



CHRISTMAS LESSON 2

The incarnation of the Son of God

JOHN 1:6-18



Jesus became a man so that people can know 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 1:14).

Supporting Truths

1. Jesus is God.
2. Jesus became a man.
3. Jesus came to show us God.
4. Jesus deserves to be received.
5. Those who receive Jesus are God's children.

Objectives

1. List five things about Jesus that are only true about God.
2. Compare John 1:14 to Philippians 2:6–7.
3. Explain that Jesus is the true light, the Word, and the unique Son.
4. State that Israel and the whole world belong to Jesus.
5. Define faith.

STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

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Lesson Summary

Christmas celebrates the day when the eternal Word of God became a human. He was always alive, and He was also shining the light of God's glory into the world. But on that day, He came into the world He had created. Most did not recognize Him or receive Him. But some did. They saw that Jesus wasn't just a man. They saw that He had the full glory of God in Him. When they received Jesus, they received the Father and became His children.

Spotlight on the Gospel

Jesus came as light into a world completely darkened by sin. He came to show us God, in order that we might know God and enter into His family. But only those who receive Jesus will receive life and the knowledge of God. All those who reject the Light, refusing to believe in Jesus' name, will remain in darkness. They do not know God, nor are they known by God as one of His children.



**The pre-existence of the
Son of God**
John 1:1–5



**The incarnation of the
Son of God**
John 1:6–18

Lesson Commentary

Jesus became a man so that people can know God.

The Christmas presents and decorations are nice, but spending the Christmas season with those we love is even better. In fact, the greatest gift of all is a relationship, one that seems too good to be true. If it depended on us, this relationship would be impossible. Fortunately, it doesn't depend on us. At Christmas we can enjoy the greatest relationship of all because the greatest person of all came to us. We can know God personally as our own Father because God Himself broke into our world to make Himself known.

He came to give light (1:6–9)

This was so special that God wanted to make sure people knew it was true (John 1:6–7). He wanted them to **believe**, to be sure, to be convinced, and to put full confidence in the One who was coming. So He sent a **witness**, someone to tell the truth and report the facts. John the Baptist came with God's authority to **testify**, to solemnly speak the truth about the light (1:8).

The light is the Word, the eternal God and the always-living companion of God who created all things (1:1–4). He is the light because He shines with God's glory so that people can see and know God (Ps 27:1; Ezek 1:26–28). He is the “**true** light” because He is the greatest and ultimate of all lights (John 1:9). There are other lights, such as the sun, moon, and stars (Gen 1:16), the lamp in the tabernacle (Exod 35:14), joyful eyes (Prov 15:30), and a king's kind face (16:15). All these lights are real and show a tiny bit of God's goodness. But they are all like shadows

of the real thing. Only the true light perfectly and fully displays God's goodness. He has always been doing this, giving light to every person whether they choose to ignore Him or not (Rom

1:19–20). Every display of God's glory throughout all history comes from Him—and now He was about to personally come into the world!

He came to create life (1:10–13)

The world should be thrilled to receive Him! Not only was He their true light, but He was also their maker (John 1:10a). He had personally created the universe and all the people in it, and He was the One breathing life into all creation (1:3–4). The world owed its life to Him, but the world didn't even recognize Him (1:10b). Something is wrong with the world! At first, the world was perfect (Gen 1:31). But ever since Adam and Eve chose to worship themselves instead of God (3:1–6), the world has become rebellious, ignorant, dark, and blind to the light of God (Rom 1:21). So the world didn't even recognize its Owner (John 1:11a).

The world was dark, but surely Israel would receive Him! Hadn't God chosen Israel as His special people? Hadn't He given them the light of His word (Rom 3:2; 9:4; Ps 119:105)? Although Israel enjoyed a special relationship with God (Exod 19:4–6), they violated the covenant and rejected their God (Isa 65:2–5). So it is not surprising that they also refused to receive their Light, their Creator, and their Owner.

But it is not all bad news. Some do **believe** in Him. They humbly receive Him, want Him, yield to Him, give allegiance to Him, rely upon Him, and let Him come in and have His way with their lives (John 1:12). They believe in His **name**, accepting and trusting Him for all that He has revealed Himself to be. That is a good choice, because the One who has authority over all the world also has authority to give them the greatest gift. He gives them the **right** and **privilege** to enter into God's own family and to enjoy the closest possible relationship with Him.

But how can people, who are so sinful, become children of God, who is so Holy? Only by being completely



THINK ABOUT IT

Believers put all their hope and joy in the light of Jesus (Isa 9:2; 42:6–7; Luke 1:79).



THINK ABOUT IT

“Unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

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changed from the inside out (1:13; 3:3). Physical birth is not enough. The Jews thought they were already children of God because they were descendants of Abraham (8:33; Gen 12:3). But no one can be saved just by being part of a certain family or community (John 8:41–47), for salvation is not something humans make happen by their own ability or desire. Fortunately, the One who created all life in the beginning is able to create new, spiritual, eternal life. After all, He is life in Himself (1:4a). To receive Him is to receive never-ending life.

He came to show the Father (1:14–18)

But how can someone so great become a part of something so small and fading (1:14a)? The **Word** is the One who is eternal, always alive, always with God, is God, created the world, has life in Himself, and shines with unstoppable light (1:1–5). That's who became **flesh**. He became actually and fully human. But why? Because He is the Word. Words communicate. They reveal, just as Scripture is called God's Word because Scripture shows us who God is. That's why the true Word became a human: to let humans see and know God in the greatest way ever (Heb 1:1–2).

This isn't the first time God "dwelt" or literally "lived in a tent" among humans (John 1:14b). Long ago, He lived with Israel in the tabernacle, and Israel saw the shining cloud of His glory (Exod 25:8; 40:34). But even then, God only spoke directly to Moses, and He wrote His word on stone (Exod 33:11; 34:28). It was amazing, but it was small compared to the Word becoming human. Never before had God lived with mankind in such a close and personal way. Never before had He made His glory so visible (John 1:14c). The Word's glory was the glory of the "only Son," the one-of-a-kind person who is exactly like the Father (1:14d). So His glory is the same **glory** that God showed Moses, His goodness that abounds in "steadfast love and faithfulness" (Exod 33:18–19; 34:6). This is exactly the same as the Son's glory full of "grace and truth" (John 1:14e). So when

the Word became human, God's full glory was walking around in the world in a way people could see.

The Son is more glorious than anyone else. He is greater than John the Baptist (1:15). Even though John was older and began his ministry first, the Son

was actually first, both in time and in rank. The Son is also greater than Moses. From the Son comes "grace upon grace," or more literally, one grace "in the place of" another grace (1:16). Long ago God gave the **grace** of the law through Moses (1:17a). The law was a loving gift from God for His people Israel because it illustrated God's holiness (Rom 7:12) and pointed toward greater grace to come (Gal 3:24). This greater grace is Jesus Himself (Eph 1:5–8; 2:7), since He alone lets us know God's full glory (John 1:17b).

So we end where this gospel began (1:1, 18). First, the Word who communicates God to the world is the Son who shows us exactly what the Father is like. No one can see the Father in all of who He is (Exod 33:20), but whoever sees Jesus sees the Father (John 14:9; Col 1:15). Jesus' life tells us the whole story of who God is. Second, the Word who was with God and was God is the Son who is God and is with God. The Son is close to the Father, loves the Father, does the Father's work, and lives for the Father's glory. Yet at the same time, the Son Himself is God in His **nature**, at the core of who He is. This precious Son is the true gift of Christmas. He is God who became a human so that humans could know God as their very own Father.

THINK ABOUT IT

"In these last days he has spoken to us by his son" (Heb 1:2).



Lesson Outline

Jesus became a man so that people can know God.

AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE



Believe in Jesus because . . .

1. Jesus came to save the world (1:6–9).
2. Jesus makes people who believe children of God (1:10–13).
3. Jesus is the Son who lets us know God (1:14–18).

AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE



1. He came to give light (1:6–9).

- John told people to believe in Him (1:6–7).
- John told people He was coming to give light (1:8–9).

2. He came to create life (1:10–13).

- His world did not know Him (1:10).
- His people did not want Him (1:11).
- But those who receive Him are reborn as children of God (1:12–13).

3. He came to show the Father (1:14–18)

- He became a human to show humans God's glory (1:14).
- His glory is exactly the same as God's glory (1:14c–17).
- He is the Son who makes known the Father (1:18).



TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

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Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

1. **Who said Jesus was coming into the world?**
John the Baptist.
2. **If someone believes in Jesus, what does Jesus make them?**
A child of God.
3. **What is another word for believing in Jesus?**
Receiving Jesus. Wanting Him to come and be the boss of your life.
4. **Did Jesus become a man?**
Yes.



Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

1. **What was John the Baptist a witness about?**
The Light—the eternal Light who shows us the Father and gives life.
2. **What was John saying about the light?**
Even though the Light was always living and shining, He was now about to come into the world in a special way.
3. **Why is it so strange that the world did not recognize Him?**
Because He was the One who created the world.
4. **Did His own people Israel receive Him?**
No, they did not.
5. **If your parents are Christians, does that automatically make you a child of God?**
No. Children of God are not born by human desire or ability, but are born of God.
6. **Why did Jesus become a human?**
He became a human so that God could be with humans and humans could be with God.
7. **How is Jesus' glory just like the Father's glory?**
Their glory is full of grace (steadfast love) and truth (faithfulness).
8. **Why do we need the Son to show us the Father?**
Because no one can see the Father for all of who He is.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



ARE YOU MY MOTHER?

Have you ever thought someone was your mommy or daddy, but then you looked up and it was someone else? That happens sometimes. But have you ever looked at your mommy and daddy, and you did not think they were your mommy or daddy? That would be silly! But that's kind of what happened when Jesus was born into the world. He made the world and everything in it, but the people He created did not recognize Him.

DWELT AMONG US

Bring a small tent or camping supplies to class. Have the children ever gone camping and spent the night in a tent? In today's lesson, we're going to learn about Jesus who left heaven in order to come to earth to live with us. He didn't live in an actual tent, but the Bible describes Him living among us like living in a tent. Does anyone know why He "camped" among us? He lived among us in order to show us what God is like.



THE TRUE LIGHT

Jesus is the "true light" because He is the greatest and ultimate light (John 1:9). There are other lights, but they are all like shadows of the real thing. Only the true light perfectly and fully displays God's goodness. Illustrate this truth with various lights. Start with something that gives off a little light (nightlight), and end with something that gives off a lot of light (large spotlight). Jesus is the "true (greatest) light."

CHILDREN OF GOD

Those who receive (believe on) Jesus become "children of God," part of God's family. They are born again, spiritually (John 1:12–13; 3:3). To show what this doesn't mean, bring in some baby clothes, pacifier, bottle, baby food, and bib. Does this verse mean that when we become Christians we become babies again? No! This verse teaches us that all those who receive Jesus by faith are born again spiritually. God gives each believer new, eternal life.



THE ONLY WAY

See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 2.

Materials: Craft sheet, crayons, yarn, tape, scissor, hole punch, construction paper.

Directions: Make two rolls with the construction paper (you can also use two toilet paper rolls) and tape them together to make a binocular. Hole punch the lens of the binoculars. Tape on the sides the two writings. Use a piece of yarn to tie the binoculars around the neck.

The Only Way
See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 2



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AGES 6–8



HELLO: MY NAME IS

Act as if the class has no idea who you are: introduce yourself to the children, write your name on the board, wear a nametag, tell them something about yourself they already know, ask them to give you their names, ask them what you've been learning, etc. Explain that while this activity may seem silly, something similar happens in today's lesson: Jesus comes to earth, to the people He created, but His own people did not recognize Him (John 1:10).

