

WHO IS JESUS?

ADVENT IN
JOHN 1:1-5



'IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD, AND THE WORD WAS GOD. HE WAS WITH GOD IN THE BEGINNING. THROUGH HIM ALL THINGS WERE MADE; WITHOUT HIM NOTHING WAS MADE THAT HAS BEEN MADE. IN HIM WAS LIFE, AND THAT LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF ALL MANKIND. THE LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS, AND THE DARKNESS HAS NOT OVERCOME IT. ' JOHN 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
He was with God in the beginning.
Through him all things were made;
without him nothing was made that has been made.
In him was life,
and that life was the light of all mankind.
The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it.

JOHN 1:1-5

Week 1: He is the Word.

John 1:1-2 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.'

This week we consider Jesus' divine nature and his eternal existence.

Week 2: He is the Creator.

John 1:3 'Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.'

This week, we look at Jesus' creative power and authority over the entire universe, highlighting his pre-eminence in all of creation.

Week 3: He is Life.

John 1:4 'In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind'.

This week, we explore Jesus' role as the giver and sustainer of life, offering spiritual and eternal life to all who believe in him.

Week 4: He is Light.

John 1:5 'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.'

This week, we look at Jesus' role as the one who brings light... the one who dispels the darkness of sin.

Christmas Day: He is Immanuel.

John 1:14 'The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.'

Today, we celebrate the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ, highlighting the intimate presence of God among us and the fulfilment of divine promises through the birth of Jesus.



'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning'

John 1:1-2

He is the Word.

John 1:1-2, John 1:11 and John 8:58

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning' (John 1:1-2).

As we enter Advent, waiting and preparing for the celebration of the birth of Jesus, preparing our hearts for Christmas, the words of St. John 1:1-2 declare to us the divine nature and the eternal existence of Jesus, who came to 'pitch his tent' among us.

The Jewish people were waiting for the Messiah to come. And when he finally came, just as had been predicted, they did not recognise Jesus as the Messiah: 'He came to his own and his own did not receive him' (John 1:11).

When we look at the four Gospels and how they introduce Jesus, the first three each place Jesus in a historical context. Matthew starts with a long list of descendants, connecting Jesus to King David and back to Abraham. Mark introduces Jesus through the preaching of John the Baptist. Luke goes a little further back and begins with Elizabeth and Zechariah and the prediction of the birth of John the Baptist.

But John is unique in introducing Jesus to us. He takes us as far back as we can think. To the beginning, before the creation of the world: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.'

John takes us back beyond creation to remind us that Jesus has been God the Son from eternity, that he existed before his birth, and is coequal with God the Father.

We see Jesus as the Eternal Word, who existed in the beginning, not because he had a beginning as a creature, but because he is eternal. He is God and he is God with us. In John 8:58, John records Jesus' very own words; 'Before Abraham was, I am.'

This Eternal Word, who was with God and was God, chose to enter our world as a helpless baby. He, the Word, spoke the world into existence. He came to live among us, to be one with us.

**And so, as we journey
through Advent, what
is it that Jesus, who is
the Word who spoke
the world into
existence, can speak
into your life in this
season?**

Dear God, we enter into this Advent season waiting to celebrate the coming of your eternal Son into our world. We stand in awe of you. We thank you, Jesus, who is the I Am, the Alpha and the Omega, for your unconditional love and for coming to live with us. Draw us closer to you this Advent season. May we be filled with worship and adoration towards you this Christmas as we celebrate your eternal love for us.

Amen.

What is God drawing you to in this week of Advent? Note it down.

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'Through him all things were made; without him nothing
was made that has been made'

John 1:3

He is the Creator.

John 1:3

'Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made' (John 1:3).

One of my most vivid Christmas memories is standing outside a large department store with my mom, looking at the Christmas displays in the large windows. These amazing displays were made from the materials available at the time: cardboard, tape, glue, and limited lights. Yet, each window represented a storybook of the joys of the season.

Today's displays are breathtaking and imaginative, featuring combinations of music, laser lighting, and robotics. The creators of these dynamic 21st Century presentations are gifted with imagination and the ability to conduct elaborate set designs.

However, no creation of man can begin to touch God's creation. In the Gospel of John, we encounter a powerful revelation: Jesus is not only the Saviour of the world, but he is also the Creator of all things.

The Christmas message is the Creator becomes the created. The Creator stepped into his creation, taking on human form, which is the greatest mystery.

This Christmas, we acknowledge the true Gift of Christmas – the birth of Jesus Christ.

During this season, we can enjoy the incredible Christmas displays and decorations; let us remember and reflect on the One who formed the stars and brought life, abundant life into this world, Jesus. Jesus, the Creator, invites us to look upon Him, not as a display in a store window to capture our imagination, but as our Redeemer and Friend.

What am I focusing on this Christmas season and how is this demonstrating courageous faith?

Father God, I praise you for your faithfulness from generation to generation. Your grace, strength, and love are so evident in this season through your son, Jesus Christ. Keep my eyes focused on Jesus – the most powerful display of love, who humbly entered His creation to redeem us.

Amen.

What is God saying to you in this week of Advent? Note it down.

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'In him was life, and that life was the
light of all mankind'

John 1:4

He is Life.

John 1:4, 1 Chronicles 16:32 and Luke 3:4

'In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind' (John 1:4).

My beginning was in the middle or maybe even at the end. Before I came, there already was. After me, there will be.

I'm part of a bigger picture. Of everything. The flow of God's plan. Such is our life from an eternal perspective, when our viewpoint broadens, and our thoughts move to consider all of time and space. We can see how God's care for us is far more extensive than we may perceive in our everyday life.

John writes, 'In Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind' (John 1:4). God's eternity also includes yours and mine now, which gives us the firm, life-fulfilling starting point we need for each day. But it is also bigger than we can ever calculate or understand. Never-ending. Limitless.

In Jesus, God comes close to 'all mankind'. In all different settings, circumstances, cultures, situations or

times He becomes Life. For everyone. Because 'his love endures forever' (1 Chronicles 16:32).

In different parts of the world, we may observe different Advent traditions. In my Swedish culture, the third Sunday in Advent is all about John the Baptist and the message of the coming Christ. A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him' (Luke 3:4).

And I think of the 'wilderness' in my own society and neighbourhoods. Where people during this sometimes stressful advent time need to hear that there is Life. In its fullness. For everyone. Also, for the people we don't understand or even like. The Light of all mankind. Jesus. And I feel the urge to go to 'the wilderness' around the corner where people are desperate for some light in the tunnel and share the news. To tell the greatest story of life, hope, meaning and purpose given to us in Jesus. An eternal message. For every generation.

**In what way do I
embrace the Life of
Jesus in my personal
situation? Is there
anything I want to be
different, and if so,
what is my plan to
achieve it?**

God, I feel quite giddy. Do you really mean Your forgiveness is eternal? Your comfort limitless? Your responsiveness and your patience inexhaustible? I stand speechless with wonder. Am I a part ... albeit less than a microscopic part, but still a fully loved and accepted part of the eternity you God, at this moment, is in the process of achieving? I'm dizzy with gratitude! Help me to find a way to share this great news to someone today. Help me to find my place in 'the wilderness' to prepare way for you!

Amen

What is God stirring in you in this week of Advent? Note it down.

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'The light shines in the darkness, and the
darkness has not overcome it'.

John 1:5

He is Light

John 1:5 and John 8:12

'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it'. (John 1:5)

When we are in a dark house and hear an unfamiliar noise, we instinctively turn on a light to be able to see and to be seen. Light shines in the darkness and helps us to see everything clearly. It speaks of security and reassurance, wisdom and understanding.

Light has an extremely pure, brilliant quality. It signifies goodness, truth and holiness. Where there is light, there is life. Where there is light, darkness cannot exist.

In this world, there is so much darkness. There is sin and there is evil. Every human heart wrestles with sinful strongholds, with a prideful heart, unhealthy thought patterns, and habitual sins that feel hard to overcome.

But light is powerful and far-reaching. There is nothing and nowhere too dark for light to illuminate.

Jesus said: 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but have the light of life' (John 8:12).

Jesus is the one who brings light, the one who dispels the darkness of sin from those who follow him. The one who brings us into the light, illuminates our next step and shows us the way. He is the light of the world.

As followers of Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, we can shine his light into the darkness of this world through our words and actions, helping others to see and come to know him, too.

**What does it mean to
you that Jesus is light?
How did you come to
know this great light?
How has the light of
Jesus dispelled
darkness from
your life?**

Dear Lord thank you for showing your light to us to help us walk in your light.
Please help us to shine this light and lead others from the darkness into light.
In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen

What is God revealing to you in this week of Advent? Note it down.

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'The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.
We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son,
who came from the Father, full of grace and truth'

John 1:14

He is Immanuel.

John 1:14, Matthew 1:18-25, Isaiah 7:14 and 2 Corinthians 9:15

'The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth' (John 1:14).

It's Christmas day and we have so much to celebrate!

God is with us – He is Immanuel.

In John 1:14, we read that 'The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us...' The New Christian Version renders the same verse like this: 'The word became a human and lived among us.'

God became a man – flesh and blood. For thirty-three years he lives as a human on earth, he feels everything that you and I feel. The early disciples saw him and heard from his mouth what he had to teach. He was real and personal, not abstract and remote, not distant or uncaring.

This is our eternal God, the one who reaches into humanity and is within reach of us ordinary human beings. This is our eternal God, the one who is touchable, with a face with human form in the here and now.

This birth, the birth of Jesus, is the culmination of the prophecy foretold by Isaiah hundreds of years before. God has become a human!

It seems difficult at times for us to comprehend the magnitude of this gift to each of us. To fully grasp the extent of this grace, this love for humankind. God is with us.

Even today, as people struggle to understand who God is and what God is like, we have assurance through his word and through our own experience of him that we can point to Jesus and say, 'Here he is'!

On this Christmas Day, we recognise the truth that God is with us – whatever we face, wherever we are, his presence is with us. As we celebrate the birth of our Saviour, Immanuel, God with us, may we join with the Apostle Paul in declaring:

'Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!' (2 Corinthians 9:15)

We receive a gift we could not earn nor could ever deserve – what an extravagant gift from God.

In what ways does the truth that God is with us encourage and bless your life?

Father God

Today, we join with Christians around the globe in celebrating the birth of our Saviour Jesus. He entered our world not like a human but as a human. Thank you for this indescribable gift. We acknowledge your grace and love for each of us. Help us to live each day with the awareness that you are with us and that whatever we may face, we can know your presence, strength and power.

Amen



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