe and to be able to write a 17-page article about this.

You don't need to have an essay. You just need to believe it. That's all you have to do is read the words, believe the words. If you can't explain it, neither can I. We're going to hit something a little later that it's going to be like, you know, the seatbelt sign is going to be on because it's going to be just stuff that you can't really understand.

too well. But 1 Timothy 3 and verse number 16 says, And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh.

Now that's enough to just blow your mind that the Creator, in the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth and then He can manifest Himself in the flesh.

He can be made, the word was made flesh and dwelt among us. We read elsewhere, and I'm not going to take the time this morning to show you where He's of this lineage or of the seed of David or the seed of Abraham and the scriptures throw all of that stuff your way to show you where He came from exactly in the human lineage that He had through Mary.

[5 : 50] It's a mystery that this god, this spirit, can be manifest in flesh and be subject to flesh and to get weary and to get tired and to lay down and sleep and to hunger and to thirst and to sweat and to fast for 40 days and 40 nights and be tempted of the devil.

He's endured some things. He was tempted in all points like as we are and so He's experienced it all. Now that's a mystery. Come back to John 1. The word was made flesh and dwelt among us. It's just wild. But again, you don't have to really explain it. It's just, it is what it is. And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Now, there's two ways to look at this word glory. Glory can refer to brightness. The glory of, there's one glory of the sun, another the moon. There's several, there's a ton of references that describe that kind of glory.

The glory of God did lighten the place, things like that. And John did behold His glory. John, as a matter of fact, in Matthew 17, was with two other apostles taken up to a mount with Jesus Christ.

[7 : 14] And the Lord Jesus Christ was transfigured before them. And His face did shine as the sun. And His garment was white as the light. And so, John beheld with his own eyes the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ.

But I don't know that he's definitely speaking of that brightness when he says, we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. It very well may be, but he could also be describing that it's His greatness, that we viewed His greatness, His power, His divinity.

That is, He's deity. This is the word that's made flesh. And we beheld that He, in fact, is God in the flesh because, take a look at chapter 2, because He manifested forth His glory by doing some supernatural things.

in John chapter 2, in verse number 11, after He turned the water to wine at this wedding, this is the first time. And so, in verse 11, this beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee and manifested forth His glory.

Now, I don't believe He's shining and glowing in the face or His garment changes to white every time that He did a miracle. He's just looking like a normal guy, a man, a Jew.

[8 : 31] But He's manifesting forth His greatness, His power, the divinity, the deity that He is. And so, that could be very well the statement there in verse 14.

We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. There's no other. He's the only begotten of the Father. And we discussed, oh, we discussed early on what I believe that word begotten is and when He was begotten from chapter 1, verse 1, where the word was with God and then He was begotten of the Father.

He came forth from God and we'll probably not have to deal with that again. Full of grace and truth, the verse ends. And He dwelt among us full of grace, full of truth.

And therein again describes the glory of the Father, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. It was something they beheld was His grace.

They beheld His truth. He's going to say a few things about Moses in a little bit in verse 17 and the law coming from Moses and the law wasn't full of grace. It may have been full of truth.

[9 : 45] The law is holy and just but not really full of grace. But the Lord Jesus Christ came with a different spirit about Him and a different means. Look at verse 15 now.

Let's move on. In verse number 15, John bear witness of Him and cried saying, so now John's publicly declaring something to the multitudes, this was He of whom I spake.

He that cometh after me is preferred before me for He was before me. So He's referring to a previous comment that He made saying there's somebody coming after me and He's better than me.

He's preferred before me. He closes that statement saying for He was before me. And there's John testifying to that this man that's coming after Him who technically was born after He was born in time, He was before me and He's God in the flesh.

And so Jesus Christ existed before Bethlehem. John bear witness of Him and cried saying this was He of whom I spake. He that cometh after me is preferred before me for He was before me and of His fullness have all we received and grace for grace.

[10 : 58] Now I don't think this is John the Baptist talking anymore in verse 16. I think this is John the writer that picks up with the word and in verse 16 because John's just repeating a quote of His for He was before me period.

