

May I speak in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit Amen

Today we come to one of the most profound passages in all of Scripture, in the first Chapter of st John's Gospel. These first verses do more than introduce a gospel. They invite us into the very heart of Christian belief: the Incarnation, the mystery that God became human. John writes, In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God and the word was God

We hear these words from John's Gospel every Christmas and are very familiar with them. It's interesting, that while the synoptic Gospels begin with events in Bethlehem, John begins by giving us a perspective of eternity. He states very profoundly, that before time began, the Word—Logos—already existed. And this Word **was** God. Not merely a messenger or a prophet. Not a created being. Throughout his Gospel, John uses Christology to confirm the nature of Christ as the divine being. John reveals the glory of God, through seven signs which reveal the public ministry and mission of Jesus, who, he proclaims as the Messiah. He uses the 'I am Statements and the signs as miracles though out his Gospel as additional declaration or confirmation of the divine nature of Jesus. He tells them, not as just wonderful works of Jesus, but,' as opening windows to the reality which was God.

The words of the Nicene creed affirms this divinity of Jesus In fact it almost mirrors the words of St John's Gospel.. Words that we say weekly:-

"We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God... of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven."

"God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God... begotten, not made."

Words, confirming that Christ is co-eternal with the Father. With the same divine glory,. The same divine essence.. And that is the whole essence of the text and of the Gospel itself ,This speaks of the eternal Son not clinging to heavenly glory, but entering human history by being born of a woman he grew. He suffered, he wept. He ate. he bled, just like us. As the Creed says:

"He became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man."

This is the mystery of the Incarnation: that in Jesus, God has skin. He walked among us. He was God with us—Emmanuel.

The incarnation of Christ can be a concept that is hard to grasp. I have to admit that the only essay that I bombed was one on the Christology of Jesus in doctrine.

The creed was written as an answer to controversy and division in the early church. One particular priest, called Arius believed that Jesus was not fully divine, but created as a separate being subordinate to the Father an early superman if you like. This was causing major theological disputes and was threatening the unity of the church. It was challenging the understanding of the Trinity. I can remember my tutor telling us that at one of the discussions, things became so heated, that Arius lumped Bishop Nicholas, who became St Nicholas or Santa Clause, he was bopped on the nose. Tensions and misunderstandings were running high, so it was of critical importance that this area of concern was clarified, so that the church could grow effectively.

Both the creed, and the first verses of St John's Gosple confirm the fully God and fully human nature of Jesus Christ, a doctrine that is central to Christian belief. They both clearly indicate that the incarnation is essential to salvation, as in Christian theology as only someone who is truly God can redeem us, and only someone fully human can truly represent humanity.

The Nicene Creed doesn't just help us understand doctrine—it helps us **stand firm in worship**. It reminds us that the baby in the manger is the **God who made the stars**. The man on the cross is the **Word who made the world**. And the risen Lord is the **eternal Son**, who now sits at the right hand of the Father.

So today, as we reflect on John 1 and the Creed, let us be filled with wonder. Let us bow in reverence. And let us rejoice in the truth:

“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”

This is our hope. This is our salvation.
This is our God.