

**Passage:** John 1:14-18

**Big Idea:** By Grace, God reveals himself and his Grace through Jesus Christ

**Aim:**

**Structure:**

1. 14-15: By Grace, The Word became flesh and dwelt.
2. 16-17: By Grace, We receive a new Grace.
3. 18: By Grace, Jesus Reveals the Father.

- I wonder how do you get to know someone?
  - I knew my cat pretty well. I know that this isn't someone but stay with me!
  - I knew that if I scratched her in the right place, she would purr
  - I knew that if I didn't feed her, she would either stare at me all night or scratch at the door!
  - I knew that if I, accidentally, stood on her tail, she would screech!
  - How do I know these things? Well, I spent 16 years knowing her.
- But what about a person? How do you get to know someone?
- Well you can ask questions and spend time with each other
- But you can only *REALLY* get to know someone if they decide to reveal themselves to you.
- You can only know someone if they open up to you.
- Now I wonder, **can** we know God? Is God knowable?
  - Well yes we can.
  - We can know God because he has revealed himself to us.
  - He has revealed himself through the WORD who is God, who was with God from the very beginning. Everything was made through the word.
  - And today we see that the word became flesh.
  - God revealed himself to us ultimately, in the flesh.
- So to unpack this further we are going to look at three points.
  - By Grace, The Word became Flesh and Dwelt.
  - By Grace, We receive new Grace.

- By Grace, Jesus reveals the Father.
- Firstly
- **By Grace, The Word became flesh and dwelt.**
  - V14 I think is one of the most powerful verses in the bible.
  - This is one of the most powerful sentences in the bible!
    - ‘And the word became flesh.’
  - Let’s remind ourselves of who this ‘word’ is.
    - He was in the beginning
    - He was with God
    - He was God
    - Through him all things were made.
    - He was the light
    - In him was life
  - And this very ‘word’ became human flesh.
  - This is the amazing news:
    - God turned up.
  - I wonder how long you have taken to think about this in your life time?
    - The fact that the son of the creator of the universe became flesh.
    - That he left the glory of heaven to come down to this dirty, messy earth?
  - And notice that he didn’t loose any of his ‘godliness’
    - It’s not like he has a human side and then a God side!
      - He wasn’t transformed or somehow morphed into flesh
    - But rather, he **BECAME** flesh.
    - He is 100% God and 100% human
      - He wasn’t ghostly, he wasn’t a spirit,
      - He is flesh.
  - He had all the qualities of a human
    - He was born
    - He had earthly parents
    - He eventually became tired,
    - He wept
    - He experienced intense anguish
    - When he was put on the cross, he physically died and was pierced, water and blood flowed from his side.

- God showed up.
  - The word **really** became flesh.
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- I like books that have action in them and I've recently been listening to the James Bond series by Ian Fleming.
    - And I've got to say that they seemed quite different from the movie adaptations.
    - There is more backstory and less action.
    - Sometimes I just want to skip to the action!
    - But I've come to learn and enjoy the fact that the backstory just makes the action that much better!
  - And it's the same with these next couple of sentences.
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- John writes that the word dwelt among us
    - This wasn't a quick FIFO g'day by the word!
  - Literally, The word, pitched a tent or tabernacled among us!
    - Now let's rewind our minds back to Exodus.
      - The tabernacle was a tent which God commanded Israel to construct and to put up when they were camping in the desert.
      - It was in this tabernacle that God's presence dwelt.
    - When they left Egypt and were in the desert, the creator of the universe was **literally** living with them!
      - *Exod 40:34 Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 35 Moses could not enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.*
    - God's presence filled the tabernacle
    - So God dwelt with his people.
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- And then we get into Leviticus.
    - If you have ever tried to read the bible from cover to cover, this is where things start to get tough.
    - In Leviticus are all these laws and things that the Israelites have to do.
    - Why?
      - Well because a Holy God was living with them! This is why the Law was given!
      - To show the Israelites how to live with a Holy God.
    - And as we saw last year in Judges, things went downhill pretty quickly.
    - They broke their end of the covenant, the promise between God and Israel, and worshipped other gods

- So much so that the glory and presence of God left the temple and the Babylonians overran the country.
- But this wasn't a hopeless situation!
  - Ezekiel is the book of a prophet who wrote during the time of exile.
    - And even after he describes the departure of the Lord and the exile of the people, there is hope.
    - in Ezekiel 37:27 God says - "My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people."
  - This is the hope even in the deep despair of the exile! And this is hope for the kingdom coming.
- Now what has this all got to do with John?
  - Well this moment has come!!
  - God didn't reject his people!
  - God's promises held!
  - God turned up and God dwelled and tabernacled once again with his people!
  - And we have seen his glory.
- I wonder what's the best thing you have either seen or witness?
  - Something that's left you absolutely gobsmacked?
  - Maybe for some of you it was watching Neil Armstrong step on the moon
    - That leaves me in wonder whenever i see that footage.
  - Maybe it's a breathtaking view at a lookout
  - For me it was watching Australia thrash India on Indian soil in the cricket yesterday!
- But here in John, John tells us that we see so much more amazing and fantastic in Jesus.
- We see God's glory through Jesus.
- Now, it's not like Jesus walked around with a halo over his head or was sparkly, no, but God's glory is revealed in a unique way.
  - We see his glory through his teaching and miracles!
  - Remember when Jesus calmed the storm, the disciples were left thinking 'who is this man?!'
    - They were gobsmacked at seeing his glory!
  - We see his glory in his compassion
  - And we ultimately see his glory through his death and resurrection.
    - His victory over sin and death won for us. His people.
- And what is our response?

- often it's 'oh, isn't that nice' or 'Well that's pretty neat.'
- BUT This news is phenomenal, amazing, terrific!!
- That our God **reveals** himself to us!
- That our God **makes** himself known!
- That our God **loves us** so much that he would **reveal** himself to us in his Son who is God!
- That our God **came down** to call his people back to him!
- That our God **would die** on a shameful cross to take our guilt and shame
- Our response should be to fall down before our great God in awe and worship.
- By Grace, God became flesh and dwelt with us.
- **By Grace, We receive new Grace..**
- So we have established that the word became flesh. So what?
- Well look with me at V16 -
  - Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given.
    - I'm reading from the 2011 Version which is probably more accurate here.
- Jesus was in every way God and in V14 we see that he came from the Father, full of Grace and Truth
- And It's because Jesus is full of grace and truth that we can receive Grace.
  - A grace that's a new type of grace.
- When Jesus came, he brought about a new covenant.
  - Previously, in the old Covenant, there was the Law, referred to as the Torah which are our first five books of the bible.
  - And John describes this as a Grace.
    - Now you may be thinking, well Michael, how is a rule book a Grace? I mean it's just rules that constrain people!
  - Well, it's a grace because it showed the Israelites, how God's people could be in a covenant relationship with him.
  - This law was given by God through Moses.
    - However, the law wasn't sufficient. In fact, the law was a preparation for Christ's coming.
    - It showed how great our sin is compared to what God requires. //
- And now in fulfilment of the law, Grace and Truth came through Jesus Christ.
  - Because of his lovingkindness and the fact that he is full of Grace and Truth, we receive this grace.
    - This grace of the Gospel
  - We receive this grace because The word became flesh and the word dwelt.

- We receive this grace by and through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ - the word became flesh, 100% God and 100% Human.
- We receive this grace not by any good works that we have done!
  - Rather, it's a gracious gift from the creator of the world.
  - That's why it's called GRACE.
  - It's something that we don't deserve
  - It's something that's an amazing gift.
  - Amazing, Unending, Phenomenal, Mind-Bending Grace.
- 9:30AM: As Charles Wesley put it:
  - *He left His Father's throne above*
  - *So free, so infinite His grace—*
  - *Emptied Himself of all but love,*
  - *And bled for Adam's helpless race:*
  - *'Tis mercy all, immense and free,*
  - *For O my God it found out me!*
- SUNDAY NIGHT:
- The fact that God so loved us,
- That he would send his one and only Son, in the flesh.
- To take our sin upon the cross.
- And raise victorious over sin and death.
- So that we can have ever-lasting life.
- **By Grace, Jesus Reveals The Father - V18**
- Now in V18 we see that Jesus reveals the father.
  - I sometimes enjoy listening to biographies of historical figures
  - I was recently listening to a book by an author called Clint Hill.
  - He was in the Secret Service and on the protective detail of then, Jacqueline Kennedy, the wife of John F. Kennedy.
  - And he revealed a lot about the Kennedy family and their holidays and so on.
  - He could only do that, because he was there.
  - He was with the family and so he could reveal those details about the family.
- Now, what or who does Jesus reveal? Well he reveals God himself!
- John reminds us that no one has ever seen God
- Exodus 33:20 says that no one can see God's **face** and live!

- But,
  - There **is** one person who has seen God face to face.
  - There **is** one person who sits at the right hand of the Father
- That is Jesus Christ, his only son!
  - The literal translation of this is that “the only Son, who is God, the one who is from the bosom of the Father, makes him known”
- Jesus has been in the closest relationship with God.
- He has a perfect relationship, not touched or blemished by sin, So, he is the only one who can look upon the Father and live.
- He is the only one who can see God.
- Therefore, he is the *only one who can make God truly known*.
  - Jesus is the one who reveals God the Father.
- Now were the Israelites able to know God before Jesus? In some way, yes!
- But Jesus coming onto this earth is the absolute **climax** of us being able to know God.
- The Author to the Hebrews writes:
  - *Heb 1:1 In the past God spoke to our ancestors [the Israelites] through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.*
- Yes, in the past God did speak through prophets, but now God has stepped onto this earth, making himself fully known!
- Jesus has set forth in accurate detail and told and reported about God.
- And this means that we, sinful humans, can know of our great Father in heaven.
  - About who he is
  - About his character of Justice and Mercy
  - About his unending lovingkindness towards his people
  - About what he is going to do.
- And where do we find all this?
  - In his word! In the bible! In Jesus Christ!
    - Do you **revel** in this?
    - Do you **realise** that in this book, you can find out more about God? The creator of the universe?
    - Do you cherish this?
  - Or, do you take it for granted?
  - And leave this **only** for Sundays?

- In some Christian circles, some people have said that God can't be known.
- That God just can't be limited to a book. That God is just too big and mysterious to ever be known.
  - And I think that's really sad!
  - Is God mysterious? yes.
  - Can God work in extraordinary ways? Yes.
  - Can humans possibly know every single thing about God? No.
- **However,**
  - Will God ever break his word? No.
  - Will God ever do anything that's against what is written in the scriptures? No.
  - How do we know and be sure of all this?
  - Because the word became flesh.

- Graciously, Jesus reveals God and makes him known.
- So that we his people can know God and draw ever closer in their relationship with him.
- It's by grace that Jesus has revealed himself to us.
- It's only by his grace that God sent his Word to become flesh and to dwell with his people
  - The same people that rejected him
  - God still turned up.
- It's only by his grace that we receive grace and truth which came through Jesus
  - Through his merciful death on the cross
- It's only by his Grace that Jesus reveals the Father to us
  - How great is it that our God can be known!
- How great is it that God reveals himself and his amazing grace through Jesus Christ.