And then the writer continues and says and of His fullness have all we received and grace for grace. Now I know that last three words is a little awkward and I'm going to make some comment on it a little bit that's not going to help you but I'm still going to make some comments.

Of His fullness have all we received. Have you received His fullness of His fullness? If you had to answer that question have I received of His fullness?

John said have we all received and undoubtedly he's referring to those that have received Him from verse 12 and believed on His name. And then he says that you've received of His fullness.

Now you could say in the apostle sense they received power and gifts and they were able to perform signs and wonders and that's recorded and documented. But as it applies to all believers come ahead to Colossians 2 Colossians 2 and the statement is of His fullness have all we received.

[12 : 27] and we could run some scripture here what Paul says takes place when you are born again and the doctrinal things that God through His Spirit accomplishes a work that God does it's extensive it's a great study but we don't have time for that this morning we'll just put it all into one lump and say in verses 9 and 10 for in Him meaning Christ in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily in a man's body dwells all the fullness of the Father the Son and the Holy Ghost and then verse 10 and ye are complete in in in in you should know that word as much as it shows up in Paul's epistles in Him if you're not in Him you're not complete you're incomplete but ye are complete in Him which is the head of all principality and power and then it's going to go on to describe

Him separating you from your sins placing you into the body of Christ and on and on and on so of His fullness have all we received because He is the fullness of the Godhead and you are in Him and so you have received of His righteousness and of His holiness you've received that in the new man you've received His purity in 1 John 3 even as He is pure and that pure seed remains in you and on and on and on and on so verse 16 says and of His fullness have we all received and then this strange phrase and grace for grace now I'm sure that the Calvinist will get excited about that and turn it into something crazy but we're not going to deal with that I printed off something here to read for you and just bear with me but here's a few of the commentators and scholars and what they have to say about this phrase because it is kind of a strange one unless you just are like clued in to the words of God and

His Holy Spirit just expounds that to you it's a weird one and so here's many interpretations of this phrase have been proposed and here's a few that are chief we have received under the gospel grace or favor instead of those granted under the law saying that the law had some grace and maybe you could say some blessings were under the law and we've received in Jesus Christ grace in the place of or in the stead of grace that was there you know if that's the actual interpretation sure is a strange way of saying it without any real indication now he's going to go on to talk about the law in the next verse but if that's what it means feel like it could have been a lot clearer verse number two we are sorry interpretation number two we Christians have received grace answering to or corresponding to that which is in

Jesus Christ meaning we are like him in meekness in humility I don't really think that resonates and speaks to you and tells you why that's grace for grace we have received grace as grace so they change the words of the Bible to make it say something it doesn't say to expound upon it so I'm not even going to bother with that one and the last interpretation is that this is a stylistic writing of Hebrew speech and talk it says that it's simply that we have received through him abundance of grace or favor the Hebrews in expressing the superlative degree of comparison used simply to repeat the word so here grace for grace may just mean much grace superlative favors bestowed on man favors superior to all that have been under the law superior to all other things God can confer on man these favors consist in pardon redemption protection sanctification peace heaven so forth so they're saying it's just a style of John to say something where he's really just saying you got a lot of grace by Jesus

Christ yeah it's true but is that really what it is I don't know okay now that I've probably thoroughly bored you with some of that talk I'm gonna like make it hurt I'm gonna you know just throw salt into this okay we received not New Testament grace under Old Testament grace nor simply grace added to grace but new grace imparted as the former measure of grace had been received and improved to have rely realized and used one measure of grace was to gain a larger measure as it were in exchange for it consequently continuous unintermitted grace the idea of the development of one grace from another is elaborated by Peter and another scholar cites a most interesting parallel from Philo quote wherefore having provided and dispensed the new the first graces before their recipients have waxed wanton through satiety he subsequently bestows different graces in exchange for those and a third supply for the second and ever new ones in exchange for the older I'll give you one more and make you sick the third and final description here the grace replaced by grace means that every grace received is a capacity for higher blessedness thus

