

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Christology, Session 10, Systematics, Incarnation, John 1:1-18

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This is Dr. Robert Peterson in his teaching on Christology. This is session 10, Systematics, Incarnation, John 1:1-18.

We continue our study of the doctrine of Christ.

Having looked at his pre-existence, we move to the glorious doctrine and fundamental doctrine of the incarnation of the eternal Son of God. By incarnation, we mean nothing less than that eternal almighty God became a human being in Jesus of Nazareth. He did so not by super-indwelling an existing human being but by taking a complete human nature to himself.

John 1:1 to 18 is our text, and I would really like to open this up and then to lead the theology out of the passage, which is my understanding of what Christian theology ought to do. John 1:1 to 18 is the prologue in my own understanding of the fourth gospel. I understand chapter 21 to be the epilogue.

Not everybody agrees with me. Everybody agrees John 1:1 to 18 is the prologue. So I see a prologue and an epilogue, and then from 119 through the end of chapter 20 is the body of the fourth gospel.

I see a major break between chapters 12 and 13. That is common to see that as well for a number of reasons. The signs, the seven signs, end in chapter 11 with the resurrection of Lazarus.

There's a shift in the time sayings, and in 12:1, anticipating 13, I'm sorry, in 13:1, flat out it says, Jesus knew his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father. So there, before that, it was largely more complicated, but his time had not yet come. My time has not yet come like that, and now the time has come.

We actually see it at the end of 12 and the beginning of 13. The time comes. And overall, that speaks of his time, as I just read, to die and rise and ascend to the Father.

It's more complicated, but that is another reason for seeing a major break between 12 and 13 in the Gospel of John. Another one is the audience changes. It's the world through 12, and as we saw in 12:36-37, right in there.

Why do I keep forgetting that exact place? Although he had made many signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him. Verse 37, that corresponds to the

purpose statement in 20:30, and 31. They there is the world, especially the Jewish leaders.

But from 13:1, the audience changes. Jesus closes the door of the upper room of the world and then addresses his 12, after a while, minus Judas. After 13:11 disciples had intimate, wonderful teachings that led them, him then, to his cross and empty tomb.

Hence, my outline is John 1:1-18 prologue, John 1:19 through the end of chapter 12, the Book of Signs, it's called, and then 13 through 20, chapters 13-20, the Book of Glory, and then chapter 1, the epilogue. The prologue is justly famous, not only as beautiful literature but as rich, fulsome theological literature. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.

I'm reading from the ESV. He was, in the beginning, with God. All things were made through him.

Without him, was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to the light, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. They believe in Jesus through John.

He was not the light but came to bear witness about the light. The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.

He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but who was born of God. 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. John bore witness about him and cried out; This was he of whom I said, He who comes after me, ranks before me because he was before me. For from his fullness, we have all received grace upon grace.

For the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, the only God, who is at the Father's side. He has made him known.

A rich passage, indeed. First, I'd like to look at the literary context. There is a chiasm here as well.

Remember, regular parallelism follows the pattern where these letters will stand for words and ideas. ABC, ABC, or ABCDE, ABCDE like that. Inverted parallelism or chiasm reverses the second member of the parallel.

So, ABC, CBA. In this case, the pattern is AB, B', A'. A, and these are, first of all, designations of the Son.

He's not called Jesus right away. He's not called Christ immediately. He's called Jesus Christ in verse 17 but not in the first paragraph.

He is first denominated as the Word, the Logos. John did not get this from his contemporary environment. As we'll see in a moment, he is dependent on Genesis 1:1. And there, the Lord God created by speaking.

Here, the Word is personified as the second person of the Trinity, as we will see. But first of all, in the beginning was the Word; the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He, or this one, was in the beginning with God.

The Son isn't called Son, and he's called Word first of all. Then he's called Light. It was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

He came as a witness to bear witness about the Light that all might believe through him. He was not the Light but came to bear witness to the Light. The true Light, which gives Light to everyone, was coming into the world.

The true Light is the Son of God. Although he's not called the Son, he's called the Light. So, here's how the pattern begins.

