

1st John Lesson 11 – Jesus Christ Is Come In The Flesh

John is an excellent instructor. He tells you what he is going to tell you. Then he tells you. Then he tells you what he told you. In management classes in University, they still teach that method today. In order to fully understand chapter four, it is imperative that we remember what John taught us in chapter three. In a nutshell the lesson was ... avoid hypocrisy at all costs. Don't be a pretender, an actor on a stage. Don't evaluate your life by what you say. **YOU ARE WHAT YOU DO!** If you are a hearer but not a doer of Jesus' sayings, your own heart will condemn you and you will have no confidence when you approach God. If you have no confidence, it will hinder your faith for your prayers to be answered. John finished up chapter three with these statements:

1Jn 3:21-24 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, *then* have we confidence toward God. (22) And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. (23) And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. (24) And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

Keeping in mind the context of John's epistle to this point ... to believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ means ... to believe He is who He says He is, to take Him as your Lord, and to keep His commandments. John has already said, if you do not keep His commandments, you do not know Him, and you do not love Him. (See the earlier lessons in this series.) To love one another as He gave commandment ... is to love one another as Christ has loved us ... to lay down our lives for the brethren. It is the love of DEEDS, not just WORDS.

The life of the vine flows through us as we abide in Him and keep His commandments. John repeats this truth again and again in this epistle. You cannot see the wind and you cannot see the spirit of Christ that dwells in you. But you can see the effects of the wind, and you can see the fruit of love and righteousness His spirit produces in your life. That's how you know that Christ abides in you, by the spirit (the new nature) He has given you.

WITH THAT IN MIND ... John begins again to contrast those who genuinely are born again, who have the Spirit of Christ within them, who remain in fellowship with John, the Father and the Son ... with those who are no longer walking in fellowship with John, the Father, or the Son ... but are still presenting themselves as being Christians.

1Jn 4:1-3 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. (2) Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: (3) And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

For many years I did not know what John meant by the statement "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." And to be honest ... I have not met many preachers who do understand it. I have heard and read some ridiculous things concerning that statement. Many believe that John is saying these "spirits" are "devils" that need to be cast out. I remember reading one book about how to cast out devils. It basically said that if you are not sure if the person has a demon or not, try to get the person to say the words, "*Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.*" If it's a demon ... they won't be able to say it. Oh brother! Demons can say that all day long. They will say it and laugh out loud that believers can be so dumb. Or ... they will say "I can't say that" to make you think you are being effective, and STILL laugh at your ignorance behind your back.

John is not talking about literal "devils" when he is talking about "try the spirits whether they are of God." He is talking about the unregenerate spirit of these "false prophets" who have gone out into the world. "Gone out" from where? From being in fellowship with us. John is referring to these same men ... these same men with the "spirit of antichrist" who went out from fellowship with John and the disciples:

1Jn 2:18-19 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. (19) They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

A little history: The first wave of "false prophets and teachers" in the early days of the gospel were what we call the Judaizers. They claimed to be Christians. They openly said that Jesus is the Messiah, but they added to the message of Christ by telling the people that in order to be saved, they had to also keep the law of Moses. Specifically, they said a person had to be circumcised in their flesh in order to be saved. They had at one time been part of the church in Jerusalem and they used that "association" as validation of their message. "*We are from the mother church in Jerusalem and we have been sent to teach you this message.*" When the church at Jerusalem heard what was happening, they wrote a letter and sent it to the Gentile believers saying,

Act 15:22-24 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; *namely*, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren: (23) And they wrote *letters* by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren *send* greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: (24) Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:*

They could just as well have said, "**They went out from us, but they were not of us.**" They could just as well have said, "These men are teaching you things that are opposite to what Jesus taught. They are opposing the doctrine of Christ and they are exalting themselves above Him as your teachers. They have the spirit of antichrist working in them."