[18:24] Christian humility is the condition of divine let me get into character a little bit here is the condition of divine uplifting the knowledge that leads to love is the condition of that higher gnosis that is born of love the faith that accepts mercy blossoms into the joy that is unspeakable and full of glory let's start really transitioning now reconciliation with God becomes itself transformed transformed into active communion with him all union to Christ becomes the abbinger of full identification with him he and us and we and him this is the great principle of the divine kingdom to him that hath shall it be given so did you understand did that teach you what that means I'm just I told you I'm just driving this deeper just to make a point here first of all thank God that you don't sit under that kind of talk week after week after week after week after week when you come to church that would I could never do that I don't know about you but I could not do that it's bad enough you sit under me God help you but to sit under that and never get to a point and just use lofty lingo that doesn't land it doesn't help spew on that it just it's disgusting now I'm going to end up not helping you at all either because I don't know why that word why the words and grace for grace I just don't mix I can't make good sense of it myself one says that

God instituted grace for when grace was necessary meaning it's prophetic of the coming church age which John as he writes this in the past tense he understands that he sees that now where he is and that's a thought that's a possibility but it really doesn't those words don't express that clearly you kind of you really have to dig and read and try to see it a different way so I'm spending a lot of time just to say I don't know what that means and I don't like what anybody else says about it either just gets nonsense after a while verse 17 we'll move on for the law was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ now it sounds like it's a contrast and it is a bit of a contrast with the word but but I don't know that it's a sharp contrast because the law was truth as well you can't say it wasn't it's it was right and and as

I quoted earlier just and holy the law was given by Moses now hold your place here and flip back to Matthew chapter 11 just to make one point in passing Matthew chapter 11 because the law was given by Moses so before Moses was there a law at least was there the law when the Jews were in exit or in Egypt as we've been studying in the book of Exodus were they under the law before Moses gave it which shows up in chapter 19 then 20 and going forward were they remembering the Sabbath day to keep it holy because God sanctified it in creation on the seventh day was there a law what was there a lot of people don't ever consider and answer that question now Matthew chapter 11 let's add a little more to this in verse number 13 for all the prophets and the law prophesied until John

John the Baptist is who Christ is teaching on it's from verse number 11 you see the phrase John the Baptist and in verse 12 same from the days of John the Baptist and so there's a time element right there there's a ministry a calling of a man a prophet that's showing up on the scene in just before Jesus Christ shows up publicly on the scene and what the scripture says was the law was given by Moses and it with along with the prophets under the law prophesied until John and those are divisions that your Bible teaches about the law now the testament is not replaced in John's coming because the testator has not yet died as you're aware of in Hebrews chapter 9 and so it's not been taken out of the way but in the in the preaching and ministry of John he shows up and he starts baptizing people and he creates a big stir look over at Luke chapter 3 Luke chapter 3 when you're reading through your Bible and you get through Matthew Mark Luke and John and you read about the ministry of Jesus Christ you're the law has not been done away and so there's still in a sense under that law and in submission to that law but it's a time period of potential transition meaning they're offering something else the preaching is the kingdom of heaven and as they preach and offer to Israel this kingdom that was promised to them and as their Messiah and King shows up to be their Messiah and King the potential the message laid down in those years was outside of Moses's law it was different and I mean Christ I'm not going to go through this again in the book of Matthew but understand what Christ said there they prophesied until John when John showed up a a opportunity arose a new message was being proclaimed verse number 15 [24 : 44] Luke 3 verse 15 it says and as the people were in expectation and all men mused in their hearts of John whether he were the Christ or not John answered saying unto them and then he tells them I'm there's that reference that we just read from John 1 I indeed baptize you with water but one mightier than I cometh the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy on loose he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire we didn't get to that quite yet but there's John the Baptist saying nope I'm not him but the people were in expectation and not sure about this preacher and his ministry but there's a change happening a transitions happening right in front of them to where they're thinking it's time if he's the Christ then this thing's about ready to go and then the Christ does come and just wasn't the way they expected it to go come back to John chapter 1 so I hope you understand a little bit about the the writings specifically in these gospels some of the material can be confusing most people want to take it and say well it's the New Testament so therefore we apply it to us today and there's a lot of stuff in here you better be careful with that but also understand the law has not been completely done away because the testator has not yet died and 2nd