A, Word, verse 1. Light, at least by verse 7. The imagery of Light is used earlier, but here, it's the person, the Son, the second person who's called Light. Now, if the passage followed regular parallelism, it would go like this. Word, Light, Incarnation in terms of Word, the Word became flesh, then Incarnation in terms of Light.

The true Light came into the world, but it reverses that order. You have Word in verse 1, Light in verse 7, and you don't have Incarnation in terms of Word, but rather, in verse 9, the true Light, which gives Light to everyone, was coming into the world. So, A, B, B prime, Light, and then Light coming into the world, and then A prime in verse 14, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

So, the big pattern is this. Word, Light, Light into the world, 9, Word became flesh, 14. This structure, of course, points to the miracle of the Incarnation.

This is strategic for the Gospel of John because it is explicitly taught only here. It is assumed in many places thereafter. Jesus will say things like, I came from above.

Or, the Father who sent me is greater than all, like that kind of thing. He implies and assumes what here is stated baldly. The Word became flesh, and the true Light came into the world.

Why these designations, Word and Light? John has a number of big pictures of the Son. One of them is that he is the revealer of God. That is exactly what these images show.

We use words to communicate our thoughts. God did the same thing. His Son is the sermon, the Word, the speech, the utterance.

Light illuminates. It shines on things. So we can see and understand.

Oh, the Son is the light of the world. The prologue introduces many of the themes of the fourth Gospel. These themes are then elaborated on later on in the Gospel.

Word is not explicitly referred to again. It appears in 1 John 1 and in Revelation 19, which are by the same author, the Apostle John.

But, the concept of the Word is everywhere in the fourth Gospel. As Jesus says, the words I bring you are not my own. They are the words the Father gave me to speak.

On and on, he talks like that. The light imagery is repeated in chapter 3. But, most extensively it is, pardon the pun, illuminated in chapter 9. Where Jesus, the light of the world, shines on a man born blind. And it does an unprecedented miracle.

He gives him physical sight. That is unheard of, as the blind man himself says. Oh, the passage is so, it's almost humorous.

Because it shows the ignorance and hatred of the leaders, Jewish leaders against Jesus, and, it shows a blind man. I like to think of him as a little fella.

Who, there's no Helen Keller. No Braille, no guide dogs, okay. He knows very little, right?

And, he withstands the leaders of Israel with the truth of who Jesus is. As best as he can see it. As a matter of fact, now he can see.

Although, he never saw Jesus when he was healed. He rather believed. He went and washed in the pool of Siloam.

And was able to see. But then, he couldn't find Jesus. Who found him, which is remarkable.

But Jesus shines on this man. And, he not only gains physical sight. But, more importantly, spiritual sight.

He sees. He gets it. And he testifies to the leaders.

Oh, it's remarkable. You're this man's disciple. We're Moses' disciples.

We don't know where this man is from. We know where Moses is from. You don't know where he's from? It has never been heard of in the history of the world.

That somebody heals a man born blind. This guy healed me. He's obviously from God. You fools. Oh, boy. He didn't say you fools. But, he is ticked. He is not happy. He's defending Jesus.

It is remarkable. He chooses Jesus against his whole identity, religion, and people. His parents are cowed. They're afraid to stand up and say the truth. Oh, we don't know. He's our son.

And, indeed, he was born blind. But, how he can see now, we don't know. He's of age.

Ask him yourself. And, John says, they were afraid that they'd be put out of the synagogue. Because the Pharisees had already decided that.

More formal excommunications followed as the gospel went around the Roman world. But, already, certain synagogues, anyway, were not happy at all with what was going on because of Jesus.

Already, in his earthly ministry, he was raising Cain, causing trouble. And I'll say it again. Because he loved people.

Because he wanted them to see the light. Pardon the pun. It is remarkable.

The chapter ends with tremendous symbolism. I've come into the world, he says, so that the blind might see. And, those who see might become blind.

Well, you could take the first part literally. This blind man now can see. Jesus healed some other blind people.

But wait a minute. Blind Bartimaeus comes to mind. But wait a minute.

