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The Word Incarnate: God's Glorious Self-Revelation in Jesus Christ

1. The Word became flesh:

- and dwelt among us (pitched his tent among us)
- and "we" have seen His glory
 - > glory as of the only Son from the Father (only unique beloved One)
 - > (glory) full of grace and truth (steadfast love and faithfulness)
- Have "we" seen His glory?

2. Jesus Christ is the Word:

- John "testifies" about Him – He who comes after John ranks before John (He is the pre-existing, preeminent One)
- for from His fullness we have all received grace "in place of" grace (grace "replacing, in return for, or upon" grace)
- for the law was given thru Moses, grace & truth came thru Jesus Christ

- the only God who is "in the bosom of" the Father has made known the invisible God ("narrates" God)
- Do you know God the Father, and have you experienced grace & truth, through Jesus Christ His Son?

Excursus: Additional notes on John 1:14-18

Source: ESV Study Bible (© 2008 by Crossway Bibles)

John 1:14 The Word continues the opening words of the prologue in [v. 1](#). **Became flesh** does not mean the Word ceased being God; rather, the Word, who was God, also took on humanity (cf. [Phil. 2:6–7](#)). This is the most amazing event in all of history: the eternal, omnipotent, omnipresent, infinitely holy Son of God took on a human nature and lived among humanity as one who was both God and man at the same time, in one person. **Dwelt among us** means more literally "pitched his tent" (Gk. *skēnoō*), an allusion to God's dwelling among the Israelites in the tabernacle (cf. [Ex. 25:8–9; 33:7](#)). In the past, God had manifested his presence to his people in the tabernacle and the temple. Now God takes up residence among his people in the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ (cf. [John 1:17](#)). Thus, the coming of Christ fulfills the OT symbolism for God's dwelling with man in the tabernacle and the temple. Later, through the Holy Spirit, Christ will make into a temple both the church ([1 Cor. 3:16](#)) and a Christian's body ([1 Cor. 6:19](#)). The references to God's **glory** refer back to OT passages narrating the manifestation of the presence and glory of God in theophanies (appearances of God), the tabernacle, or the temple (e.g., [Ex. 33:22; Num. 14:10; Deut. 5:22](#)). **the only Son from the Father**. Jesus is the "Son of God," not in the sense of being created or born (see [John 1:3](#)), but in the sense of being a Son who is exactly like his Father in all attributes, and in the sense of having a Father-Son relationship with God the Father. The Greek word underlying "only," *monogenēs*, means "one of a kind, unique," as in the case of Isaac, who is called Abraham's "one-of-a-kind" son in [Heb. 11:17](#) (in contrast to Ishmael; cf. [Gen. 22:2, 12, 16](#)). Thus "only" is a better translation than "only begotten" (made familiar through its use in the KJV). On **grace and truth**, see note on [John 1:16–17](#) ...

John 1:16–17 **Grace** indicates God's (unmerited) favor that brings blessing and joy. **Grace and truth** most likely recalls the Hebrew behind the phrase "steadfast love [Hb. *hesed*] and faithfulness [Hb. *'emet*]" in [Ex. 34:6](#) (cf. [Ex. 33:18–19](#)), where the expression refers to God's covenant faithfulness to his people Israel. According to John, God's covenant faithfulness found ultimate expression in his sending of his one-of-a-kind Son, Jesus Christ (see note on [John 1:14](#)). The contrast is not that the Mosaic law was bad and Jesus is good. Rather, both the giving of the law and the coming of Jesus Christ mark decisive events in the history of salvation. In the law, God graciously revealed his character and righteous requirements to the nation of Israel. Jesus, however, marked the final, definitive revelation of God's grace and truth. He was superior to Abraham ([8:53](#)), Jacob ([4:12](#)), and Moses ([5:46–47; cf. 9:28](#)).

John 1:18 **No one has ever seen God**, that is, in a full and complete way (cf. [6:46](#)), but some people did see partial revelations of God in the OT. To see God in Christ would be far better (see [14:6](#)). Some ancient manuscripts say "the only Son" here (see ESV footnote), but the earliest manuscripts say **the only God** (using the same word for "only" as [1:14](#), meaning "unique, one-of-a-kind"). John refers to two different persons here as "God," as he did in [v. 1](#). John concludes the prologue by emphasizing what he taught in [v. 1](#): Jesus as the Word is God, and he has revealed and explained God to humanity.