FIRST RESPONDERS

Policemen, firemen, and paramedics are called "first responders" because they are normally the first ones to arrive at an emergency. Whenever there is a problem, they go quickly! Now can you imagine calling 911 when your house is on fire and the fireman telling you to come to the fire station? What about a police man telling you to come to the police station while you're witnessing a crime? No. They do not make you come to them—they go to you! That is what we are going to see in today's lesson: At Christmas Jesus came to us in order to rescue us from our sin. We did not go to Him.



A SECOND BIRTHDAY

Everyone has a birthday, but some people have two birthdays. This is not just another birthday celebration, but a completely separate event that marks the beginning of new life. Do any of the children know what this is? Salvation! Being "born again" spiritually (John 1:13; 3:3). Do any of the children celebrate this birthday?

CAN I GET A WITNESS?

Has someone ever told you something so amazing that it was hard to believe? Did they try and convince you it was real by bringing along a witness: someone else who could prove that what they said was true? John the Baptist was a witness. God sent John the Baptist to prove that we can have a relationship with Him through His Son, Jesus (John 1:6–7).

*The Word Became Flesh
See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 2*



THE WORD BECAME FLESH

See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 2.

Materials: Craft sheets, crayon, yarn, tape, scissors.

Directions: Color the images. Cut the word image. Make a hole where indicated in the craft page and pass a yarn through them so that it can slide easily. Cut the dotted line so that the "word" can pass through it.



AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

WORTH A 1,000 WORDS

Describe a famous landmark (Golden Gate Bridge, Grand Canyon, Mount Rushmore, etc.) using nothing but your words. Can any of the children guess what you're describing? After describing the object, show the children a picture (or video footage). Which provides a better description: your words or the picture? The picture! In today's lesson, we're going to learn that Jesus came to earth to show us God. There were descriptions of God in the past (Old Testament), but Jesus provides the best picture of who God is and what He is like. In fact, Jesus isn't a picture (representation)—He's something much greater. Jesus is God Himself!

DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?

Show the children pictures of some well-known people, both historical and contemporary. Can the children identify them? Make sure the last picture is someone all or most of the children will immediately recognize. Explain that if this person were to walk into class today, the children would have no problem identifying who they are. Yet in today's lesson, we're going to learn about someone much more recognizable who came to His own but His own did not recognize Him (John 1:10).



ILLUSTRATE

BELIEVE IN HIS NAME

The name of Jesus represents all that He has revealed Himself to be. Illustrate this by having the children take turns saying the names of different children in the class. After they say each name, say some positive, encouraging things you know about this name (child) through your experience with them in class. Explain that their name represents who they are.

TO ALL WHO RECEIVE HIM

Ask the children to imagine a person that has just been bitten by a rattlesnake. Without an injection of anti-venom they will surely die. They are rushed to a nearby hospital and overjoyed to learn that it just happens to have the exact anti-venom they need to live! However, instead of injecting the anti-venom into their body, they simply hold the vial in their hands while their life slowly fades away. What's the problem? They never truly received the anti-venom. Now ask the children to imagine a person who lives their whole life with access to the Bible but never receives Jesus as their Lord and Savior. To receive Jesus is to believe in Him, allowing Him full and complete access and ownership of our lives (John 1:12).



APPLY

CHRISTMAS IN A WORD

Ask the children to come up with as many one-word descriptions of Christmas as they can. Explain that these words must be related to the Christmas of the Bible. As they share, take a moment to talk about how each word describes something about Christmas. After the children have shared their words, ask them what they think is the best one-word description of Christmas. Here's a hint: open your Bibles and read Philippians 2:6–7 together. Do the children know it yet? One of the best one-word descriptions of Christmas is the word "humility." Do the children know why? At Christmas, Jesus, the Creator of the world, entered His creation as a baby in order to save those who had sinned against Him. He became a human so that humans could know God as their very own Father.