He didn't ever blind anybody, did he? Not physically. He didn't. No.

That would be something Paul does later on. Anyway. No, he didn't do that.

So, Jesus is speaking spiritually. As so often in this gospel, he uses physical language to speak of spiritual realities. That is one of the sources of the misunderstanding that continues.

So, he tells the woman at the well that he's got this living water. She hears those words. And, it means to her running water.

She's kind of excited. Where's this spring you're talking about? He's talking about eternal life and the Holy Spirit. It's hard to know which.

Whichever it is, the other is implied—perhaps eternal life, or, perhaps, a spirit.

I really don't know. On and on, it goes like that. On and on, it goes like that.

You must be born again. And, the great teacher of Israel says one of the dumbest things in all of scripture. How can a man, when he's old, enter back into his mother's womb? Duh.

Nicodemus, you're in spiritual kindergarten. You don't understand. Don't you understand, Ezekiel 36? Come on.

37, get with the program. Oh, my word. But Jesus is not mean to him.

But, he confronts him. He gives him what he needs, which is a good scripture lesson on the doctrine of regeneration from Ezekiel 36, especially.

Anyway, Jesus is the light of the world. He's the revealer of the Father. He's the word.

The one through whom God speaks powerfully. Definitively. Authoritatively.

Unlike the scribes and the Pharisees. Another big picture of Jesus, along with being a revealer in the fourth gospel, is he is the giver, the bestower of eternal life. I give my sheep eternal life, and they'll never perish.

Even as the Father gives life and raises the dead, so the Son gives life to whom he wants. I'm the way, the truth, and the life. He's the life giver all over the place.

He demonstrates it. I'm the resurrection and the life, and he raised Lazarus from the dead to show it. Right? Incredible.

And, already here in chapter one, Jesus is the revealer, the word, and the light. And, he is the life-giver. Beaumont and other critics found the background of 1.1.5 in the Greek metaphysical literature.

Wrong. The background is plainly Genesis 1 and 2. My goodness. And, this pre-incarnate Son was the Father's agent in creating all things, verse three.

It's comprehensive language like this. All things were made through him. Without him, was not anything made that was made.

It's comprehensive because it affirms the positive and denies the negative. He made everything. Nothing was made without him.

That's all there is. In him was life. The location of the eternal life.

Zoe is used many times in John. Always of eternal life. The location of eternal life is in the logos, in the pre-incarnate word.

And that life was the light of men. The eternal life resident in the word that was the source of all created life, verse three, was the light, the revelation of God to human beings. That is John 1:4 teaches what theologians call general revelation.

God has revealed himself in the things he has made. Here, the Son, technically the logos, the word, has revealed himself in what he has made. So, here's what John is doing in 1.4. He is saying the pre-incarnate Son, I can't help but refer him that way.

He is that way frequently in John. He revealed God in general revelation as the Father's agent in creation. And the rest of the Gospel of John, he shows, therefore, we should not be surprised that the incarnate word reveals God supernaturally and efficaciously to save men and women who believe in him.

He is qualified to reveal the Father because he revealed the Father before he became a man, likewise with the life-giver. He was the creator of everything.

Nothing was made apart from him. Oh, once again, I see the prepositions. Through him, yes, through him, shows agency.

The Father is the first person. The Son, equal to the Father, is the second person. We get it.

But, the Son does the work of creation. He's God. He was the life-giver to creation before he became a man.

Therefore, oh, my goodness, is he qualified to give eternal life to those who are spiritually dead? Is God qualified to give life? The creator became the creature. And, the life giver of creation is the life giver of the new creation, giving eternal life to everyone who believes in him. The structure of this chiasm, word, light, light coming into the world, word became flesh, points to the incarnation, which is the essential precondition, presupposition, foundation, for the rest of the gospel of John.

The incarnation is foundational. John was not the light. Verse 9, the true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

I want to speak about this translation. It is an accurate translation. The King James Version, for example, says the true light enlightens every man as he's coming into the world.

This has been used in Wesleyan epistemology and theology to teach the Wesleyan doctrine of universal prevenient grace. Indeed, God's grace is prevenient, as St. Augustine argued. That is, people don't get saved apart from the grace of God preceding their faith.

