

Sunday 27th December

**Reading     John 1:1-14**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Over the years these are probably the words I have read most often at Christmas. They are not part of the Nativity Story but are words John put together for the beginning of his message about Jesus. As the minister these are often left for me to read – or I allocate them to myself. The phraseology is powerful and there has been much thought in the construction.

John points out in these words the important truth that the Son has always been; the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as we now refer to them are the community we call God.

Jesus was there at the beginning in the creation process. The phrase “in the beginning” would take the mind of Jews reading it to the beginning of Genesis. There is much to ponder upon in these words.

A songwriter called Michael Card in one of his songs called “The Mystery” – wrote, “a mother made by her own child.” I find that an amazing statement. It picks up the idea of Jesus being from the beginning in an amazing way. Alongside that phrase Michael Card uses the phrase “When the Father longed to show a love he wanted us to know, He sent his only Son and so he became a holy embryo.” That I find even more mind-blowing.

We picture the baby lying in a manger but have you ever thought of the vulnerability of God as an embryo? The depth of God's love expressed in such an amazing way to the world truly amazes if we ponder upon it.

John was seeking to explain to a wider audience than the Jews who Jesus was. Amongst the audiences were those with a Greek pagan philosophical background. Who was Jesus? In this pagan world the word was spoken of as a principle of rationality lying deep within the Cosmos and within all human beings. “Get in touch with this principle and your life will find its true meaning” was the Greek philosophical position. John seeks to show that the Word is not an abstract idea but a person, who he will show is Jesus, get in touch with Jesus and then life has true meaning.

Over the years I have discovered more of this truth for myself. It has not been a smooth easy journey. It was when I was 12 that I gave my life into the hands of God allowing my life to find meaning by His purpose. Nearly 50 years later there is still more to discover about the grace and truth of God revealed in Jesus living among us – or now living with us.

It is a mystery but one worth exploring and opening ones life to.