

7th Grade New Testament (Gospels)

Lesson Plan: Prologue to John, pt. 2

Learning Goals: Students should be able to define the concept of Incarnation and explain its significance to John's Gospel.

Question: Would you rather have constant day (light) or constant night (darkness)? Why?

Prayer.

Discuss question on board. (5 minutes)

Read (watch John 1:1-18)

John the Baptist is introduced. (What do we remember about John the Baptist?)

- Parents: Elizabeth and Zechariah; born in their old age (miraculous) - father rendered mute after visit from an angel
- Elizabeth was Mary's cousin (Jesus and John are cousins)
- Recognized Jesus in the womb
- Baptized Jesus
- Lived in the desert, ate locusts and honey, wore camel hair, was a prophetic voice preaching repentance in order to enter the coming kingdom

What was John's role?

- He was a witness - giving testimony to the light (point people to Jesus)
- Witness is from the same root word as martyr, which means one that dies for their faith; he would eventually be killed (beheaded) by Herod Antipas

The Reception of the Light

- The world (as a whole) did not recognize him or receive
- To those that did receive him, he gave them the right to become children of God
- "believing" is not the same thing as "receiving" (receive = "to grasp, obtain, come alongside of")
 - *It's not just about having some kind of faith. Imagine that I need to get to Los Angeles. I go to the airport and there is a guy that tells me he can get me there for really cheap. He takes me out back and shows me his plane (missing a tailpiece, there's no windows, and it's held together by duct tape). I could have all the faith in the world, but I better not expect to arrive in L.A. safe and in one piece. We have to have faith in the right things.*
- vs. 13 tells us that it is not about our parents' faith. We won't be getting in on their coattails. It won't be because of the faith of our pastors, teachers, youth leaders, or friends. We have to make that decision for ourselves.

The Word Became Flesh

- Concept of the Incarnation - God took all of his "god-ness" and crammed it into a flesh and blood. He limited himself and became one of us.
- Illustration of an ant - *Pretend that I am out in the yard and see a line of ants carrying their food. I look up ahead and see my kids playing in the yard in a kiddie pool. They are about done and are going to empty the pool, flooding a part of the yard and drowning the ants. I've got to tell the ants. I've got to save them. What do I do? I could put a wall in front of them to make them change directions. They would probably think that I am trying to squish them. I could yell at them, but they wouldn't understand me. I could say "who cares, they're ants after all. What does it matter if a few die?" The best way to communicate with them would be to become*

an ant and go down and lead them to safety. This is what God has done for us. The gap is so much larger from God to humanity, but God crossed it to lead us out of sin and into life.

- Eugene Peterson's The Message translates this passage: "The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood."
- In Jesus, we see the glory of God, clothed in skin - the glory that made Moses' face shine, the glory that made Isaiah say, "Woe is me! I am a man of unclean lips and I come from a people of unclean lips" ; the glory that would kill a priest if he came into the Holy of Holies and was not pure.
- If we see Jesus, we have seen God the Father
- Jesus was also full of grace - unmerited favor, a gift we could never deserve or be worthy of; Jesus demonstrates God's beauty and offers us a gift that we could never deserve
 - Grace demonstrates the poverty of humankind and the limitless kindness of God. Instead of looking down on us or putting us down, God stoops down to look us in the eye.
- Jesus was full of truth (that which is right and good) - truth is not an abstract idea, truth is a person; Jesus is truth (in Jesus is all truth)
 - Not that Jesus contains truth or always tells the truth, Jesus IS truth

Summary of all that Jesus is in John 1:

- The Word
- Life
- Light
- Truth
- Grace

Lesson Summary/Review:

Students should review and highlight the following vocabulary terms and concepts from this lesson in their notes:

- John the Baptist
- Incarnation