


JOHN 1:14

CHRISTMAS ACCORDING TO JOHN

“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.”¹

ne can focus on minutiae and fail to see the beauty presented in the story of God’s love. Nevertheless, for a moment think of separating the Christmas story into component parts. If you could place the Christmas event in a test tube, testing its reaction as in a laboratory, what would you discover? If you could dissect this holy season, exposing each component part for careful and minute scrutiny, what do you suppose you would learn?

We are given a perfect revelation of the Living God in the Christian celebration of Christmas; and few writers have done more to reveal the essence of Christmas than has the disciple whom Jesus loved. Though we are not prone to think of John as one of the Scripture writers who provided a detailed account of the advent of our Lord, he nevertheless made a significant contribution to our understanding of that holy event. John details the heart of Christmas in the opening verses of his Gospel. In particular, the verse serving as our text is decidedly a Christmas text which has too long been neglected by both pulpit and pew.

I said I wanted to segregate the Christmas story into component parts in order to examine them; I suggest this with some trepidation. Separating the account in order to understand is fraught with danger if we lose balance. The Word of God presents Jesus as unique—He is fully God, and He is fully man. This presentation of the unique God-Man is almost universally rejected. While we would anticipate that those enmeshed in recognised cults would reject this truth, we are always somewhat startled when we learn that professing Christians reject this truth.

Two significant heresies plaguing the early churches were Docetism and Nestorianism. Tragically, these heresies are still resident among the churches in this day, as problematic as ever despite being answered and rejected soon after they arose. Docetism, among other similar teachings, taught that Jesus is fully God. However, they reject the biblical teaching that He was truly and fully man. Docetism, the term is derived from the Greek term *dokéo*, meaning “to seem” or “to believe,” denied the Incarnation of Jesus. Generally, Docetism taught that Jesus only appeared to have a body. The teaching arose out of the supposition that follows dualism, that the body is inherently evil. Thus, according to this view, God could not take on human flesh as the body is evil and God cannot be associated with evil.

Our text puts the lie to this ancient heresy when John writes, “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us” [JOHN 1:14]. The case for Christ’s presence in human flesh is made stronger still when John writes in his first letter, “By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God” [1 JOHN 4:2, 3]. For the sake of completeness, consider one other statement which John provides believers. Writing in his second letter, John testifies, “Many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist” [2 JOHN 7]. Any teaching that denies Jesus was fully man, or even that depreciates the importance of His humanity, must be considered docetic. God Himself identified with fallen mankind, sacrificing Himself for us.

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Nestorianism is similar to Docetism in that it holds that Jesus is two distinct persons. Nestorianism was named after Nestorius, who served as Patriarch of Constantinople in the Fifth Century A.D. Because of his error, Nestorius was deposed as Patriarch and sent first to Antioch, then to Arabia and finally to Egypt. Though Nestorianism originated in response to the designation of Mary as “Mother of God,” the heart of the argument Nestorius advanced denied that Jesus was very God. Nestorius held that the Christ had two distinct, though loosely associated natures—human and divine. Ultimately, the danger of this teaching was that it denied that God sacrificed Himself for mankind. The Nestorians taught that the man Jesus died on the cross, but that the Christ did not die.

In fairness, Nestorius was struggling to understand how God could become man. He fell into grave error when he attempted to follow his premises to what seemed a logical conclusion. Among questions raised are these. If Jesus was not truly and fully God, if there were two distinct natures that were not combined in Him, then do we have an infinite sacrifice? Who died on the cross? Did a man die, in which case any sacrifice is finite and we have no covering for our sin—at best any covering is finite? Or did God provide Himself as an infinite sacrifice for sinful man?

The author of the Letter to Hebrew Christians has addressed this subject quite clearly. “It was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him” [**HEBREWS 9:23-28**].

Again, the same writer observes, “Every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified” [**HEBREWS 10:11-14**].

This is the reason the prologue to John’s Gospel is vital to the Faith. Though the unique Person of Jesus is presented throughout the Word, John addresses His unique Person in a more direct fashion than do any of the other writers of Scripture. John boldly presents Jesus as very God and as very man. The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved presents in a forthright manner the truth that is too often ignored in modern church life—Jesus is very God is human flesh; Jesus is both perfect man and fully God. There has never been, nor shall there ever be, another God-man.

Thus, as we enter into this Christmas season, each believer should sing, and sing often, of “Immanuel,” “God With Us.” Each individual should have opportunity to hear that God came seeking mankind and that He took upon Himself our nature that He might present Himself as a perfect sacrifice because of our sin. Each individual should be filled with joy in the knowledge that in Christ Jesus, God has provided the way that each individual may have peace with God and the forgiveness of sin.