By the time of the year 85AD, when John wrote this epistle, it was not the Judaizers who were the prime threat to Christianity. It was the other side of the ditch. Now it is those who are turning the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ into lasciviousness. At first it was "legalism" through the Judaizers. Now it is "greasy grace" through these false prophets and teachers who are antichrist by teaching a different gospel than the one Jesus taught. Keep it in context. Notice John says in verse three, "this is that spirit of antichrist." John has already taught much about the spirit of antichrist in this letter. (See lesson 5 – The Spirit of Antichrist). John says these antichrist people have "**gone out from us**" but they "**were not of us.**" That means they are portraying themselves still as Christians, even though they came to the place they could no longer stay in fellowship with John. John says his fellowship is with the Father and the Son. When they break fellowship with John, it is because they are breaking fellowship with the Father and the Son. John is simply teaching what he heard Jesus teach more than fifty years earlier. Here is a brief list of things that the antichrist spirit could not stay in fellowship with:

1. God is light and so are you.
2. There is no darkness in Him and there is none in you.
3. You don't have to sin anymore.
4. If you do commit "a" sin you have an advocate with the Father.
5. Don't think you can live in habitual sin and have fellowship with God. You can't.
6. If you do not keep His commandments, you do not know Him.
7. If you do not keep His commandments, you do not love Him.
8. If you love Him, you cannot love the world, nor the things that are in the world.

Joh 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, **I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.**

Jesus is plainly saying, if you follow Him you will have the power to walk above sin. You will have the same light of life that is in Him, and you don't have to sin anymore. Jesus also taught that the world would HATE the genuine Christian.

When they say, "*Jesus Christ did not come in the flesh*" they are saying, "*He did not come as a human being. He could walk free from sin because He was God. We are just men. You can't expect us to walk as He walked. He was God and we are men.*"

Don't get me wrong, that is correct if you are speaking about people who have not been born again, people born of Adam with the spirit of the world in them. The unregenerate man cannot live above sin like Jesus did. They are slaves to sin. In all of history there has never been even one son of Adam, not even one, who lived a righteous life, no matter how hard he tried. The following verse describes every single human since the fall of Adam until Jesus Christ was born.

Rom 3:10 As it is written, **There is none righteous, no, not one:**

But if you say such things about the born again children of God, you are completely wrong. Jesus is the prototype of a whole new species of mankind that did not exist before He came. Jesus is the first BORN of MANY BRETHREN. **[Please review Lesson 8 – The Purpose of The Gospel]**

In the book of Genesis, we read that God's original purpose was to populate the earth with sons of God, born of God's Spirit. That was his original plan and it is still His plan. There will be a new heaven and a new earth where righteousness dwells. That new earth will be populated with the sons of God. God is not a quitter. Jesus is the first BORN ... the prototype ... of what this new species would be. You want to see what a born again child of God looks like? Look at Jesus,

Heb 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith;

We have been born of the same Spirit, with the same light of life that He had. He is the VINE, we are the branches, and the same LIFE that flows through Him flows through us. That's why John has already made statements like these earlier in the letter;

1Jn 2:6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

You don't need the devil to have an antichrist spirit. Normal, logical, sense based, fallen human reasoning is very much an "antichrist" spirit. *"I can't be like Jesus. Come on. Jesus is God in the flesh. I'm not like Him. Only Jesus was able to live above sin. I'm forgiven but I'm not changed to be like Him. Come on, who do you think I am ... Jesus?"*

Php 1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

2Co 4:10-11 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. (11) For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

For born again people to say they cannot be like Jesus ... is to come against the very purpose of God. They mean well. They think they are being humble, but it is unbelief in the gospel of God. Without intending to, they also are speaking forth from an antichrist spirit. That is not what Jesus taught. It is anti- what Jesus taught. It is speaking against the purpose for which Jesus came.

It is also a cop-out, a justification for continuing in sin, a conclusion based on sense knowledge and human reasoning rather than on the Word of God. It is the opposite of faith. It is false doctrine based on sense knowledge and feelings rather than faith in the Word of God.

Jesus Christ came in the flesh ... the same kind of fallen, human flesh you are wearing. He is the Word, He is God, but **He came as a man**, as a man in fallen flesh having the life of God in His spirit. He came as the prototype of the new species of man, the sons of God, that the Father is going to populate the earth with. You have to grasp this ... JESUS DID NOTHING AS GOD IN THE FOUR GOSPELS. IF HE DID ANYTHING BECAUSE HE WAS "GOD IN THE FLESH" ... THEN HE IS NO LONGER THE PROTOTYPE FOR US. EVERYTHING HE DID HE DID AS A MAN, BORN OF GOD'S SPIRIT, AND ANOINTED WITH THE HOLY GHOST AND POWER. HE DID IT FOR THE SPECIFIC REASON THAT BELIEVERS COULD LOOK AT HIM AND KNOW WHO THEY ARE NOW THAT THEY ARE BORN AGAIN. JESUS IS GOD BUT HE LIVED AMONG US AS A MAN.

1Co 15:21-22 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. (22) For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

Adam was a man. By that man came death! Jesus was a man. By that man came the resurrection of the dead. Both were men! Both were called the "son of God."

1Co 15:47 The first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* the Lord from heaven.

NOTICE THE FIRST MAN AND THE SECOND MAN. God Himself has only ever made two men. He made the first man Adam as described in Genesis. He made the second man Jesus by conception of the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary. To both men God said ... now you go and make more men. [replenish the earth].

1Co 15:45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

The first man Adam fell before he produced any children. He populated the earth through physical procreation and produced physical offspring with eternal souls that would live forever ... somewhere. Their souls are eternal, but they are born spiritually dead.

1Co 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

The last Adam is populating the earth from that dead species of the first man Adam by quickening them spiritually from death to life. Remember what Jesus said more than fifty years prior,

Joh 10:9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

Jesus is the door through which you can leave the species of the first Adam and enter into the species of the last Adam. You die to Adam and you are reborn in Christ. You are reborn to newness of life as a child of God. This is a supernatural miracle. Adam could reproduce eternal creatures through physical procreation. But Adam could not change the nature of his offspring. Adam was spiritually dead, and all of his children are born spiritually dead. The first Adam could not quicken his offspring from spiritual death to spiritual life. But the last Adam can. God could have wiped out the human race and started all over again. But God loves man, even fallen man. He is not willing that any should perish so He provided an "escape plan" for all who would choose life over death. You can be born again ... but to do that ... you must be baptized into Christ's death.

Rom 6:1-4 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? (2) God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? (3) Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? (4) Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the

Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

He is the quickening, life giving Spirit that is now repopulating the earth with the spiritual children of God. [Gary's note: Jesus is not called the second Adam. He is the LAST Adam. There is not another Son waiting in the wings. There is no other name under heaven by which men can be saved.]

It is as though the Father is saying, "**Hear me, all you children of Adam. Behold my Son Jesus, who is born of My Spirit. He is able to live above sin because He has the light of life within Him. He is the Lamb to be sacrificed for all the sins of Adam's species. He will swallow up sin into Himself and die in your place under the penalty of the Law. I will resurrect Him to new life. I am giving you the opportunity to die as a son of Adam and be reborn as a son of God instead. When you receive Christ as your Savior, you die in Christ to your old life as a son of Adam. In Christ you are resurrected as a son of God. Jesus Christ quickens you to new life and the life of Christ now flows through you. Christ becomes your Adam and you will become a member of the species of the sons of God I am preparing for the new heaven and the new earth.**"

IS JESUS DIVINE? IS HE ONLY A MAN? IS HE GOD AND MAN?

Entire books have been written on this subject. For many, the controversy still rages until this day. It is not my assignment from the Lord to deal in depth on this subject during these lesson on first John. But I would be a coward and incomplete if I did not share with you a little about this mystery, when even the apostle Paul said was a great mystery:

1Ti 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

Who was manifested in the flesh? God. So at first glance it seems those antichrist preachers are correct; *"See there? Jesus is God in the flesh. That's why He could live above sin. See there brother Gary? Even Paul knows Jesus was GAWD manifested in the flesh and therefore ... we mere mortal humans cannot be expected to live like He did."* [Remember this ... false doctrine will always tend toward ungodliness. It will always justify continuing in sin.]

