

The Great Exchange

John 1:1-18

04/01/2026

Let us Pray:

Father in heaven, we thank You for Your Word and for the revelation of Jesus Christ. Open the eyes of every heart that does not yet know Him, that they may see, believe, and receive Him as Lord and Savior.

Through faith in Jesus, our sins are forgiven and eternal life is promised. May all who hear this message come to know that He is the Christ, the Son of God, who came in the flesh to save the world.

We thank You for this gift of life and grace. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Greetings Church, Christmas is over—just like that.

The decorations come down. The songs fade.
And suddenly, 2026 is here in the blink of an eye.

Time moves quickly. Life moves quickly.
And that is exactly why it matters—deeply—that we understand who Jesus is.

Because if you get the identity of Jesus wrong,
it changes everything—
everything about salvation,
everything about life,
everything about eternity.

John understood that. That's why he wrote the Gospel.

He tells us plainly in John 20:31: "These things are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name."

John writes so that we might believe. And believing—really believing—means life. That brings us to our theme today:

THE GREAT EXCHANGE

1. In the Beginning Was the Word

John opens his Gospel dissertation by taking us all the way back. Verse 1 of our Text says - "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*" Those words echo Genesis 1:1: "*In the beginning, God...*"

John wants us to understand immediately:

Jesus did not begin in Bethlehem. Jesus did not come into existence at Christmas. Jesus always was. He was with God, and He was God, right from the beginning.

This is not poetry—it is theology. This is not symbolism—it is truth. Jesus is eternal. Jesus is divine. Jesus is God.

And John goes further: Verse 3 - *"Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made."*

The Word who would one day lie in a manger is the same Word who spoke galaxies into existence. The hands that would be pierced by nails are the hands that formed the universe.

Church, if we misunderstand who Jesus is, we misunderstand everything.

2. Light and Life in a Dark World

In Verse 4 John writes - *"In Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind."*

Life and light are not things Jesus gives occasionally. **They are who He is.** And here is the hard truth John lays before us: Verse 5 - *"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."*

If Jesus is light and life, then to consciously reject Him is to choose darkness and death.

There is a real sense in which a person who separates themselves from Jesus is spiritually dead and walking in darkness. Jesus Himself said in John 8:12: *"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

Light and life are found in Christ alone.

3. The Tragedy of Rejection

And then John tells us something heartbreakingly: Verse 10 says - *"He was in the world, and though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognize Him."*

The Creator came to His creation — and creation did not recognize Him.

It gets even worse: Verse 11 says - *"He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him."*

The Jewish people had the Scriptures. They had the prophets. They had centuries of promises about the Messiah.

And yet, generally, they did not receive Him. And church, not much has changed in 2,000 years. We've just celebrated Christmas—the Word became flesh—and still as we all know - the world does not recognize Him.

4. But Some Did Receive Him

Thank God the story does not end there. John writes in Verse 12 “*Yet to all who did receive Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.*”

Not everyone rejected Him. Some received Him. And notice the language John uses: **Receive Him, Believe in His name, Trust in Him, Rely upon Him.**

To receive Jesus is to place your full and complete trust in Him. And when you do, something extraordinary happens:

You become a child of God: Not by heritage. Not by effort. Not by self-reformation. But as Verse 13 states - “*Children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.*”

This is not turning over a new leaf. This is not trying harder. **This is surrender.**

You say, “Jesus, I receive You.”

And God does something in you that you could never do for yourself.

5. Now, The Word Became Flesh

In Verse 14 we reach one of the greatest sentences ever written: - “*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*”

The eternal Word. The divine Logos. The mind that manages the universe. **Became flesh.** And John says He dwelt among us—literally, He tabernacled among us.

Just as the tabernacle was the meeting place between God and humanity in the Old Testament, **Jesus is now the place where we meet God.**

God did not stay distant. God came close. If you ask, “Where is God?” The answer is clear: Look to Jesus.

If you are struggling to find God, reorient your focus to Christ. Start by spending time in the Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. God meets us in Jesus.

6. Glory, Grace, and Truth

John testifies in Verse 14 - “*We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*”

And then John finally names Him: Verse 17 - “*For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*”

Moses brought the law. Jesus brought grace and truth.

A new order; A better covenant; A greater revelation. Announced by John the Baptist. Lived out by Jesus Himself. **This is God revealing His heart.**

7. now to The Great Exchange

And here is the heart of the Gospel:

THE GREAT EXCHANGE

- Jesus' sinless life for our sinful lives
- Jesus condemned so we might be forgiven
- Jesus died so that we might live

God did it all to rescue us:

We bring our sin - He gives us righteousness.

We bring our death - He gives us life.

We bring our darkness - He gives us light.

8. Praise the God Who Sent His Word

Today's Psalm – psalm 147 says: "*He sends out His word...*"

And Psalm 148 calls us to praise: "*Praise God from whom all blessings flow... Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*"

Church, He sent His Word—and the Word became flesh. We have seen His glory. We have received His grace. We are born of God.

That is our call this morning: **Receive Him**

John's invitation still stands: "To all who did receive Him..." That includes you and me.

No one is excluded. No one is beyond grace. **If you will receive Jesus, if you will believe in His name, you will have life.**

This is the Great Exchange.

Let us receive Him. Let us walk in His light. Let us live in His life.

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen!