

God's Glory Shines in the Word

✦ Eternal Creator (vv.1-14)

✦ Made flesh to live with us (vv.14-18)

In the name of Jesus, the Word of God Incarnate, dear children of the heavenly Father:

One of the things I love most about evolution is that a little child can defeat it. Let me take you back to when my son Joel was a little boy. He only knew one word: *car*. Everything he said was, "Car...car...car..." Not wanting to discourage him, I took him out in the garage and walked around our car pointing out *tires, bumpers, doors, headlights*, etc. After he could say these, other words followed.

Most kids know how to say, "Why...?" Wasn't that one of our favorite words as teens? You could use that word to defeat evolution. Just keep asking, "Why?" "Why did nothing suddenly blow up and become everything?" But the child's question to really beat down the darkness of the humanistic religion known as evolution is this, "What was before that?" What was there before your *Big Bang*? Why did the *Big Bang* bang? What caused the spark? How did nothing blow up? Show me.

There's nothing wrong with wanting to know how things began. But wouldn't it make sense to ask someone who was there? Eventually, you have to take someone's word for it. Will it be the word of man who must return to the dust? Or should we trust an eyewitness? Don't you love the way God takes us back to the very *beginning* in John's Gospel account? **God's Glory Shines in the Word...**

✦ Eternal Creator (vv.1-14)

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³By him everything was made, and not one thing was made without him. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. ⁵The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not grasped it."¹

The Holy Spirit obviously wants us to think about the very first verse of the Bible which is repeated and assumed throughout the rest of the Bible: ***"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."*** You can't go back farther than ***"the beginning."*** And if you ask, "What was there before that?" the answer is always: God. When God spoke, ***the Word*** out of His mouth is explained here as the Second Person of the Trinity. There are only two types of essence: God the Creator and created things. Since ***the Word*** was there ***in the beginning***, and ***all things were made by him and through him***, then we would expect that ***the Word*** is God. We don't have to guess. We don't have to wonder. The Holy Spirit tells us: ***the Word was God***. When God said, ***"Let there be light," the Word*** coming out of God's mouth is the eternal ***Word*** spoken of here. By His ***Word*** God created light to shine.

The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not grasped it. The Holy Spirit's original Greek pictures *darkness* like a wrestler trying to *understand* and *take down* his opponent. But the *darkness* of sin and unbelief can neither *understand* nor *snuff out* the ***light*** which is Christ. One unfaithful pastor found this out the hard way. He did not believe the Bible, but his Alzheimer's patients did. "It's uncanny!" he complained. "They can't remember anything else. But if I just say, 'Our Father,' they go on and say the whole Lord's Prayer!" God's ***Light*** keeps souls alive even after the mind is gone.

"There was a man, sent from God whose name was John. ⁷He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but [he came] as a

¹ Draft translation of John by Pastor Mark A. Cordes for the Wartburg Project.

witness for the light.” This was Jesus’ cousin, John the Baptist. The writer of this Gospel account is also John, but “the disciple Jesus loved” is how he refers to himself. “John” here is John the Baptist.

“The genuine light that enlightens everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to his own, yet his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who did accept him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. ¹³They are not born of blood [descendants], nor of the impulse of the flesh, nor of a husband’s desire, but they are born of God.”

This should give great comfort to all of us in this age of broken families. Our society tries to sugar coat it by calling them “blended families,” but broken hearts and shattered lives hurt. God says, *“I hate divorce,”* and calls it *“violence.”* (Malachi 2:16) Some of us have suffered abandonment or disownment by parents. Painful as the death of a parent can be, there is still honor in their memory. But divorce and abandonment leave scars of discontent and insecurity hidden deep inside. What can heal way down in there? The fact that by faith in Jesus, trusting in *the Word* of God as your Savior and Lord, you have the God-given *right to become* one of God’s children. Your heavenly Father will never disown you, never walk away, never take His eyes off you for even a second. God put His *name* on you. Baptized in the *name* of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, you will always be carried close to God’s heart.

✠ **Made flesh to live with us (vv.14-18)**

“And the Word became flesh and lived among us. We have seen his glory, glory belonging to the one and only Son who came from the Father’s side, full of grace and truth.” Throughout his Gospel account, John the disciple wants us to realize he is an eyewitness of *the Word*. Along with John the Baptist and all the apostles, he will tell us the awesome wonder of what he saw. In eternity before time began and before God created all things by His almighty *Word*, God said, *“You are my Son; today I have become your Father.”* (Hebrews 1:5; Psalm 2:7) He did not say this to any of the angels, only to Jesus.

But how can God the Father make His *glory* clear to us along with abstract ideas like *grace and truth*? God wanted His children to feel His love, so He gave them a calendar through Moses that included the Feast of the Tabernacles. It was a national campout in the Fall of every year. Here he says literally that the Word *“tentled among us.”* And John also uses this Greek word in Revelation to picture how God will live with his family forever. Heaven will be a great vacation living with God in paradise.

This we could not see or know if God did not reveal the mystery. The Greek word for “one and only” also means “one of a kind,” “unique.” In his eternal essence *the Word* is the “only begotten” Son of the Father. *John testified about him. He cried out, “This was the one I spoke about when I said, ‘The one coming after me outranks me because he existed before me.’” ¹⁶Out of his fullness we have all received grace upon grace. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. The one and only God, who is close to the Father’s heart, has made him known.”*

God’s *law* through Moses helps us see where our weaknesses are getting the best of us. When children are disrespectful to God’s representatives in home, church or government, God’s Law shows us our sin. But God’s forgiveness and the power to overcome flows from God’s *grace and truth* revealed by Jesus, the eternal *Word*. Put your heart and soul, your family, marriage and all your relationships in Jesus’ hands. He carries them *close to the Father’s heart*. Jesus’ hands still show the trophy scars of the nails where He shed His blood for you on the cross. By raising Jesus from the dead, the Father expressed His eternal satisfaction with His Son. When God looks at you, He sees only Jesus. So God is satisfied with you because He is satisfied with His Son Jesus. *“Grace upon grace”* keeps coming from Word and sacrament. Look *“in the beginning”* with God the eternal *“Word,”* and realize God says, “I’m just getting started with you. I have blessings and peace to give you for all eternity. Follow *the Word* where **God’s Glory Shines** in the face of Jesus Christ. Amen.