



John 1:14-15: 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.’”)

From Darkness to Light:
1. Don't believe the lie that God is removed and does not care.

Verse 14: “And the Word became flesh...”

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Bruce Milne: *“There is no going back on the incarnation. The act of self humbling on the part of God is irreversible; he is eternally ‘Emmanuel’, God with us. God the Son, without ceasing for a moment to be divine, has united himself a full human nature and become an authentic human person, ‘God with us.’”*

The Word became flesh:

1. You matter to God!

The Word became flesh:

1. You matter to God!

2. Your life/story matters to God!

One more thought...

Whatever darkness you are facing, Jesus can *relate* to your experience.

Hebrews 2:17-18: 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.

Atticus Finch (To Kill a Mockingbird):

“If you can learn a simple trick...you’ll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view...until you climb into his skin and walk around it.”



You must resist the lies that are telling you that God doesn’t care, that God is removed and can’t relate. Christmas tells us that those lies are fundamentally untrue.



From Darkness to Light:

1. Don’t believe the lie that God is removed and does not care.
- 2. In your loneliness, find comfort in knowing that God has come to dwell with you.**



Verse 14: “And the Word became flesh **and dwelt among us...**”



G.K. Chesterton: “There are no words to express the abyss between isolation and having one ally. It may be conceded to the mathematician that four is twice two. But two is not twice one; two is two thousand times one.”



Application:

1. Dwelling and feeling unsafe
2. Dwelling and fear of abandonment
3. Dwelling and our sin



One more thought: **Loneliness vs Solitude**

“Loneliness is inner emptiness. Solitude is inner fulfillment.” - Richard Foster



Henri Nouwen: *“To live a spiritual life we must first find the courage to enter into the desert of our loneliness and to (have God) change it by gentle and persistent efforts into a garden of solitude. The movement from loneliness to solitude, however, is the beginning of any spiritual life because it is the movement from the restless senses to the restful spirit, from the outward-reaching cravings to the inward-reaching search, from the fearful clinging to the fearless play.”*



From Darkness to Light:

1. Don't believe the lie that God is removed and does not care.
2. In your loneliness, find comfort in knowing that God has come to dwell with you.
3. **Whatever darkness you are experiencing, behold the glory of Jesus!**



Verse 14: *“...and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*



The challenge of grasping the meaning of “glory”



The doctrine of God's glory encompasses the greatness, beauty, and perfection of all that He is.

- Paul Tripp



The “grace and truth” of God’s glory

Verse 15: (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.’”)

Augustine: “*He was created of a mother whom He created. He was carried by hands that He formed. He cried in a manger in wordless infancy, He the Word, without whom all human eloquence is mute.*”

Application:

1. Our glory-hunger, glory-dysfunction, and glory-healing

Glory-Dysfunction:

Paul Tripp: *Within the heart of every sinner is a deep and abiding glory dysfunction. Living for the glory of self is more natural to us than acknowledging and living for the glory of God. In our self-deception, we tell ourselves that we really can satisfy our hunger by drinking from dry wells. If we want to solve our glory dysfunction, we have to get to the heart of the dysfunction – which is, in fact, our heart.*

Glory-Healing:

Paul Tripp: *...the reality is that we can't actually solve our own glory dysfunction. Many have tried; none have succeeded on their own. Our only hope is for the God of glory to invade our lives and rescue us. This is why Jesus came to earth, lived righteously on our behalf, died for our dysfunction, then rose again conquering sin and death. ...*

In amazing grace, Jesus willingly came on a glory rescue mission, and because he did, there's hope for us. When we admit to our glory thievery and when we cry out for help for our dysfunction, we can finally be free from the never-satisfying quest for worldly glory and live forever in the light of the satisfying glory of God.



Application:

1. Our glory-hunger, glory-dysfunction, and glory-healing
2. Beholding (Jesus) leads to becoming (like Jesus), even in the darkness.



2 Corinthians 3:18: And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.



(Summary) From Darkness to Light:

1. Don't believe the lie that God is removed and does not care.
2. In your loneliness, find comfort in knowing that God has come to dwell with you.
3. Whatever darkness you are experiencing, behold the glory of Jesus!



Ann Voskamp: *"Whatever the dark of this Advent – our dark wildernesses are not places of hopelessness; wildernesses are places where He who is Hope has a word for you. Deserts are not places where God deserts you, but a place deserted of noise so you can hear the voice of God. Even now, no matter whatever the dark, or the tender heartbreak of the wilderness: in your desert, Hope has not deserted you – Hope has carried you away, so your heart can hear His heart."*

