The Word Became Flesh

At one time, in one small place on earth, the Word came down to be born, to live, and to die among us. When He did this, He revolutionized our understanding of God, of our own lives, and of our relationship to Him.

**How did the Word turn our world upside down?**

**1. By taking on flesh**

“Flesh” = a complete human nature in its weakness, but without sin (Isaiah 40:6-8; Psalm 78:38-39)

A. A fully human *body*

John 4:6

B. A fully human *soul/spirit*

John 12:27; 19:30

**2. By revealing His glory**

Before the eyes of His apostles (1 John 1:1-3)

A. In His *transfiguration*

Mark 9:2-8 ;2 Peter 1:16-18

B. In His *miracles*

John 2:11; 11:4, 40

C. In His *resurrection & ascension*

John 7:37-39

D. In His *death*

John 12:23-24

**3. By His relationship to the Father**

A. He was *begotten* by the Father

John 5:26; 1 John 5:18

B. He is in the *bosom* of the Father

**4. By the fullness of His grace and truth**

A. He surpassed the *Law of Moses*

B. He embodies the *fullness of God*

Colossians 1:19; 2:9

**Notes:** I acknowledge that my views differ from most Greek scholars today, but I stand with the ancient church.

**1.** I think there are good reasons for translating *monogenēs* (in John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9) as “only begotten” rather than “one and only” or “unique*,”* as most modern versions do. Certainly, *monogenēs* may mean “one-of-a kind.” However, John is fond of using words that bear a double or deeper meaning. The original form of the Nicene Creed (AD 325) understands *monogenēs* as teaching that Christ is“from the essence (or substance) of the Father.” (Therefore, according to the Greek and Latin Fathers, m*onogenēs,* indicates that Jesus is of one naturewith the Father, sharing the Father’s essence, not that He is unique or one-of-a kind.)The creed also adds an explanatory phrase saying more clearly that the Son was *“*begotten from the Father*.”* 1 John 5:18 uses this clearer term for begotten to describe both believers and the Son of God, showing that this is the sphere in which John’s thought was moving. “Only begotten” teaches that the Son has received His life and His divine essence from the Father.

**2.** In John 1:18, some versions have “only begotten God” instead of “only begotten Son.” Although the manuscript evidence may favor “God” over “Son,” I prefer “only begotten Son.” “Only begotten Son” makes good sense. “Only begotten God” is exceedingly awkward. If “God” is retained instead of “Son,” a better translation would be, “The only begotten One, God, who is in the bosom of the Father....”