But for Augustine, God's preceding, preparing, prevenient, from the Latin *preveniete*, grace is efficacious, and therefore, it is particular. For our Wesleyan brothers and sisters and friends in Christ, we receive them. We graciously disagree with them on some points.

This is one. Of course, they can believe in their doctrine of universal prevenient grace, which is the glue that holds their theological system together. I understand that.

It enables them to have not a works theology but a faith theology that is grounded in this universal preparing grace of God, which nullifies the effects of original sin. Specifically, in this area, it gives everyone the ability to believe. So, Calvinist theology books talk about inability, and some Wesleyan theology books, some Arminian theology books, and Wesleyan persuasion especially talk about gracious ability.

Well, other passages may teach it. Kindly I say, I don't think so. But this one does not, because it should not be translated that true light gives light to everyone as everyone was coming into the world.

Rather, it is a periphrastic construction, and the NASB, the NIV, and the ESV have it right. That is, the basic thought is this. The true light was coming into the world.

It's a statement of the incarnation. Under light imagery, the world is pictured as dark. And in John's speak, that means ignorant of God.

It means hating God. It means opposed to God. It means sinful.

Am I suggesting a double meaning? I am suggesting the very thing. It speaks both of ignorance and of sin. But the true light was coming into the world.

This is the right translation because then, in verse 10, it says he was in the world. If you translate this way, the true light enlightens every man as every man is coming into the world. You don't have an incarnation in that verse.

But you have the results of it in verse 10. So, logically, it works like this. The true light was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and so forth. Are you with me? But then what does this mean, the true light, which gives light to everyone? Although philosophers, including Calvinist ones, have used this as a proof text of something like Justin's Logos Spermatikos, God giving rationality to everybody, and I don't deny that God does that, but that's not what this is talking about. Rather, it's talking about the incarnate word.

No, rather, the incarnate light. We're mixing metaphors here. The light in the world shone on everyone who came in contact with him.

I just take it as a historical statement. The true light gives light to everyone who saw the signs and heard the words. Chapter 7, the temple police are sent out to rescue Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles.

The temple police come back empty-handed. The Jewish leaders are not happy at all. What is your problem? We sent you to simply arrest this man.

What's going on? No man ever spoke the way this man spoke. The meaning is, he is the light. He brings revelation from God himself.

They don't say it, but the meaning is that we would oppose God in doing this. He is the word. He is the speech, the very revealer of God.

Yes, the structure of the prologue points to the incarnation when it says the true light was coming into the world, and of course, in verse 14, the wonderful teaching, the word became flesh. Oh, Apollinarius is wrong, and Apollinarianism is wrong. To literalize and say it means flesh and not a soul, no.

It is biblical language, flesh for humanness, humanity. That is, if you want to press the psychology of human beings in both body and soul. In other words, the word became flesh and blood human beings, like us in all respects, as the creeds say, apart from sin.

Sin is not a constituent part of humanity. It's an aberration. It's a twisting.

It's a disease that God will heal in the resurrection of the dead, and already heals in part in regeneration, in the regeneration of his people. The word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory. Glory is of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

In both of these statements, the true light was coming into the world, the word became flesh, and we have the teaching of the incarnation of the eternal Son of God. Make no mistake about it: the background of John 1 is Genesis 1. In the beginning is John's pointer back to the first verse in the Bible. In the beginning, the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, it's the same NRK, the same words.

The word here is parallel to, and God said, let there be light, and there was light, and God said, and God said. Here, that speaking of God, and the speaking God himself, is personified. He's the word, the revealer of God, already in creation, let alone when he becomes incarnate.

Light and darkness are used literally in Genesis 1. Here, metaphorically, of the revelation that Christ brings in creation, and the darkness, the opposition to God. ESV has it right. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Has not understood it? Yeah, has not understood it. But in John's gospel, the darkness doesn't try to understand the light. The darkness hates the light.

It wants to snuff out the light, as the exposition of light and darkness themes in chapter 3 demonstrates. Creation, good grief. The subject of Genesis 1 is creation.

