

## GETTING THE WORD OUT

Artios Ministries is, in a single statement, committed to “getting the Word out”. Having spoken in the past through the prophets at many times and in various ways, in these last days, Hebrews tells us, God has spoken to us by His Son (see Hebrews 1:1,2). In other words, God *spoke* Jesus — He “got the Word out”.

*<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup>Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and that life was the light of men. ... <sup>14</sup>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. Jn 1:1-4, 14 NIV*

“The Word became flesh” — essentially, Christmas, the message of the Incarnation, is about “getting the Word out”!

In John 1:18 we read, “No-one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father’s side, has made him known.” He has made Him known in three ways:

### **As He got the word out, God’s presence is made known**

*The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.*

The Word was pre-existent. He was with God, in the beginning; and He was God. The Word *became* flesh. First He was *not*, and then He was. He made His dwelling among us. The word literally says He *tabernacled* among us — pitched His tent among us. This is a strong picture of the Tent of Meeting in the time of Moses, where God’s presence would be manifest amongst His people.

He was fully man. He did not simply *seem* to be human, but He actually *was* human. And He was fully God. He did not in becoming human cease to be divine. Yes, He chose to minister as an anointed man so that He could be a model for us to follow. But He still had all His divine attributes. What He laid aside was the independent exercise of His divine attributes, and did only what He saw the Father doing (see Jn 5:19).

Jesus was fully man and fully God. It’s a mystery! Our minds can’t get hold of that or put it together. Poetically, many have tried. Charles Wesley wrote: “*Our God contracted to a span, incomprehensibly made man*”; and again “*Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, hail the incarnate deity*”.

Jesus referred to His body as a living temple filled with the presence of God. God didn’t say, “*Come into the temple where you will find My Presence*”, but rather He said, “*The temple filled with My Presence will come into your midst.*” That’s the Incarnation! And according to Corinthians, we’re temples too — our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit.

This Christmas, and this year as the New Year breaks upon us, as we get the Word out, let us each operate as a temple of the Holy Spirit. As we allow *God in us* to come through, as individuals and as a corporate Church, we still make His Presence known. And who knows but that *your* example may be the only “Jesus” someone sees.

### **As He got the Word out, God’s glory is made known**

*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*

What is glory anyway? Definitions include: splendour; triumphant honour; resplendent brightness; honour resulting from a good opinion; God's manifested excellence. Hebrews 1:3 tells us that the Son is the radiance of God's glory.

Jesus revealed His glory in the healings and miracles and signs and wonders.

*This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him. Jn 2:11*

*When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it." Jn 11:4*

*Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" Jn 11:40*

They beheld His glory at the Transfiguration.

*Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. Lk 9:32*

He made God's glory known in completing the assigned task.

*I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. Jn 17:4*

They glimpsed the glory of Jesus.

If we really see Jesus, it's a jaw-dropping moment that results in wide-eyed, open-mouthed wonder. Yet as we follow His example, it can be true of us too: people can glimpse the glory of Jesus even through us.

This Christmas, and this year, as we reach out in faith for healings and miracles and signs and wonders, and see these happen more and more through us, we make His glory known. And as we do the work God gave us to do, we make His glory known.

*For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. 2 Cor 4:6*

*In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. Mt 5:16*

### **As He got the Word out, God's heart is made known**

*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.*

John 1:17 says, "Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

*Grace* is God's free, unmerited favour. We can't *earn* it, and we don't *deserve* it. It's the *goodness* of God in our badness — it's the *completeness* of God in our incompleteness — it's the *riches* of God at Christ's expense.

*Truth* is the reality of how things are. Truth shines clarity in the midst of confusion. Truth confronts deception and pierces tradition.

If it's all grace, things can get fuzzy. If it's all truth, things are too black and white. Grace and truth belong together.

Jesus is full of grace and truth, and reveals these in His teaching and behaviour. Truth shines through. He always calls it like it is. He doesn't compromise the truth for the sake of guarding feelings or avoiding offence. Yet He models for us *grace*—unmerited favour—a non-judgemental application of truth. The Christian message is a message of grace and truth, not law and guilt and fear and shame. Jesus revealed a God of grace and truth.

This Christmas, and this year, as we know and interact with Jesus for ourselves, let's know His grace and truth. It doesn't mean we're passive—we reach out in *faith*. But it does mean we're released from law and guilt and fear and shame.

And as we teach, as we model, as we share Jesus with others: let's not be legalistic Christians; let's not be guilt-mongering Christians; let's not be fear-producing Christians; let's not be shaming Christians. Let's be full of grace and truth.

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