GOD BECAME MAN is the first thing to be learned from even a casual perusal of the text. In John's words, "The Word became flesh..." With apology neither to unbeliever nor to misguided wannabe scholars—*The Word is God*. Moreover, this Christ from Whom Christians derive their name and to Whom they look is *the Word* of Whom John wrote and is therefore Himself God. We do not say He ceased to be God at His birth; rather, in Him we witness a unique Being—*the God-man*. The Christ was neither man alone divested of all divine attributes nor was He God separated from and aloof from man. We do not see Him revealed as a mere demigod stationed somewhere between man and God; but He is revealed at once both as God and as man. This is the ancient and unceasing declaration which has defined the Christian Faith from earliest days. Without belabouring the point, yet not daring to overlook the need to provide sound instruction in this vital aspect of the Faith, this is the consistent teaching of the written Word. John is bold in attesting this truth that Jesus is very God in human flesh.

I recall one particular series of studies conducted during my time leading to my doctorate. I was working in the laboratory of a brilliant physical biochemist. This gentleman was informed that I had become a follower of the Christ; consequently, he sought to speak with me frequently. Since I was doing work that necessitated long periods of waiting as an ultracentrifuge separated proteins from supernatants, we would engage in philosophical discussions. Not surprisingly, he questioned why I would profess to follow the Christ. However, he set some rather strict ground rules for our discussions—I could not refer to the Gospel of John. His reason for refusing to discuss this Gospel was, in his words, that John believed that Jesus was God. Therefore, he refused to discuss anything that was written by someone who believed Jesus was God.

No Christian should ever shrink from affirming the truth that Jesus was very God. Assuredly, this truth is woven throughout the warp and woof of Scripture. Thus, I did not hesitate to accept Glen's challenge—I was new in the Faith and believed I was appointed by God to accept every challenge. Since that time, the Master has mellowed me, making me somewhat less bombastic; however, at the same time He has increased my confidence in His Word. Throughout the history of the Faith and until this day, men and women have sealed their confidence in Him as very God through giving their lives rather than deny Him. They do this because they know Him and have received life through faith in His Name.

When John wrote, he employed a Greek philosophical concept, introducing readers forthwith to *the Word*. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." [JOHN 1:1]. Whatever else may be said of that stunning statement, it is evident that the individual identified as *the Word* is eternal, for He was "in the beginning." Moreover, *the Word* was intimately associated with and identified with God, for "the Word was with God." That God was *the Word* (for that is the literal translation of John's Greek [*theòs ān ho lógos*]) is evident from this most specific statement which can be translated in no other way.

Despite suffering the assault of religious anarchists (Jehovah's Witnesses) at the doors of their own homes, believers need to know that John's choice of words—deliberately penned without the definite article—is the strongest possible construction for stating qualitatively that *the Word* is God. It is as if He pointedly stated that *the Word* was by nature God. He writes of this One who is identified as very God (*the Word*) that "*the Word* became flesh." The Word burst on the human scene, sharing man's condition of mortality.

Who can fathom such a thought? Who, in their wildest imaginations, could conceive that God would become as one of His creatures? Who could dream that the Living God would make Himself helpless, dependent upon a mother's milk and reliant upon her to care for His every need? In the Christmas story God submitted Himself to the tutelage of a man, learning how to co-ordinate eyes and hands to make such mundane items as yokes and ploughs, and tables and benches. Before salvation was complete God would know what it was to experience exhaustion, thirst, hunger—experiences common to the flesh. God would know what it was to be grieved, to experience rejection, to see unfulfilled longing.

Was not the heart of the Saviour broken over His rejection by Israel, the chosen people? Did He not sorrow at the self-destructive choices of individuals such as the rich young ruler? Did He not weep with Mary and Martha at the cruel invasion of death tearing at the soul of a family and insuring that the survivors felt helpless in the face of that final, relentless assault? Did He not weep over Jerusalem, longing to comfort those within that great city, though the inhabitants would not permit Him to spare them from the consequences of their own wicked choice? This is a mystery of love we can never explain, though we may indeed experience it. We may experience the compassionate love of God as we receive this Christ as Master of life.

There is a marvellous paragraph included in the early verses of the Book of Hebrews. That particular paragraph affords us insight into God's purpose in this act of becoming one with His fallen creation. "Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted" [HEBREWS 2:14-18].

The corollary of that truth is found just a few short verses away. "Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" [HEBREWS 4:14-16]. This, then, is the Christian Faith. At a specific point in time, *the Word*—God—became flesh, fully identifying with man. God became man. That is the marvel of Christmas.