The subject here is, at least initially, all things were made through him. Without him was not anything made. That was made.

I understand I'm going against the punctuation in the standard UBS Greek New Testament, but so be it. It has to make sense, and I don't think their punctuation really makes sense. Theological teachings.

The preexistence of the sun is all over the place, as we have previously said. He's the agent of the father in creation. He's the light coming into the world.

He is the logos becoming flesh, and he is the one of whom John says, the one who was before me, he means in birth and human age. Do not miss the fact, this is our current point, that the incarnation is emphasized in this passage in a strategic way

for the message of the fourth gospel. It is not repeated, but rather it is assumed ever after.

And here is the critical foundation. The true light came into the world. The word became a man of flesh and blood.

Verses 9 and 14. Because of that, the passage teaches the humanity of Christ. We see it in 14.

The word became sarx, flesh. It's an earthy word. For Greek metaphysics and Greek philosophy, it's impossible.

No. You can't have God associated with filthy flesh. So later, we'll see views of the virginal conception that try to separate the word from Mary's womb.

They talk about this transmission going on, but no contamination. Because wombs are filthy, and flesh is filthy, sex is filthy, and the human body is filthy to the Greeks. This went in two directions, of course.

Light wild license, or total abstinence from such filthy things. The Bible knows nothing of that. God's the creator.

The body is his creation. Sex is his creation to be used as he has ordained. And wombs, thank God, are where we are conceived.

And the eternal son of God was conceived in the womb of a woman. Thus, if anything, sanctifying womanhood and having a womb. His humanity is also affirmed in verses 14 and 15, when John the Baptist says Jesus came after him.

He means, of course, as we've said, in time, in birth, and in ministry. This is a man. Oh, the disciples knew he was a man.

Good grief. And so, the first thing they said was, how could God be with us? They didn't say that. As a matter of fact, it wasn't until after the resurrection they really understood.

The first thing they said were things like this. What manner of man is this? The winds and the waves obey him. Who is this person, this human person, who teaches us with such authority the demons obey him? But John won most emphatically and repeatedly teaches, when he teaches the incarnation, before and after, the deity of the son of God.

Oh, my word. This is our main passage for the incarnation, not the deity of Christ. That'll be Hebrews 1, in which all five historical proofs of the deity are present.

The only passage I know of that does exactly like that. But this one is filled. As a matter of fact, the gospel of John is filled with the deity of Christ, in chapter after chapter after chapter.

The word was God. Chapter, verse 1, chapter 1:1. "A god" it should be, right? Wrong.

Well, shouldn't it be "a god"? Isn't it the Greek word for God? Theos, without the article? Yes. Well, what makes you translate that "a god"? Well, that's what the Jehovah's Witness New World mistranslation does, right? Right? Aren't they accurate? No. They're so biased against the son of God, they inconsistently translate Theos without the article.

In this chapter, verse 6, there was a man sent from "a god," right? It's the same word, God, without the article. I once had one of these characters trying to talk to me. I had a course in Jehovah's Witness theology, and I could answer everything they said, and they couldn't answer me, and the person was always going to go back and talk to somebody at headquarters.

Boy, it showed me the power of darkness. When I showed him it was the same word without the article. Of course, the Greek endings are different depending on what the relation with the other words is.

And he didn't believe me. That is, he knew zero Greek. I don't pretend to know Japanese, so I don't say I do.

I don't know it. Oh, my word. And how about chapter, verse 12? To all who did receive him who believed in his name he gave the right to become children of a god, right? No, they don't translate that way.

Obviously, it's God there. Obviously, it's God in verse 6. Obviously, to anybody who is not super biased, it is God in verse 1. And as a matter of fact, emphatically so because of the position of the word. It is in that emphatic... I just misspoke.

Excuse me. It could be an emphatic first position. It is not in the emphatic last position.

I'm wrong. And the word was God. A plain, straightforward affirmation of the deity of Christ before the very beginning.

As a matter of fact, even before that. Genesis 1:1. In the beginning, God, right? John 1:1. In the beginning was the word. Wait a minute.

