“What Child Is This?”
JOHN 1:1-14 (NKJV)

Please turn with me in your Bibles to our scripture text in the Gospel of John, chapter one.

John 1:1-14 (NKJV)

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

2 He was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. John’s Witness: The True Light

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.
12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

PRAYER

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INTRODUCTION

I love Christmas music, don’t you?

“Away in A Manger”
“Joy To The World”
“Silent Night”
“O Holy Night”
“Carol of The Bells”

And the list just goes on and on. But I think one of my favorite Christmas carols of all is “What Child Is This?”

What Child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary’s lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping. This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing. Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the son of Mary.

What Child Is This? John answers this very important question for us here in the opening verses of his gospel.

Normally when we think of the passages of scripture that tell us the Christmas story we think of Matthew chapters one and two, and Luke chapter 2.
These scriptures tell us about Joseph and Mary and the Christ child. They tell us about Bethlehem and the shepherds and the angels. They tell us about the Wise Men and the star, and the gold, frankincense and myrrh.

John doesn’t mention any of these things: NO shepherds…..NO angels…….NO Bethlehem……NO manger……..NO Joseph or Mary or baby Jesus.

And yet John’s account presents for us “the BIG picture” of Christmas. This is Christmas from God’s vantage point. This is Christmas from an eternal perspective, which helps us to understand Matthew and Luke’s accounts even better.

In these first fourteen verses of JOHN 1, John provides us with FIVE WONDERFUL IMAGES of the Incarnate Christ.

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WHAT CHILD IS THIS? First of all John tells us……..

I. He Is CHRIST, THE ETERNAL ONE (vs. 1-3)

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

2. He was in the beginning with God.

3. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

1. Notice John begins with the words, “In the beginning.” What beginning? The only beginning we know. The beginning of CREATION.

   Genesis 1:1 says, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”
2. The beginning of creation was NOT the beginning of CHRIST.

   *Before there was a heavens and earth, there was CHRIST!

   *Before there was a sun....moon....or stars, there was CHRIST!

   *Before there was a DAY or NIGHT.......before there was DRY LAND and SEAS......before there were animals and plans or even human beings, there was CHRIST!

3. Bethlehem was NOT the beginning of Christ for Christ is THE ETERNAL ONE!

   “In the beginning was THE WORD (Christ) and THE WORD WAS WITH GOD and THE WORD WAS GOD!

   CHRIST WAS IN THE BEGINNING WITH GOD!

4. John goes on to tell us in VERSE 3, “All things were made by through Him........THROUGH WHOM?......through CHRIST, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” Now think about that! That means........

   CHRIST created THE DONKEY upon which His mother would ride from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

   CHRIST created THE TREES to provide the lumber to build a manger in which He would lay.

   CHRIST created THE ANGELS who would announce His glorious birth.
CHRIST created **THE WHEAT** from which the straw would be gathered to lay Him in the night He was born.

CHRIST created **THE FLAX** from which the strips of linen would be made to wrap around His newborn body.

CHRIST created **THE STAR** which would guide the Wise Men to the house where He was staying about a year or two after His birth.

What Child Is This? He is **CHRIST, THE ETERNAL ONE!**

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WHAT CHILD IS THIS? Next John tells us........

II. **He is CHRIST, THE REVEALED ONE** (vs. 4-5)

4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

1. Jesus was and is God’s revelation of Himself to mankind.

2. Jesus is so incredibly awesome, so far beyond our human understanding, John describes Him as “light.”

   “And the light shines in the darkness.”

What is this “darkness” John is talking about? The “darkness” is our world, the world of humanity, the world that is blanketed in the darkness of sin.

It is a dark world inhabited by demons, a world that is dominated by Satan.
3. Light a match or a small candle in a huge dark room and that light will shine brilliantly in the darkness.

Look up into a dark sky at night and you will see the flashing lights of a jet flying 30,000-40,000 feet overhead.

Look out across the countryside on a dark night and you will see the security lights at homes five miles away from your house.

4. Light overcomes darkness. Imagine how brilliantly Jesus Christ, “heaven’s perfect light” shone in the darkness of this sinful world.

**WHAT CHILD IS THIS?  HE IS CHRIST, THE ETERNAL ONE!**

**WHAT CHILD IS THIS?  HE IS CHRIST, THE REVEALED ONE!**

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**What Child Is This?** Thirdly, John tells us.......

III. **He Is CHRIST, THE PROMISED ONE (vs. 6-9)**

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

1. Throughout the Old Testament many prophets foretold the coming of the Messiah. But then came a 400 year period of absolute silence. A period in which God raised up NO PROPHETS or gave any PROPHETIC MESSAGES.
2. We have come to know these 400 years of silence as the “intertestamental period.” The period between the end of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament.

3. After those 400 years of silence, God raised up a man named John the Baptist, whose primary mission in life was to announce the coming of THE PROMISED ONE......the coming of THE LIVING WORD......THE LIFE OF MEN......THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD......THE MESSIAH......THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD!

WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

He is CHRIST, THE ETERNAL ONE!
He is CHRIST, THE REVEALED ONE!
He is CHRIST, THE PROMISED ONE!

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WHAT CHILD IS THIS? Fourthly, John tells us......

IV. He is CHRIST, THE REJECTED ONE (vs. 10, 11)

10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

1. “He came to His own” can be interpreted two ways:

*Generally speaking, it refers to Christ coming into the world in which He created. As the Creator, all of creation is “his own.” He owns it, he possesses it, it belongs to Him.

*But more specifically, “He came to His own” refers to the Jewish people. Matthew’s gospel begins with the genealogy of Jesus, tracing His bloodline all the way back to ABRAHAM, the Father of the Jewish people.
2. Throughout their history, THE JEWS were the ones who were God’s chosen people. They were the ones who were given the Tabernacle and the Temple. They were the ones who were given the Law of Moses. They were the ones who had received the words of the prophets regarding the coming Messiah.

3. And yet John tells us, “He came to His own, His own people, the Jewish people, and they did not receive Him.

4. The Jews REJECTED Christ. They REJECTED Him as their Messiah. They REJECTED Him as their Savior.

   But it was because of that rejection, the door to salvation was opened to you and me.

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

He is CHRIST, THE ETERNAL ONE!
He is CHRIST, THE REVEALED ONE!
He is CHRIST, THE PROMISED ONE!
He is CHRIST, THE REJECTED ONE!

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WHAT CHILD IS THIS? John tells us fifthly.......
I. He Is CHRIST, THE GLORIOUS ONE (v. 14)

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

ILLUSTRATION: Long ago there lived a wise and good Persian king. He loved his people. He wanted to know how they lived. He wanted to know all about the hardships they faced. Often the King dressed in the clothes of a working man or a beggar and went to the homes of the poor.

No one he ever visited would have thought he was their ruler. One time the king visited a very poor man who lived in a cold damp cellar. He ate the meager food the poor man ate. He spoke kind words to him. And then he left.

Later he visited the poor man again and disclosed his true identity. He said, “I am your king!” The king thought the poor man would surely ask for some money or a gift, but he didn’t.

The poor man simply said, “You left your palace and your glory to visit me in this dark, dreary place. You ate the meager food I ate. You brought joy and gladness to my heart! To others you have given the gift of your riches. To me, you have given the gift of yourself.”

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

- He descended that we might ascend (John 6:38, 14:3).
- He became poor that we might become rich (2 Cor. 8:9, James 2:5).
- He was born that we might be born again (John 1:14, 3:2,7).
- He became a servant that we might become sons (Phil. 2:7).
- He had no home that we might have a home in heaven (John 14:2).
- He was hungry that we might be fed (Matt. 4:2- John 6:50).
- He was thirsty that we might be satisfied (John 19:26).
- He was stripped that we might be clothed (Matt. 27:28; Gal. 3:27).
- He was forsaken that we might not be forsaken (Matt. 28:20).
- He was sad that we might become glad (Isa. 53:3; Phil. 4:4).
- He was bound that we might go free (Matt. 27:2- John 8:32-36).
- He was made sin that we might be made righteous (1 Cor. 5:21).
- He died that we might live (John 5:24-25).
- He came down that we might be caught up (I Thess. 4:16, 17).
CONCLUSION

Why did Jesus take off His robe and lay aside His crown and leave the splendor of heaven to become a man?

Couldn’t God have just sent an angel or someone else?

Couldn’t Jesus have come to earth as a full-grown man instead of starting as a tiny little embryo in Mary’s womb? Couldn’t He have just skipped the swaddling clothes, the manger and the whole Bethlehem scene?

In short, NO! In order for Christ to fully understand our lives completely He had to experience it from birth to death just like we do. He had to experience our weaknesses, our fears, our frustrations, our hunger, our thirst, our fatigue, our disappointments, and our temptations.

Think what that means to you and me personally. That means, except for sin, there is nothing you or I have experienced or are currently experiencing, that Christ Himself has not experienced.

From stubbed toes……scraped knees……and cut fingers…… to the loneliness felt by you who are widowed and the grief felt by you have recently lost loved ones, CHRIST IS YOUR SAVIOR WHO UNDERSTANDS HOW YOU FEEL, BECAUSE HE’S BEEN IN YOUR SHOES.

What Child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary’s lap is sleeping? Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping. This, this is Christ the King.........THE ETERNAL ONE.....THE REVEALED ONE.......THE PROMISED ONE.......THE REJECTED ONE.......THE GLORIOUS ONE!

And the WORD became FLESH and dwelled among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth!