

John 1:1-14ⁱ

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

ⁱ About the Gospel (Christmas III): John 1:1-14

John understands the incarnation as the presence of God among humanity, surpassing every other experience in history. In Jesus, God is with us more fully than ever before. The glory of the lord manifests itself clearly in Jesus through his ministry.

Grace and truth, two weighty words in John's gospel, perfectly describe this incarnate Word. Grace describes the unmerited favor of God, which Jesus embodies and communicates to us. Though the word grace never reappears in this gospel, its presence in verse 14 alerts us to watch for God's favor in all that Jesus says and does.

Truth becomes a refrain throughout the gospel. It describes the reality that lies behind all the confusion, misbelief and ignorance of our lives. In Hebrew thought, truth only had meaning in relation to God's character. The reality of God provided the basis for truth, and God's name represented the integrity of truth. For John, Jesus does more than simply tell us the truth. Jesus is truth.