You're putting that word, that logos in the place of Elohim, of God in the first verse of the Bible. You better be careful. Well, he is being careful.

And what he assumes there he explicitly says two clauses later. The word was God. Notice the word was with God.

What's going on here? That language speaks of one person in the presence of another person. There's the rudiments of a binitarian theology here. I think I said in an earlier lecture John customarily, not always not totally consistently, but redemptively historically views the spirit as post-Pentecost.

So usually, we get binitarianism from John, and then we extrapolate and deduce trinitarianism based upon what he says in the farewell discourses and, of course, what is said in other places, especially Paul. The son is God. In him was eternal life.

In some angels was eternal life? I don't think so. Was some angel creator, verse 3? No. Angels are creatures of God.

Oh, the son, the eternal son, becomes a creature in the incarnation, but we're not even talking about that yet. He becomes the creator creature, the God-man. But verses 3 and 4 show that he's the Father's agent in making everything that was created.

He's in the God circle, not the creation circle. In him was life and so forth. Verse 10: He was in the world, and the world was made through him. There it is, creation again.

Get a load of that rejection. He was in the world because the previous verse said the true light was coming into the world, and the world was made through him, and the world did not know him. We have a great high priest at God's right hand who understands rejection in a way no other being in the universe can understand it.

The creator became a creature to offer himself to the covenant people, and they spat in his face, beat him up, and hung him on a cross to die. There's no rejection like that. The creatures crucified their creator.

Oh, I don't want to sound like Jürgen Moltmann. God did not die. God in heaven cannot die.

God became a man so he could die. God cannot die, but mysteriously, the one who died was God. That is, the mystery of the incarnation lends its mysteriousness to the cross.

I refer you to my 20 hours of lectures on Christ's saving work, which are also part of biblicalelearning.org. Again and again, the son is portrayed as God in this passage. By the way this language John himself tells us how to translate. Verse 11: He came on his own, and his own people did not receive him.

In chapter 19, I won't turn there. From the cross Jesus says to John behold your mother and to marry his mother. Jesus dying on the cross fulfills the commandment to honor his parent; presumably, Joseph has passed away by saying woman, behold your son.

Then it says from that day on, he, John, took her into his own things. They don't translate that way. They say into his home.

The exact same expression is right here. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own home because he built it.

The carpenter made the world before he was the carpenter, and his own people did not receive him. That's a good way to translate. His own people, of course, are the Jews the covenant people.

The world is his own handiwork. It's his own home and yet he doesn't belong there in the estimation of his covenant people. Oh how sad.

How stubborn, how stiff-necked Israel is, and all of us are apart from the grace of God. To all who receive him, which is defined as believing in his name. Receiving Christ means nothing else than believing in Christ.

I once did a little course that emphasized the way John communicates faith in the fourth gospel. Half a dozen ways believing in him, believing in his name, receiving him, abiding in him, I forget them all. They all mean the same thing.

Trusting him as Savior and Lord. To all who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. Only God does that.

You say, did John mix his pronouns up? I don't think so. Although 1 John sometimes looks like that. I'm never speaking against Holy Scripture.

I'm just saying. At times, it's hard to understand whether 1 John is speaking of the Father or the Son. I'll just leave it at that.

Here, it's the Son who is the adopter. Everywhere else in Scripture, the Father adopts. Here the Son gives the right to become children of God.

That is a prerogative of God alone. Fourteen, where became flesh, told among us, we have seen his glory. Glory as of the only Son from the Father full of grace and truth.

Grace and truth are divine attributes, just as glory is. John is affirming the deity of the incarnate one. Oh, he became a man.

He became flesh. And he lived among us a short period of time, 33 years. But we saw him; the apostles are speaking as witnesses; we saw his glory.

We saw the brilliance of God in his signs. Already, in chapter 2, it says that. In chapter 11, if only you would believe, didn't I tell you? Is he the glory of God? Poor Mary and Martha.

Lord, his body's going to stink. I love this combination. His body is going to stink.