But Paul also wrote,

Php 2:5-8 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (6) Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (7) But made

himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: (8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Before the incarnation, Christ pre-existed as God with the Father.

Joh 1:1-4 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (2) The same was in the beginning with God. (3) All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. (4) In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

I went through these verses myself in the Greek, word by word, thinking I would write what those Greek words say ... but as I was completing it I realized ... that has already been done by some of the best Greek scholars. Here are these important passages from the Amplified and the Wuest translations:

Php 2:6 (5-8) This mind be constantly having in you which is also in Christ Jesus, who has always been and at present continues to subsist in that mode of being in which He gives outward expression of His essential nature, that of absolute deity, which expression comes from and is truly representative of His inner being, and who did not after weighing the facts, consider it a treasure to be clutched and retained at all hazards, this being on an equality with deity, but himself He emptied, himself He made void, having taken the outward expression of a bonds slave, which expression comes from and is truly representative of His nature, entering into a new state of existence, that of mankind. And being found to be in outward guise as man, He stooped very low, having become obedient to the extent of death, even such a death as that upon a cross. WUEST

Php 2:5-8 Let this same attitude and purpose and [humble] mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus: [Let Him be your example in humility:] (6) Who, although being essentially one with God and in the form of God [possessing the fullness of the attributes which make God God], did not think this equality with God was a thing to be eagerly grasped or retained, (7) But stripped Himself [of all privileges and rightful dignity], so as to assume the guise of a servant (slave), in that He became like men and was born a human being. (8) And after He had appeared in human form, He abased and humbled Himself [still further] and carried His obedience to the extreme of death, even the death of the cross! AMPLIFIED BIBLE

How much did Jesus become a man?

1. He died on the cross. God cannot die.
2. He got hungry. God does not get hungry.

3. He got tired. God does not get tired.
4. He slept. God does not sleep nor slumber.
5. He never did a miracle before being baptized in the Holy Spirit.

But was Jesus also still divine?

1. **Joh 8:58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.**
 - a. No living "man" can say he existed before Abraham.
 - b. Several times Jesus declared Himself to be "I AM." This is the name of God given to Moses at the burning bush. Christ spoke to Moses through that bush as surely as He is speaking to men through lips of clay in the gospels.
2. No man has come down from heaven.
 - a. **Joh 6:38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.**
 - b. Pastor Dave taught us eloquently that the spirits of little babies do not "come down from heaven." The spirits of babies are produced through the law of Genesis. This is the privilege God gave Adam and Eve which distinguished them from the animal kingdom. They produce eternal creatures. Their spirits will live forever somewhere. But the point today is ... the spirits of men do not "come down from heaven." They are generated at the first cell division according to the law of Genesis.
 - c. But Jesus plainly says He came down from heaven. As the Word, He existed there always with God, and as God.

I could go on for pages and chapters. Jesus referred to Himself both ways ... Son of God and Son of man. The point the apostle John is making is this ... Christ laid down his divinity when He was incarnated as a man. He came to demonstrate how the new species shall live. He is to be the last Adam, the progenitor of a new species of human, whose spirit is born of God, whose mind is renewed by the Word of God, whose flesh has been mortified, and who has been anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power!

As a born of God ... MAN ... Jesus lived above sin. As a born again MAN anointed with the Holy Spirit, He cast out devils, healed the sick, raised the dead, walked on water, multiplied the loaves and fishes, opened the eyes of the blind, and set the captives free. NOT ONE OF THOSE THINGS DID HE DO AS GOD. John is so adamant on this point because it is vital to understanding the PURPOSE OF GOD. It is God's purpose to give the species of Adam a chance to be reborn as children of God, so they can escape that lost species and not perish with the world.