Corinthians chapter 3 if you need to study that read through there because that New Testament is what it did away the old one and so it hasn't been instituted and that one's kind of ready to come to an end and there's this three and a half year ministry that we study and read and where do we place it it doesn't it's kind of in the Old Testament but it's it's not really supposed to go there it's something different it's it's moving them to a kingdom and what we really do is take that three and a half years not not not strictly like not just dice it out of the Bible and move it there there's overlap there's blending there's application here and there but but over in general what he offers to the kingdom to the Jews is going to be kind of moved on to the future to when the king comes back and when he does set up his kingdom and his throne then all of his teachings all of that stuff he's telling the Jews the kingdom of heaven is likened unto this that and the other it will it will fit like a glove it will be right on the money all right come back to John chapter 1 and verse 17 the law was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ now Moses's ministry was not a ministry of grace was it it's not an attack on Moses it's it's what God dispensed in that moment what God gave him to declare to the people it was the law what did the law do primarily it just showed everybody their guilt it showed them how wrong and ungodly they truly are it was Paul says a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ Jesus Christ didn't show up pre or with the law oh my goodness if he would have brought the law everybody would be condemned even tenfold because he lived above the law as far as he fulfilled the law we don't we'd all be without hope if Jesus Christ came with the law instead he came with grace thank God and he came with truth and he is the truth all right verse number 18 and here's some stuff that's just hard to hard for our brains to handle so we'll just believe it no man hath seen

God at any time the only begotten son which is in the bosom of the father he hath declared him the son hath declared the the God who has never been seen is the statement the the Lord Jesus Christ in being manifest or being made flesh is a declaration of the person of an invisible God come to Hebrews chapter one and see this here Hebrews chapter one no man hath seen God at any time

so just take that to mean connected with scripture that God is invisible and we'll say the father is invisible God is a spirit Hebrews chapter one and it's referring to well verse one starts with God God who at sundry times and a diverse manner spake God spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets hath in these last days spoken unto us how by his son and he's referring back to I believe Matthew Mark Luke John that time when he was made flesh and dwelt among them he spoke to us by his son whom he hath appointed heir of all things by whom also he made the worlds so Jesus Christ is the creator the word all things were made by him verse three who being the and so we did kind of touch in this a little bit earlier in this chapter in John that Christ was begotten or he comes forth from the father and he's manifest in a variety of ways some of which being made flesh as a man and walking on this earth and living and eating and breathing and dying other ways he shows up as a man and he shows up as a man and he shows up as a man and he shows up in a fire and the form of the fourth is like the son of God and so there's multiple times that Jesus Christ manifests himself he is the image of the person of God

I know this is hard to understand but just let's just let the scripture tell us what it can tell us and we'll take it John chapter 1 verse 18 no man hath seen God at any time I didn't quote this verse to you but it's in Colossians 1 Colossians 1 you could write down Colossians 1 15 speaking of the son of God it says who is the image of the invisible God that's a key verse you should write down Colossians 1 15 that Christ is the image Hebrew says the express image of his person you remember when Nebuchadnezzar the king set up an image unto himself and told everybody to fall down and worship him was that image Nebuchadnezzar it was an image of Nebuchadnezzar right Nebuchadnezzar could have been you know 300 miles away but that image was there now Jesus Christ is the image it's not a good analogy but nevertheless get the idea he's the image of God when you see him when there's anything visible it's Christ because he's the image of the invisible God and I know this is hard to comprehend because we're we're human we're trapped in a physical realm like trapped we can't escape this we can't really sense it or detect what else is out there what God made in Colossians he refers to things that he made that are in heaven invisible thrones dominions principalities powers things that we can't even really relate to or connect with it's over our heads literally and that's fine we don't need to be dabbling with that stuff but it exists and just understand if you can or believe that the scripture says God's invisible he's kind of in that realm and yet when he manifests himself into this one it's through Jesus Christ or through the word okay so no man hath seen God at any time the only begotten son as he's begotten of the father and comes forth and then he says this in John 1 18 if this has been enough already it's just going to go a little bit further the only begotten son which is in the bosom of the father

