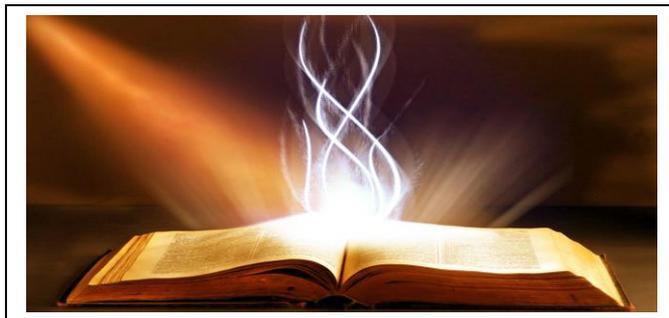


Series – What has John seen?

2. Glory and Tents

Read John 1: 9-18 A well known and much-loved passage, often read at Christmas carol services, is hugely profound. Most likely written some years later than the other Gospels it reflects, I think, how John's understanding has matured. His introduction (verses 1-18)

encapsulates everything Jesus was, and is, and did, which he expands into the following 21 chapters of his Gospel. So, what of all this should we select for our brief studies today!



1. In verses 10&11 John writes that Jesus was neither recognised or received, (recognised as in verses 9&10; and received as in verses 16&17). Has anything changed in 2000 years?

a. How many ways can you think of which demonstrate failure by our neighbours to recognise Jesus today in what they might say, the language they use, and their view of life and the world?

b. Are there some things which reflect your faith that you say or don't say, or things you do or don't do, that have been noticed by those within your sphere of influence (family, work-place, social group)? Can you share some of these with the group?

c. Is it possible to 'see' Jesus today? If so, how, and which of his features would be recognisable?

2. Verse 14. John's first readers are aware from their (Old Testament) scriptures that no-one has or can see God's face and live (see Ex 33: 20 [exception was Moses]). You can hear the depth of his amazement and gratitude from this verse for what he has witnessed. *God (in Jesus) became human, lived right here with us, we have actually seen him (God), and his glory!* (this theme continues in verse 18).

a. Do you sometimes have difficulty fully appreciating what God has done for us? Do you have any suggestions to share on how you manage to bring focus on this when you need to?

b. "Full of grace and truth". What does this mean for you? How would you explain this to 'the man in the street'?

c. "Made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory". This is another prompt for John's first readers as, in the original Hebrew language of the Gospel, these phrases paint a mental picture for the reader of the 'dwelling in the Tent of Meetings which was filled with God's glory' (see Ex 40: 33-35), a word picture that struggles for a direct translation equivalent today. One Commentary suggests that we should understand John to mean that Christ's glory was revealed to his disciples by the miracles he performed and by his death and resurrection. Do you agree? Would you add or subtract anything?

Prayer. *Loving Father, as we read the Bible, help us to understand it. Send your Holy Spirit to us to not only make its message clear but also to touch our consciences so that we see what you want us to do in obedience to your word. For Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.*