GOD CAME NEAR is the second Christmas truth which John has provided us. We witness this truth when he read, "the Word ... dwelt among us." John's language is expressive in a way that may prove difficult for us to grasp in this day. He says, rather literally, "He tented among us." *Skēnōō*, the Greek word here translated by the English word "dwelt," speaks of living in a tent, or of taking up one's temporary dwelling place. Emphasise in your mind the transient nature of His earthly body during the time of His presence with us and you will have begun to seize the concept presented in John's statement. Christ was not born to remain forever in the form in which He appeared when He came the first time.

What does John's statement have to do with God being approachable and with Him being willing to receive man into His presence? In order to answer this question I must refresh your memories with the details of the way and the places in which God was worshiped under the Old Covenant. Before the Law was given, men worshiped God by approaching Him through sacrifices presented upon an altar. Those altars were situated in places which filled men with awe and with dread. As an example of such a time and such a place, recall the account of when God made His covenant with Abram, we read that "A deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him" [GENESIS 15:12b]. The approach of God is associated with "dreadful and great darkness." When Jacob was visited by the holy angels at Bethel, he "was afraid and said, 'How awesome is this place' [GENESIS 28:17a]! Those places where man would approach the True and Living God were inevitably places of fear and dread—for there the Most High revealed Himself as great and awesome to those approaching to worship.

Then, under the Law, Moses was instructed to build a Tabernacle—a Tent of Meeting where man and God would meet through the intermediacy of a high priest. Though only a rude tent when viewed from the outside, the presence of God sanctified that Tabernacle, making it a place of awe and dread. Within that Tabernacle was the Holy Place, which in turn was separated from the Most Holy Place. The Most Holy Place was where none save the high priest was permitted to go, and he was permitted to enter that Most Holy Place but once a year and then only with the blood of atonement. That innermost sanctuary, lighted by the glory of God and shielded from the gaze of worshipers by the great curtain was a place of mystery and awe. It is significant that whenever God was resident within that Tent of Meeting a cloud stood over the Tabernacle. Those who would come near to God would pass into the cloud, just as Moses had to pass through the thick cloud to come to God on Mount Sinai [see EXODUS 19:16-21]. The approach to God was awesome and terrifying. This was manner of approach to the Lord of Glory, the Living God, when the people would meet with Him in the Tabernacle.

When Solomon built the first Temple, the place where God chose to make His dwelling place, that holy edifice became for worshippers a place which inspired awe and dread, just as the Tabernacle had previously been a place of wonder and mystery for worshippers. Solomon offered up a prayer of dedication, inviting the True and Living God to occupy a building built with human hands, though he confessed that "Heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You" [2 CHRONICLES 6:18]. When Solomon's prayer was finished, "fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. And the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD's house. When all the people of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory of the LORD on the temple, they bowed down with their faces to the ground on the pavement and worshiped" [2 CHRONICLES 7:1-3a]. Wouldn't you fall down? When God reveals His might and power man involuntarily falls in awe.

The Temple rebuilt after the exile was also a place of reverential fear. When the Romans secured Jerusalem during the Jewish revolt, however, first Pompey and then Titus entered into the Most Holy Place to see for themselves what made this place held sacred by the Jews special [Josephus' *Wars of the Jews*, I.VII.6 and VI.IV.7]. In neither instance do we read that these pagan warriors were filled with dread or fear as were ancient worshipers; but then, the glory of God had already withdrawn as it had in an earlier day witnessed by Ezekiel.

Ezekiel writes, “The glory of the LORD went out from the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim. And the cherubim lifted up their wings and mounted up from the earth before my eyes as they went out, with the wheels beside them. And they stood at the entrance of the east gate of the house of the LORD, and the glory of the God of Israel was over them” [EZEKIEL 10:18, 19]. I note that there is but one thing more dreadful than the presence of God—that is when the glory of God has departed that place wherein it once was witnessed.

The glory of God had long before departed the Temple when the Christ was born and God made His dwelling among us. Worship of the Lord God had first slipped and then slid into rite and ritual and routine—mere duties mindlessly performed by specialists trained in religion. The body of Jesus Christ, the Word, became the new localisation of God's presence on earth. When He unveiled His glory, those who worshiped Him were awe-struck, as when He was transfigured [see MATTHEW 17:1-8]. He was the personification of Isaiah's suffering servant, and just as the Tabernacle was undistinguished from the outside, so of Christ it is fair to say,

“He had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
and no beauty that we should desire him.”

[ISAIAH 53:2b].