[33 : 48] John's saying this he hath declared him the only begotten son is in the bosom of the father but he's already been begotten well he could be saying he went back into the father but it doesn't seem like from scripture that that takes place till till the end in 1 Corinthians 15 so let's connect this with a few other thoughts and I want to point this out only John says things like what we're covering here look at chapter 3 we're dealing with something that has to do with the nature of God and even though Jesus Christ is manifest as a man he is still God and as God he has and possesses and can enact the nature of God and it's over our heads truly is look at John 3 he's talking to Nicodemus and Nicodemus cannot understand things of spiritual nature being born of the spirit just goes right over his head he's talking about entering his into his mother's womb a second time to be born because that's that's what I understand physical birth but spiritual stuff

I don't understand and so Christ likens it to the wind in verse number 8 to say well you can't really see the wind so you but you know it exists you hear the sound of it you don't know where it's coming from where it's going I mean it's it's wind it's to you with your eyes it's invisible in of itself and so Christ is using something that we do kind of get a a grasp on to illustrate something we don't but then when he comes down in verse 12 he says if I have told you earthly things and you believe not how shall you believe if I tell you of heavenly things because you're not going to understand them at all you're not going to relate to them and so he says this in verse 13 watch this closely and no man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven uh oh even the son of man which is in heaven Nicodemus talking about myself and we're seated together speaking back and forth and I'm in heaven right now is what he told him even the son of man which is present tense in heaven now either you change the words of your Bible to make it say something else because you don't understand that or you just believe what it says that's not all look at chapter 14

John 14 and here's another guy Nick or Philip and Philip struggles to understand some things verse 7 Christ says if ye had known me ye should have known my father also why? because I'm the express image of his person I'm declaring him to you and from henceforth ye know him and have seen him wait a minute no man has seen God at any time and now Christ says but you've seen him Philip saith unto him Lord show us the father and it sufficeth us just show us somewhere wherever he is just you know let us see him open our eyes so we can see the father and look at his response in verse 9 Jesus saith unto him have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me Philip he that hath seen me hath seen the father and how sayest thou then show us the father believest thou not that I am in I am in right now I am in the father the son of man which is in heaven I am in the father and the father in me the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself but the father that dwelleth in me he doeth the works believe me that I am in the father and the father in me now he's not just declaring that I am deity that I am God and before Abraham was I am but he's he's telling him that geographically if we can say it that way I'm standing in front of you but I'm in the father right now I'm in heaven right now John says the only begotten son which is in the bosom of the father one more look at John 17 and notice the present tense again John chapter 17 verse number 24 and he's praying father he's from earth praying father I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am well they are with you where you are they're right there beside you walking to the garden going to the garden of Gethsemane [39 : 09] I pray father that what's he talking about that they be with me where I am that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world he's talking about up in glory with God the father in the bosom of the father and in Christ now this is just kind of stuff I mean I think you understand that you don't understand and that's okay this is what we're what I do with all of this just put this in this category with a big question mark and it's the spiritual nature of God this is what I don't get and I'm not gonna get until I'm like him and I see him as he is and then I think it'll just ah that wasn't so difficult but right now it's very difficult to understand the trinity to understand being two places at once to understand being in a human body and in the father and in heaven at the same time and to say that and to be right and to expect his disciples not to question him on that so there it is

John 1 18 we'll have to stop here that no man hath seen God at any time the only begotten son which is in the bosom of the father he hath declared him so I hope you understand what that verse is talking about some people will say well that's a problem because people saw God Moses got to see God other people other prophets got to be taken up in the spirit and you know see things and so how can it be said if you can't well the answer is God is invisible Jesus Christ the word is God but he is the person of God the image of God that is at times visible and revealed and manifest to man he is declaring or displaying or revealing to humans the father he's kind of that bridge that connects the two so we'll have to stop there I know that was some heavier stuff I really didn't intend to do that too much and we'll probably pick up next week so we can be able to move a little bit quicker but let's take a break there and come back at 10 o'clock