

Christmas Day 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, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

How would you have dressed if you hadn't come to church today? I'm sure for the majority you would have dressed a bit differently. You see, we dress for what we are going to do. I'm sure most of you wouldn't wear the same clothes to a wedding that you would for doing work in your yard. You wouldn't wear the same clothes to bed as you would for meeting your family and friends for dinner at a restaurant.

Our wardrobes have clothing for a wide variety of activities. From clothes for every day, lounging around our home, playing in the snow, for hunting and fishing, I have even heard that some might have clothes that are just right for shopping. We dress for success in what we are going to do. Getting dressed doesn't mean you change who you are. It means that you are ready at that time to do what you plan to do.

So God did not stop being what he was a true God. But he also became true man, a real human being. He became incarnate, in the flesh. He dressed himself in human nature and received the name Jesus. He was born in the flesh like every human being, complete with human emotions, human temptations, and human needs.

Nevertheless, the Word made flesh was free of one thing every other human being had—sin. The flesh of all other humans is inherently corrupted by sin. Yet God taking on the flesh found a way to escape this curse of sin. Through his miraculous virgin birth, Jesus “became flesh” untainted by sin. He came to live free from sin in our place.

The Word was born in the flesh and made his dwelling among us. He lived on this earth along with other human beings. God set up his tent with us. He made a place for himself once again so that he could live with his people. He took up residence on earth and dwelt among his people similar to how he had dwelt in the tabernacle and temple with the children of Israel. The glory of the LORD filled the earth in Jesus.

This glory shown in the baby, not in a bright light that spread out from the baby lying in the manger. There was not a spotlight on Jesus with a big arrow that pointed to him as the Savior of the world. But the words of angels that told of the Christ who was born. His outward appearance was not different from other babies but the same. He was born as the light of men.

The light he came to reveal was the glory of God in a way that we human beings could look at and not be blinded, but believe. At long last God would let us see his glory by giving us his one and only Son, Jesus Christ. And Jesus would reveal God's glory through his work of salvation.

That work was why Jesus dressed himself in the human flesh. Not to change who he was or to hide. But to get to work. To carry out the task that he assumed. He became like us in every way that he might know firsthand temptation. That he might sympathize with us in our weakness because he too knows what it is to be human. He wrapped the cloak of humanity around himself not to be protected but to face the tough and daunting task of living under God's law that says be perfect therefore as your heavenly Father is perfect.

That means our Savior, Jesus, did not stay in the cozy stable on his bed of a manger. His glory shone from the life lived exactly as God had designed life. Exactly how God had created human life to be. To be a complete walking with God step by holy step. Never trying to run ahead of God to get something he hasn't granted nor ever falling because the way gets tough. Jesus walked as true man side by side with God. The One and only who came from the Father's side stayed by his side even as he took on the flesh.

That's glory. To live like God. To be completely with God. To be able to work with God and to have the work be pleasing, acceptable, and good in God's eyes. Jesus came to this earth dressed in our human flesh and got the job done. Because he wore the human flesh perfectly he as our Savior could give that life to pay for all your sins. He finished the job that he came to do.

That is truth. Jesus left behind his heavenly throne to dress himself in the flesh. Our God didn't become less but fashioned himself to be able to be our Savior. With his glory as God, he stepped into our shoes to walk as we do. He became one of us that he might save us.

That is grace. God didn't have to dress himself in skin. He chose to because he loves us. He loves us so much that he wasn't going to let us stay the same way we are but improved us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Unlike how you might take off the clothes you put on to do a certain task, Jesus doesn't want to take off his human dress. He has kept it on and will forever. Because he truly is a human just like you and I are human beings. He remains human like we are so we don't have to think deeply, stretch the limits of our IQs to have the truth and know God. We need only to see in Jesus, the Word made flesh. We don't need to dress ourselves to be save. We don't need to complete the chore of paying for our sins. Jesus dressed for that success when he took our flesh. He reveals all we need to know about God and his saving truth. Jesus came to show us the truth dressed in our humanity. Amen.