Though the world could never have realised the magnitude of its unbelief, men who should have been distinguished by wisdom and knowledge of the Holy One rejected the presence of God with man; they even led others to join in their revolt against reason. Earlier in his account of the life and ministry of the Master, John had stated, almost with a note of wonder, that the Word “was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him” [JOHN 1:10]. Of this voluntary and terminal blindness, the Apostle to the Gentiles will observe of the message of grace that we possess, “We impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory” [1 CORINTHIANS 2:7, 8].

There is another, vital, aspect which relates to this great truth that God came near. In the revelation that the Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us is the evidence that is too readily ignored in this day when man exalts himself. The initiative for coming to God lies with Him and not with us. However much man may have longed to approach God, to know God and to be accepted by God, no mere mortal could fulfil such aspirations because sin always intervened to keep us from God. Therefore men and women played a devastating charade in which they went through the motions of seeking to open a way to God when no way was to be found. Some pretended there was no God, and therefore attempted to convince themselves that they were all right just as they were. Like a man falling from the roof of a tall building who shouts in his confidence as he passes the third floor, “Okay so far!” these willingly blind stare in the face of certain judgement and say, “Okay so far!”

Others imagined that God must be like themselves and thought that they could therefore manipulate Him into doing their will. Through the invention of rites or imposition of religious exercises, they pretended they could coerce God into accepting them. They even thought they could perfect themselves, forcing God to receive them. But they died just the same, stepping into eternity without hope and living out their few days without God in the world.

Those startling words spoken by the Lord humble us and remind us that He must be the initiator of our salvation; He said, “No one comes to the Father except through Me” [JOHN 14:6b]. Just as our approach to the Father is dependent upon coming through Christ, so “No one can come to [the Master] unless the Father who sent [Him] draws him” [JOHN 6:44; see also JOHN 12:32]. Let me remind you of a truth, though you already know it very well—it is not that we find God; God finds us. God is not lost; man is lost. Of His mission of rescue, Jesus said, “The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost” [LUKE 19:10]. God through Isaiah stated long years ago,

“I made Myself available to those who did not ask for Me;
I appeared to those who did not look for Me.”

[ISAIAH 65:1a NET BIBLE].

We did not ascend to Heaven, then, to enter into the presence of God; but God, entering the world through the miracle of human birth, approached man that man might be rescued from death and enter into life. Who of us can begin to understand the marvel of divine love demonstrated in the Advent of the Son of God?

GOD REVEALED HIS GLORY is the third great Christmas truth John presents. Because the Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us, we are given a marvellous witness through the senses of the apostles. “We have seen His glory,” says the apostle—a statement reminiscent of that other introduction with which he begins his first letter. In that letter he writes, “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us” [1 JOHN 1:1, 2]. Our translation lacks John’s wonder, though other translations have uniquely captured some of the power and wonder of his opening statement.

In his translation of the New Testament, Eugene Peterson has done a masterful job of communicating the wonder of the Word. He translates those two verses in powerful fashion. Listen, then, as I read those verses from “The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language. “From the very first day, we were there, taking it all in—we heard it with our own ears, saw it with our own eyes, verified it with our own hands. The Word of Life appeared right before our eyes; we saw it happen! And now we’re telling you in most sober prose that what we witnessed was, incredibly, this: The infinite Life of God himself took shape before us.”

J. B. Phillips’ insightful paraphrase of the New Testament provides a delightful excursion into the excitement of the New Testament writings. He opens John’s First Letter in this way. “We are writing to you about something which has always existed yet which we ourselves actually saw and heard: something which we had opportunity to observe closely and even to hold in our hands, and yet, as we know now, was something of the very Word of life himself! For it was life which appeared before us: we saw it, we are eyewitnesses of it, and are now writing to you about it. It was the very life of all ages, the life that has always existed with the Father, which became visible in person to us mortal men. We repeat, we actually saw and heard what we are now writing to you about.”

When John writes, “We have seen His glory,” dare any say we can imagine what he saw? We have the record, but our own senses are dulled. The word John uses [*theáomai*] spoke of watching, as in a theatre. Even hearing the word pronounced conveys something of that idea; *theáomai* sounds something like *theatre*. The thought conveyed through this word is that of careful consideration or contemplation. His choice of wording speaks of spiritual perception arising out of careful physical scrutiny. John is saying quite plainly that he, as well as others, examined in detail the glory of the Word which was revealed. He is providing us with a strong statement both of the veracity of his observations and of the accuracy of his conclusions so that we may share in his certainty. It is as though for a short while, God was under the microscope. It is as though God stood in the laboratory, permitting Himself to be examined by man.

Writing of that time when God stood in man's examining room, three things stood out in the aged apostle's memory. He was impressed by *THE GLORY*. Whenever we speak of the glory of an individual, the thought in our minds is usually that which brings praise or honour to the individual. Since we are examining *the Word*, we can be confident that we are examining that which brings praise and honour to God Himself. In particular, John directs attention to the character of God as revealed in this unique individual, stating that this character revealed through His life was His glory. The glory to which John refers is His presence and His power.

What inspired awe and dread in Abram, in Jacob, in David? Was it not that sense that they were in the presence of One so utterly different from all mankind that He could only be described as *Other*? Indeed there was the sense of might and majesty which suffused His being and the inherent knowledge that He could do as He willed; but it was that knowledge of the radical difference between themselves and Him in whose presence they were that overwhelmed those first disciples. That knowledge drove them to their knees in wonder and marvel. What was it about the transfigured Christ that so confused the disciples when they witnessed His metamorphosis on the Mount? No doubt the brilliance of His person was awe inspiring, as was the knowledge that all power was actually resident in Him. It was not the sudden bursting on their consciousness that this was very God in whose presence they had stood, however; it was His unveiled glory which stunned them into silence or reduced them to incoherent platitudes. “We have seen His glory”; and so have we who know Him and who now worship Him.

John, witnessing God undergoing examination in man's laboratory, was indelibly impressed by *THE UNIQUENESS* of this One. *The Word*, by John's witness, is *monogenès*. Historically, and in older translations especially, this Greek word has been translated “*only begotten*.” The thrust of that word to those first readers was that of *sole*, *only* or *unique*. That is the thought motivating John when he iterates, “We have seen His glory, glory as of the Only Son from the Father.” There has never been nor shall there ever be another like this One and Only Son of God. A few sentences farther we are informed, “No one has ever seen God; the Only God, who is at the Father's side, has made Him known” [JOHN 1:18]. The Only Son has revealed, He has explained, the Father. If you would know the Father, you must know the Son.

Do you ever wonder what God is like? According to John, all you need do to satisfy your wondering is to look at Jesus. John arrived at this conclusion on his own, perhaps when he heard the Master gently rebuke Philip for asking that very thing. “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father” [JOHN 14:9]. This unique being—*the Word*—is strongly identified as God, the One and Only.

The glory and the uniqueness of *the Word* impressed John, compelling him to include these qualities in his list of results resulting from careful examination. But he was also impressed by *THE PERSON* of this unique One, for unlike others whom John knew, He was full of grace and truth. Of all the characterisations which could have been attributed to the God-man, His fullness with grace and truth seem to stand out forcefully in John's mind. Grace, undeserved love, marks God as distinct from man. His mercy is extended without thought of man's abilities, for in contrast to God, man has no ability. His love is not predicated upon any condition man has or may ever attain, for man can never achieve the perfection demanded of Holy God.

Likewise, truth is unique to God. Who among us can state that we have never lived a lie, or that our very life is a statement of truth? We hide behind masks of our own design, carefully crafted to present just the image we think others would want to see or which we wish to present. The lies which rule us press us into the slavery of debt, insuring that we are fruitless in extending the work of God. If we never spoke a lie, we would nevertheless find truth wanting in our lives. Diogenes, the Athenian cynic, wandered the streets of Athens, peering intently into the face of everyone he met in a vain attempt to find one honest man. He would enjoy no greater success in our cities in this present day. Only one man has ever walked the face of this earth whose life was characterised as truth, and that One is the Christ, *the Word*.

The message is nearly complete. God became man, identifying with us in our weakness. In His humility and in His voluntary weakness He made Himself vulnerable, demonstrating that He could be approached and thus issuing an invitation for each of us to come into His presence. Under the microscope of prejudiced examiners He was scrutinised, His words dissected and tested, His actions observed and His motives questioned, and His body even handled.

What was learned when all this had been accomplished and the examination complete? We learned that the glory of His presence need not be confined to that body which walked the dusty roads of Judea two millennia past, for now we discover that the same glory is resident in His Body which is the Church [see **EPHESIANS 3:21**]. We discovered that He is unique—the One and Only Son of God, Himself very God. But that uniqueness is not some esoteric truth confined to knowledge lost long centuries past. The uniqueness of the Son of God is equally true even today. With the Apostles, we testify, “There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other Name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” [**ACTS 4:12**]. In this Christ we have seen the Person of God, full of grace and truth. That is yet our need, grace rather than judgement and truth rather than deceit. That is offered in the Christ of Christmas. This is our message; and this is our Faith. Will you accept Him? Will you believe? Will you be saved? Amen.