God, John, the Lord through John, puts in close proximity the stench of human death. At least that's what it should have been, right? With the glory of God revealed in the person and ministry of Jesus. Raising his friend Lazarus from the dead.

The son has the attributes of God. And that's why he is, that's why he outranks John, verse 15 because he was before me, John says. Only God preexisted.

Only God the son preexisted. He is God. For from his fullness, the fullness of the incarnate son, we have all received grace upon grace.

There's a sense that we can give grace to each other, but not this sense. This is saving grace. From the fullness of deity resident in the son incarnate, human beings receive grace on top of grace, on top of grace.

I was writing in today thinking of how patient the Lord Jesus Christ is with me. Forgiving me again and again and again. Loving me, correcting me gently.

May the Lord help us to deal with others as he deals with us. The law was given through Moses. Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

This verse, unfortunately, has been greatly misunderstood. John, it's understandable in a way. John has this one feature of his style is to put in a bald contrast, an absolute contrast that is not really absolute.

So, in chapter 16, twice Jesus says, if I had not done the works among you that no one else did, you would not be guilty of sin. If I had not given the words no one else said, you would not be guilty of sin. I'm actually not sure if it's 14 or 15 or 16.

I'm sorry. I lost it. It's in the farewell discourses.

I'm positive. That's not a literal statement. Jesus is not denying original sin.

He's not saying these people were innocent. But rather, it's his form of overstatement. Sanctified exaggeration or overstatement.

There's a technical term for that. Perhaps it'll come to me. The meaning is, not that they had no sin.

The meaning is that compared to your previous sin, which was substantial, your sin now will be incalculable. The meaning is something like that because greater revelation demands greater faith.

And greater revelation spurned bigger judgment. If I had not done the deeds and the words, I'd combine the sayings among you that no one else did; you would not have sinned the way you do now. Here's the meaning of that.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites. Because I did my signs in your presence, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead.

Surely, they're going to believe. Wrong. That's chapter 11.

Chapter 12, they put the death warrant out for Lazarus. Are you kidding me? He is a walking evidential apologetic. They had to kill him.

They don't succeed unless you're not told that they do. Goodness. There's nothing he can say or do that will bring them to believe.

That's the truth. That is the truth. How sad.

What an indictment on humankind. I'll say it again. John's doctrine of sin is largely unbelief.

We're still exploring the incarnation in the prologue, and we're showing the wonderful sub-doctrines that are communicated along with it. The pre-existence, the deity of Christ, the humanity of Christ. Deity is shown again and again.

Verse 18, no one has ever seen God. The only God who's at the father's side. He has made him known.

It calls the son, as one of those church fathers said, a second God. Making him equal with God. It's a, and we shouldn't use that terminology, but the poor father was groping for language to communicate that this one is God as well.

Of course, it does not threaten monotheism. It's impossible, biblically. John 1:1 and 1:18, in fact, form a large form of bookends.

John begins and ends the prologue by saying the word was God and the only God who's at the father's side has revealed him. We can't miss it. The son pre-incarnate is God.

The son incarnate is God. This is a rich passage. Our point right now is the incarnation of the son of God, and what we're saying is nothing less than this.

Eternal almighty omniscient, omnipotent deity became a baby. I like to encourage, I like over the years to encourage my students at Christmas time to get as close as possible to the smallest baby in their church with mother's permission. Perhaps they'll let you touch a little arm or a little leg with your finger.

Perhaps they'll let you have the baby grab your little finger, how they do that with their little hands, right? In any case, babies are amazing. I love babies and babies turn human beings into ooers and owlers and cooers and the whole deal. That's great, but would you ever think of worshipping that baby for a second? Of course not.

It's absurd. But the shepherds worshipped the baby and later the wise men. They were wise indeed.

Not all those people were wise, but by God's grace, these people were these magi; they worshipped a baby. In that case, in a house. What is going on here? A unique event in the history of the world.

God became a man. Why? For us sinners and our salvation. As the creeds say, we will take up these matters further in our next lecture. But for now, God bless. verses 1-18

This is Dr. Robert Peterson in his teaching on Christology. This is session 10, Systematics, Incarnation, John 1:1-18.