

Xmas Day 2019
John 1

¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 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 have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

In the Name of Jesus.

‘He is a Servant—I a lord! How great a mystery!’

Edgier language it is hard to find. Of course, the Gospel According to Saint John is full of such language! Let us now REVEL!

‘He who believes in me, though He die, yet shall He live. And whosoever lives and believes in me shall never die.’

‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life!’

‘If you have seen ME, Y’ALL HAVE SEEN...the FATHER!’

‘Unless you eat of the flesh of the Son of Man and drink of His blood, you shall not have life within you.’

‘Anyone who comes to me I will in no way cast out. For I have NOT come to do my OWN will, but the will of Him Who sent me.’

‘I am the light of the world.’

‘Go and tell my disciples, I ascend to My Father and to your Father, to My God and to your God!’

‘No one takes my life from Me. I lay it down and I take it up again.’

‘It is finished.’

When are there TOO MANY gifts to unwrap at Christmas?!

Let us, my dear ones, focus on two: ‘born of God, NOT by man’s efforts, etc.’; ‘The Word became flesh....’

By ‘Flesh,’ the Spirit of Jesus means BOTH—what WE can grab hold of, consider, figure out kind-of what we are, what we feel, what we think....AND, ‘FLESH’ means, says the Holy Spirit everything WE are, that HE AIN’T....What HE is and what WE cannot be....

Bear with your poor pastor—WHO? Is sufficient to proclaim this wonder?!

Not only are you and I EASILY, daily and much, DIS-APPOINTED BY OTHERS—

God doesn’t come out too well in our satisfaction survey either, does He?!

WE don’t even KNOW God—though we make up lots of gods, daily and much, which CANNOT satisfy us, but we are fooled to think they will.

But there IS SATISFACTION, FULFILLMENT, ‘ENOUGH-NESS,’—MORE than ‘ENOUGH-NESS...’ In a word: the Word!

He made us—fearfully, wondrously! AND...He came to us; even to His own, special people Israel.

But, still, no good! No matter HOW MUCH special care He showers on one nation, or on all—WE DON'T 'GET HIM!'

Merry Christmas!

Don't YOU worry about 'GETTING' God: getting on His side, getting lined up with Him, getting with His program—

The LAW came through Moses! But it is Christmas and we ain't TALKIN' 'bout MOSES!

Christmas is God devoted to what God ain't: flesh; blood too; and all the nightmare possible there, here.

But HE is here! 'And dwelt among us. And WE have seen His glory, the glory as of the One Where God IS, He IS, where HE IS, God IS....'

And what you can COUNT ON with the God-Man, Man-God, Flesh-Spirit, Spirit-Flesh, Word-Deed, Deed-Word—IT IS ACCOMPLISHED!....

What you can COUNT ON with HIM, is that HE will never COUNT ON YOU AGAIN! Or me. Or the world. Whoever....

THIS is what makes us, as the apostle Paul writes, 'ZEALOUS for good works!' NOT driven to good works. NOT OBLIGATED to goodness. NOT, 'You better be GOOD, for GOODNESS' SAKE!'

No. Since HE is the Servant, I the lord—He's gonna lay out each step today, guide it, forgive where I make up gods, even teach me that people are flesh, like God; they are NOT things, NOR are they gods!

And when the day is done, THE WORD from Above, from our Foundation, from forever to forever, through life and then stomping on death---

The Word is this: The Father no one has seen or even can see is counting on....One Man. And, in Him, we see the Father!

Flesh scares me, my dear Christian friends. People terrify me. Part of it is a psychological misfire, that the doctors are working on. 'Center—feel—think, not overthink—work with what you feel...' A lot of work.

But there's a spookiness about men—all men—that no therapy can assuage.

You and I count on flesh: family, spouse, child, parent, friend, fellow Christian, pastor! And how often, leaning there for support, do we not only find no crutch, no rail...but nothing?

The Word was made flesh... Glory to God in the highest!

WE still get STUCK on disappointments in the flesh....

God got over that long ago; in terms of the flesh, some two thousand years ago. Inside Himself, God was set on this from since He signed up to BE God! But thinking way back like that is beyond you flesh and blood and brain cells! The Spirit anchors us: in Bethlehem, in Judea, in the manger, at the Virgin's breast, nursing; on the cross, dying; in the tomb, dead; NOT in the tomb—He is not THERE! Speaking with Mary, ascending to make God and Flesh at Peace for good!

Meaning....my dear ones. DO...NOT...RUN...FROM...
...FLESH!

And DO...NOT...FEAR...THOSE...WHO WANT YOU TO
RUN FROM HIS Flesh; and His Flesh and Blood gifts!

BE the ANTI-GOD, anti-Spirit, anti-Holy that you are! I don't
really need to tell you to try, do I? Embrace FLESH, despite your
fears. Look in the mirror, step on the scale, listen to a recording of
yourself—Fear Not!

But...rejoice in HIS flesh! And blood!

His Spirit is for-certain with us where His words are: written by
flesh, read by flesh, proclaimed by flesh...

God is for-certain bearing with us, where God Who is NOT flesh
and blood, tells us that hearing the PLEDGE THAT He...IS...flesh
and blood—for good now!—is the only hope we need—

So we can IGNORE...EVERY...VOICE....

That tells us GOD is counting on us; or that WE needs to count on
us....

The Creator is One Thing; Creation is another. But since we've
decided to worship Creation instead of the Creator, we've left Him
little choice, but to tie HIMSELF to...what He has created; good,
turned bad.

Water that can drown; but which makes alive.

Bread that can choke us; but which now makes God happy!

Wine which causes so much damage; but which now brings the cross and completion to each drinking mouth..

Men. Words. Flesh. Blood.

I'm so happy to be a Lutheran when this type of thing comes clear, even to me:

At the end of your day; at the end of your rope; at the analysis of despair, the Word made Flesh just wants you to answer one question: Are you still someone God CANNOT...COUNT...ON????!!!!

'Oh, yeah; I imagine I'm KILLING God with my days and my deeds!'

Nope. We already killed Him. Actually HE laid down His Life; He has picked it up again; and when YOU...SEE...GOD...

He has eyes, and ears, and fingers, and toes; nail marks in His hands; a spear gash in His side. Your God is Flesh and Your God is Blood.

And when HE looks at YOU, He has a smile on His face...

God's got a face! Not a metaphor. Skin and bone and pores and a nose—flesh and blood.

Count on that instead of on you in the Name of Jesus. Amen