



[Pastor Keith GeRue](#)

Sermon for Christmas Day

December 25, 2024

The Word Became Flesh

John 1:1-14

¹ *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

² *He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men.*

⁵ *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

⁶ *There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.*

⁹ *The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.*

¹⁴ *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

In the Name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Christmas is a time when people try to set aside and forget about the problems of life. At least for a day or few. Be merry, not grumpy. Generous, not stingy. It is a time to transcend the ordinary, the everyday, and fly above it all . . . for as long as you can, anyway.

But Christmas, for God, is exactly the opposite. For God it is not a day to try to forget about the problems of this world and life and fly above it all. Christmas is the day when God *came down* into the midst of it all. Into our trials and troubles, struggles and sins, grumpiness and guilt, doubt and death. Because today ***the Word became flesh.***

John's words are "the remedy against our making Christmas too heavenly." It's easy to do. Even with Luke's worldly account of the stable - we transform it into a serene scene, a Silent Night, a baby that doesn't cry, as peaceful a night as there ever was, when the reality was *exactly the opposite*. God was born into a chaotic Bethlehem bursting at the seams with travelers who didn't want to be there but had to be to register for a tax they didn't want to pay. Strangers smelling like sheep burst into His delivery room to see Him - no security guards or doors that you need to be buzzed in. And a bone-tired Mary and Joseph just



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wanted to go home. There, into a real world and real life - your real life - ***the Word became flesh***. God is at home in the world.

Which is as it was meant to be. The God who made the heavens and the earth “was just as much at home in the Garden with Adam as He was in heaven with the angels.”* Until we decided we wanted to be the God of the Garden, but succeeded only in bringing darkness into the world. But the darkness, as John told us today, could not overcome the light. The light ***came into the world and shines in the darkness***, for ***the Word became flesh***.

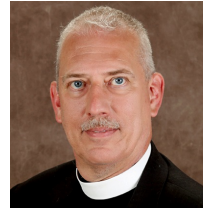
John the Baptist came to point us to Jesus. To show us our sin and show us our Savior. We shouldn't have needed John, but when ***the Word became flesh***, though ***the world was made through Him, we did not know Him***. Our sin-induced spiritual Alzheimer's means we look at Jesus and see only a man, a baby in a manger, a condemned criminal on a cross, like thousands of others had been. But John, the last and greatest prophet, and perhaps, we could say, the first apostle, said no! Not just a man - the Word. ***The Word became flesh***.

But even with John's testimony, some still ***did not receive Him***. They scoffed at such a notion, that God would do such a thing . . . belittling God's love and making Him a standoffish, demanding, angry God.

But *some* believed John, and believing, marveled at God's love for us. That God would be born a son of man so that we could be born as sons of God. ***Born***, as we heard, ***not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God***. God's children, through Jesus, ***the Word made flesh***.

But the Word didn't just become a flesh, as in just a flesh and blood man - He became your flesh and my flesh and all flesh. In becoming flesh, He took the sin of all flesh unto Himself. And with the sin of all the death of all. To say ***the Word became flesh*** is to say that He became sin for us - and not just little sins, but big ones, the worst ones. He became the worst of all sinners by taking the sin of all sinners. And He died the death of all. He died the death of and died for the sin of every person who ever lived, lives now, and will ever live. Your sin and your death, that it be yours no longer, but His. And in its place, give you His forgiveness and His life.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, John says. He didn't just swoop in and swoop out, not really wanting to be here, getting it over as quickly as He could. He ***dwelt among us***. Set up His tent here among us. Lived with us. It's what He *wants* to do. Where He wants to be. *With you*. And so even when He ascended into heaven, said, *lo*



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I am with you always (Matthew 28:20). And not in some mystical, unknowable, omnipresent sort of way - though that is true. The Word is still flesh among us and He comes and feeds us with that Body and Blood He became for us.

And with that, John says, ***we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.***

But this glory not an earthly glory. The glory of God is not in highness, but in becoming low. Is not in being served, but in serving us. The glory of God is ***the Word became flesh***. That the almighty God would do that for you, for sinners, *that's* glorious. And so, every time a person is **baptized**, ***we have seen His glory***. Every time His **absolution** sounds in your ears, ***we have seen His glory***. Every time you eat **His Body and drink His Blood**, ***we have seen His glory***. Every time the **Gospel** is proclaimed, ***we have seen His glory***. The ***glory as of the only Son from the Father***. The glory ***full of grace and truth***. The glory of ***the Word became flesh***.

So today, this Christmas day, we gather here in a place even more humble than where we usually gather, though far greater than where our Lord first came. Yet much stays the same. We confess our sin, we receive His absolution, we hear His Word, we sing of His mighty deeds, and we are fed by Him. Which means His glory is here, and we are filled with grace and truth. For we are filled with Him, ***the Word become flesh***.

Whether we had a good year or a bad year.
Whether Christmas is a disappointment or a joy.
Whether our faith has been strong or weak.
Whether we're healthy or struggling.
Whether rich or poor.
Whether the world thinks us anything or not.
Whether we're praised or persecuted, glorified or vilified.

The Word became flesh where you are. No bidding you climb up to Him, but coming down to you in great meekness. To make His home with you, that your home be with Him.

Or as we will now sing and confess:

The world may hold her wealth and gold;

But thou, my heart, keep Christ as thy true treasure.

To Him hold fast until at last

A crown be thine and honor in full measure (LSB #372 v. 6).

In the Name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen