

08/22 PM: *When the Word Dwells, Things Happen*

*O LORD. We join together in asking that truth would be free  
to make her sorties upon us all, which way You please.  
Guide our minds for your designs. We ask that,  
nothing smothers truth's golden beams. (Spurgeon)*

 I want to begin this evening by first turning with you to *John 1.14: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

 I fear, rather than prayerfully pondering enough this verse, especially those three little words *we have seen*, preceded by *dwelt among us*, we satisfy ourselves with an earth-bound understanding. Visualize with me, if you will, that the first two messages of this series are two flashlights. By recalling what we've already learned, take that knowledge in your hand and shine their lights on these three words, *we have seen*. Methinks that soon we will see, that embodied within are some quite significant truths.

 How could we put this verse into layman's terms? Picture with me if you will, the headwaters of a spring called *all that we have seen*. Above its lintel are the words *dwelt among us*. We must begin our conversation here. Before speaking of *Christ's glory, His glory as of the only Son, His glory as being from the Father, His glory as One so full of grace and truth*, we must, by God's grace, solve the riddle of *dwelt among us*, and *we have seen*.

 There MUST have been something quite remarkable going on in the secret recesses of the hearts of John and the disciples, for having such an eye-opening and eternal effect upon them. The dichotomy was that Christ had dwelt among men for 33 years, the most of which were unaffected for the good. Why? What was the difference between *John's dwelling* and that *other kind of dwelling*?

 Let's now go to the very beginning of our Bibles, once again to Genesis 1. There are two words, which are repeated 10 times in this chapter, when God created all things. They are, *God said*, seen in vv. 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 28 and 29.

Q Borrowing John's New Testament phrase, how can we express what happened 10 times in the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter of Genesis?

A We can say, God's Word *dwelled* on ten different occasions on a world,

which was *without form, void, under the spell of darkness and awash in hopeless depth.*

Q What *happened* then, when God's Word dwelled in Genesis?

A *The heavens, the earth, light and darkness; Heaven; dry land, the seas, and vegetation; the sun, the moon and the stars; living creatures in the water, birds in the air; and land animals and people* came into being. In short, *when God's Word dwelled, things happened.*

Q At this point, with a glance back to John 1.14, let's confront a problem that to avoid would potentially give us a twisted view of God and His Word? Mankind continues to live seemingly unaffected by the Word of God. It scorns and laughs at God, if not on the outside, within its heart. Shall we conclude by that that the efficacy of God's Word is a fable, sterile and subject to man's whims? Is it just a dreamed up hope of the Church? Why couldn't the majority of the Jews, and by extent, humanity, quote John 1.14 as their own? *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.* Many had seen Christ work His miracles, some no doubt talked to Him, and many followed Him. Why then did *this kind of dwelling* not produce the same effect upon the crowds as the effect of the *disciples dwelling* upon the John and the disciples? Why was it not effectual even in the face of God's authentication of Christ as witnessed by Peter in Acts 2. Is there some hidden weakness in God's Word that we are not being told about? Is it up to man's will whether or not Christ's dwelling is going to be effectual or not?

A For this answer we go back to God's 10 *Word Dwellings* in Genesis, which shed light on John 1.14. If we were allowed only one adjective to express God's 10 *Word Dwellings* in Genesis, what would it be? Would it not be *effectual*? God's Word Dwellings were *effectual, not so much in the results, as in God's INTENTION.* Before one creative breath came out of His mouth *intention* was in full bloom. Though not created yet, all things were as well as created, before one word came out of His Divine mouth, because they were already *INTENDED.*

! Visualizing illustrations or examples in order to comprehend a difficult fact, is an invaluable tool. But for one who has only experienced life under the reign of sin, he will inevitably run to the empty vault of some earthly experience into order to understand a spiritual truth. It will most likely be a full vault, yet bereft of any satisfactory analogy.

! Let's not draw on earthly experience in order to judge or understand **Divine INTENTION**, thus **assuming weakness upon Divine Intention**. E.g., Exercise or execution of human intentions even at their best can never be used as something to mirror **Divine intentions**. Because they are in essence never effectual. Remember Nicodemus! He fatally drew upon earthly experience to attempt an understanding of what Christ was saying. "*Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?*" He forgot to read the disclaimer of his reference material. *Human Experience: unsuitable for spiritual knowledge.*

👉 **Divine intention** drove and continues to drive the vehicle of God's **Word Dwellings**. Speaking as a man, *If God spoke without intending, nothing would have been created.* Herein lies the difference between **John's dwelling** and the *other kind of dwelling*. God intended one to be effectual and intended the other not to be effectual.

👉 Now let's come back to John 1.14 and make application. Herein lies the secret to God's **Word**, Christ, **dwelling** among worldlings, versus **dwelling** among His elect. The latter carries with it a Divine intention to open the heart's eye. It's what *caused the world to recognize (but not understand) that the disciples had been with Jesus.* It is the same **method** and **effect** as Genesis 1. The former does not carry with it the Divine intention to save. It is enough to judge, but is sterile to save.

👉 Now for our remaining time let's look at the seven perfect characteristics of God's intended effect of Christ's **Word** dwellings upon the disciples. **Once again, it is important to note that each and all of these effects upon the hearts of not only the disciples, but you too as a child of God, is due solely to Divine intention upon our hearts. Remember! We do not discover Christ, God's Word. He is revealed to us.**

👉 Peer now with me into the finished Work of God upon our hearts; that day that when by His gracious Spirit he dwelled Christ upon your formlessness, your void, your darkness and your abyss. Through the following characteristics, let's remind ourselves how effectual God's **Word Dwelling** was, and continues to be, upon our hearts.

1 *And the Word became flesh*

☆ You now see and perceive that God's gracious Word has become simple and understandable flesh, replacing the harsh complexity of the works of Law.

2 *and dwelt among us*

☆ What do you see dear soul? Why do you look at the city lights of Egypt? It holds no hope. Where does your help come from? Look! God's Word is dwelling among your very soul!

3 *and we have seen his glory*

☆ The eye-scales of the effect of original sin, which have provided only a blur, now have been removed. You now see past Christ's humanity to His Divine character hidden within.

4 *glory as of the only Son*

☆ You now see His glory, not as conjured up aimless shafts of light, but as the single shaft diffusing from God's only Son.

5 *from the Father*

☆ Dear elect, you now see that He is the very **Word Dwelling** of God's unmerited love for you. Through Him you see clearly how God feels about you, thoughts He's had before the foundation of the world.

6 *full of grace*

☆ The long-awaited riverbed of grace, parched from endless seasons of rainless summers, is now swollen with the spring rains of Christ's blood, flowing unabated. And under your feet a subterranean branch which previously could not be seen flowing beneath your deepest sin is now in clear view.

7 *full of truth*

☆ When you look around, dear saint or sinner, what do you see upon life's sea? Countless sizes and shapes of boats just like yours, tossed upon life's seas, all with tattered sails. When despair begins to settle in, let your tear-filled eyes climb your own mast. See there that **Truth** in the flesh fills your sails, and His replenishments will be unbroken until you safely arrive at your eternal haven of rest.

👉 You see! THIS is what John, the disciples and you dear saint see. The world sees only His flesh. But God's intention was and continues to be that you see these 7 characteristics of your Savior. Thus, with this kind of **dwelling** Jesus, things happen! As God's **Word** dwelled effectually in Genesis, causing all creation to come into being, so His **Divine Word**, our Lord Jesus Christ dwells effectually within each of us, because that was His intention and His intention alone!

 I close with the words of the Psalmist in the 29<sup>th</sup> Psalm.

**3** The **Voice** of the LORD **is over** the waters;  
the God of glory **thunders**,  
the LORD, over many waters.

**4** *The **Voice** of the LORD is **powerful**;  
the **Voice** of the LORD is **full of majesty**.*

**5** *The **Voice** of the LORD **breaks** the cedars;  
the LORD **breaks** the cedars of Lebanon.*

**7** *The **Voice** of the LORD **flashes forth flames of fire**.*

**8** *The **Voice** of the LORD **shakes** the wilderness;  
the LORD **shakes** the wilderness of Kadesh.*

**9** *The **Voice** of the LORD **makes the deer give birth**  
and **strips** the forests bare, and in his temple all cry, "Glory!"*

**!** *When the **Word** dwells, things happen!*

 Tomorrow morning, Lord willing we'll continue the thread of this journey by exploring the intriguing study of *A Gracious instinct – a gracious state of the heart.*