

- John 1:1-18. Rev. Bruce Stanley

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Christmas Day. Tuesday December 25th, 2012

Merry Christmas!

How many times have you said those words today?

It's a unique phrase isn't it?

You don't say Merry Birthday, or Merry Easter, Merry Anniversary, Merry New Year. But it's a greeting we use a lot at Christmas time. Words that we use just for today.

What other words do we use at Christmas?

“Seasons greetings”, “Happy holidays”, Or one of my favourites on this Christmas card:

- “Happy Everything – now leave me alone until next year”

Words are powerful things. We can use our words to encourage people, or to hurt people, to celebrate, to mourn. People express themselves about Christmas in many different ways. Some love it, some hate it.

- “Christmas is a holiday that persecutes the lonely, the frayed, and the rejected.” [Jimmy Cannon](#)
- “God is here. This truth should fill our lives, and every Christmas should be for us a new and special meeting with God, when we allow his light and grace to enter deep into our soul.” — [Josemaría Escrivá](#), [Christ Is Passing by](#)

These are two **very different** expressions of Christmas. All of us here today probably use different words to describe Christmas. And the words we choose to use to are very important for a couple of reasons:

1. First of all, words can reveal something about us.

Words reveal to people information about us – we can tell people the truth or tell lies. Some people like to speak about themselves to make them sound important. Others don't say very much at all. Some people like to speak about how good they are and how much they do or how much they earn. We

can tell people where we live, what we do for a living, we can talk about our family, and our hobbies. Words reveal us. Words open us up to people.

2. Secondly, we can use words to express ourselves.

Words express our desires, our feelings, our disappointments, our character. Some people use a lot of negative words. Other people use very encouraging words. Some use big words, some use simple words. Some say Merry Christmas, others say Happy holidays. Words like these express who we are and what we're celebrating at a time like Christmas.

But words can also be confusing. Do you know the meaning of these words:

- **Popliteal**

It's the back of your knee – your knee-pit.

- **Whisternefet**

An old word meaning a sharp slap.

- **Fardingbag**

It's the first stomach of a cow.

- **Battycatter**

A word meaning ice that forms on the rocks along the shore.

We can use words to reveal ourselves, and to express ourselves. Big words, small words. Few words, lots of words. But God uses just one word.

John 1 is an important Christmas passage because it speaks to us about God's word for Christmas. What word does God use? And why? What does God say? How does God **reveal and express himself** with his words?

- *1In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2He was with God in the beginning.*

Right from the start, we're told that God's Word is there at the very beginning. His Word is with Him, and his Word IS Him. **HE** was with God in the beginning. God's Word is ... a person. A "He". A "He" who was with God and IS God, from the very beginning.

God's word is a person.

If you want someone to trust you, you might say something like "I give you my word." In one of the marriage services which I used just the other week, the bride and groom said to each other, when they committed to marry each

other: “And to this, I pledge you my word”. Giving your word is a commitment of your very self.

God’s word is a person. God’s commitment to us is a person. And who is that person? Who is that Word of God?

The next verses tell us a few things about that Word:

Verse 3: *through him all things were made*” – this person is the creator.

Verse 4: *in him was life, and that life was the light of men*” – this Word, this person offers life.

Verse 6: John (John the Baptist) was sent to testify to who this Word was.

Verse 10 – this Word came to this world but was not recognized.

But it’s not until verse 14 that we hear the final description that reveals who this Word is:

- **14***The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

The Word of God is Jesus.

Jesus, God himself, who became flesh and lived among us on earth.

Jesus, who was with God, and is God, from the very beginning.

Jesus, who came to earth so people could put their faith in him and become children of God.

Jesus, verse 18 – the one who brings **grace** and **truth**.

I love reading kid’s letters to Santa. Like this one from Evan...

- Letter to Santa...

“Dear Santa, how are you and the reindeer doing? I am doing fine. I want a football game and a football because my little brother always tries to steal mine. He may look sweet but he I the DEVIL! I also want a remote control truck.

Love Evan.

PS – how do you get into my house on Christmas?

Kids write letters to Santa because they want him to bring them things. Like footballs. But there are always those questions: how does Santa get into my house? How does he find me if I move house? How does he deliver presents

to millions of children on one night? These are the questions that we will probably never be able to answer properly...!

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But let's ask those questions about God. How does he know us? How does he find us? And what will he bring us? And how does he get into our life? And the answers are all there in John 1.

He knows us because he came to earth to know us. He finds us because he is the creator. And what does he bring us? Himself. Jesus. THE Word of God, who brings us grace and truth.

Why grace and truth? Because these are what define God. These words define who he is. Grace and truth.

God's Word, Jesus, reveals and expresses God himself to us – the God of **grace** and **truth**. And he comes to us so that we can **know** him and become children of God. Verse 9:

- *9The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.*

Christmas is a great reminder to us that God **WANTS** to reveal himself to us. He **wants** us to know him. He **wants** to express to us how much he desires for us to be his children. He **wants** us to live in the light, to clearly see who he is, to clearly see his grace and to clearly see his truth.

You might get a present today. And it might be wrapped up. So you'll probably take off the wrapping to see what's inside. That's what God wants for us today. To clearly see HIM through his Word Jesus. Jesus is God's word. THE Word for Christmas. THE Word who reveals and expresses God's very nature to us.

- "Jesus" is the one Word for Christmas from God.

You want to know what Christmas is about? You want to know truth? You want to know grace? You want to know God's heart? You want to God's desire for YOU to be a child of God? Then you simply need to know God's Word. Jesus.

To know God is to know his Word. And to know Him, we simply need to accept Him, as God himself, as the creator and Lord of all. The King over this world, and the King over our lives. The King of grace and truth. The King of peace and love.

"Joy to the World, the Lord is come, let earth receive her king."