**John 1: 1 - 14.**

And the word became flesh and lived among us,… full of grace and truth.

Each of the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were obviously written by different men, but each were inspired and directed by the Lord. They were written with different specific audiences in mind, but together, they provide 4, complimentary, accounts of the life of Jesus.

John, the son of Zebedee, is the author of the Gospel we heard from today. That very familiar passage, loved by so many and often argued about as to which translation is the best.

John and his brother James are sometimes known as the "Sons of Thunder," most likely for their lively, zealous personalities.

Of the 12 disciples, John, along with James, and Peter formed the inner circle, chosen by Jesus to become his closest companions.

They had the exclusive privilege of witnessing and testifying about events in the life of Jesus that no others were invited to see.

Luke tells us that John was present at the resurrection of Jarius' daughter, and Mark that he was at the transfiguration of Jesus, and in Gethsemane.

John is also the only recorded disciple to be present when Jesus was crucified. He is the one Jesus spoke to from the cross about His mother. He is the one Jesus told to take care of His mother after He was gone. They were close.

John tells us a lot about the life and ministry of Jesus that the other writers do not tell us.

John tells us about the Marriage Feast at Cana of Galilee, of the coming of Nicodemus to Jesus, the woman of Samaria, of the raising of Lazarus, of the way Jesus washed the disciples’ feet.

John paid careful attention to everything going on around him, so he gives us many of the little details the other writers leave out.

When Jesus feeds the 5,000 with the fish and loaves, only John tells us they were barley loaves. When Jesus walked on water and came to the disciples in the middle of the storm, John is the one who tells us they had rowed between 3 and 4 miles when the storm came.

He is the one who tells us there were 6 stone water jars Jesus turned in to wine. Only John tells us about the crown of thorns and how the soldiers gambled for Jesus’ robe.

These are all the memories of a man who was there, who experienced these things first hand.

But in the beginning part of this chapter, John tells about things he did not directly see or know. These are things which could only have been shown to him by the Lord, showed to John so that he could record them for others.

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

These are the words of a man inspired and directed by God to teach us and to help explain to us who Jesus is and where He came from, and how God prepared the way for His arrival.

There was a man sent from God who’s name was John, is a God-directed passage telling us about the forerunner of Jesus, not John the disciple but John the Baptist of course, explaining how through him God paved the way for His arrival.

And in verse 14, John shares more of his God-inspired, but also directly experienced memories.

And the word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen His glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.

Most of us are familiar with the verse John 3: 16, explaining why Jesus came into the world, explaining how the love of God caused Him to send His only begotten Son into the world, to pay the price for our sins, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life.

That is often quoted as the most important verse in the New Testament, many have called chapter 1 verse 14 the 2nd most important verse in the New Testament.

You remember I’m sure, it begins, “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”

This can also translated as he pitched his tent among us. Many of the people of Jesus’s time were nomadic so a tent would be their home, not a stone or brick building, Jesus came for everyone nomad a town dweller, rich or poor, anytime, anywhere. We do not only find him here in church.

Can you imagine the love that drove God to have His only begotten Son, the Creator of all things, leave the glories and majesty of heaven to come and live as a man?

To know the pains, hunger, thirst, heat and cold, heart break and temptations that we know?

But He did, and John was able to spend around 3 years with Him, and took care of His mother after that.

If we could talk with John now we might ask him to tell us, like a good interviewer would, what stood out about the time you spent with Jesus? When you saw His glory displayed, you who notice all of the details, what stood out to you about Jesus?

Here we read what I think would probably be his answer.

We observed His glory, the glory of the One and Only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

We might also ask what was most important thing you personally took from your time with Jesus?

He could be likely to reply, I saw His grace and truth.

Years ago, a large international conference was held of religious leaders and theologians from around the world. In the midst of the conference, a quite heated debate began about what it was that set Christianity apart from other religions.

Some argued that it was God coming in the flesh that set Christianity apart from other religions.

They decided that wasn’t it, because other religions claimed that their gods came to earth to us too.

Some argued that it was love, or sacrifice, or the resurrection, or one thing or another; each idea in turn being shot down.

Finally, C. S. Lewis, the writer and theologian, who had arrived late, walked into the conference and asked what all the noise was about.

When he was told they were discussing what it was that set Christianity apart from all other religions, he said, “That’s easy. It’s grace.”

I can see why he said that, as John brings that message to us so clearly in this passage.

Yes, the thing that sets Christianity apart from every other religion in the world is grace, the “unmerited, unearned, undeserved, favour of God, given freely out of His love.”

That is what Jesus brought to us all.

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

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen His glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.

Let us pray,

Heavenly Father help us to meet your Son, and just as John did, to know your grace and truth on our lives. Amen.