**John 1:1-18 (ESV)**

**1**  In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3**  All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. **4**  In him was life, and the life was the light of men. **5**  The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. **6** There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. **7** He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. **8**  He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. **9**  The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. **10** He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. **11** He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. **12** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, **13** who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. **14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. **15** ( John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’ ”) **16** And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. **17** For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. **18**  No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.

**“Fullness Celebrated”**

 Let us pray: “O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who make Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Savior. Amen” (A Year In The NT, 3). The fullness of Christmas celebration fills the lives of many today. It calls for families and friends to come together. It directs attention to gifts given beneath the tree. It turns to food on tables that is ready for a feast. All this is fitting to have for us in life. Yet, the parable of the sower warns how fullness can turn against us. Jesus said, As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful” (Matthew 13:22).

 Honoring the One born of the Virgin Mary is the true fullness of Christmas that cannot be taken away. Jesus promised, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly” (John 10:10). St. John the apostle assumes those who hear his Gospel account already know the Christmas story. The birth of Jesus is nice for us to recount every year, but none of us were a part of that event. This is why St. John wants us to know something better than a onetime event. It is the fact that God has found a way to fulfill His promise that is for all people. “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.” Christmas is all about the fullness of God for us in Jesus.

**This fullness of God does not fit what men fancy.**

1. The Son of God was truly born a man.
2. Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, but everything else was ordinary.
3. It had to be this way for St. Paul said, “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law…” Galatians 4:4-5.
4. Who would have recognized Jesus if John the Baptizer did not prepare His way preaching repentance and saying, “Behold the Lamb of God!”
5. His hometown Nazareth had no place for such a humble God for sinners saying, “Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him” Mark 6:3.
6. The same fancies about God stand in our way.
7. What is the miracle at Christmas? Is it merely the virgin birth or God finally being born just like us?
8. Luther notes, “Behold, thus they all lie who say, they mean the true God who created the heavens and the earth, and yet do not accept his work and Word, but exalt their own opinion above God and His Word…Now there is no surer sign of a thing of God than that it is against or beyond our fancy.” (Postils Vol. 1 220)
9. Isaiah put this forward as a promise that, “all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.” Jesus truly stood in our place as a man.
10. St. John said, “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

**This fullness of God also has glory fit for only One man.**

1. Jesus is truly the Son of God.
2. He is the Word that was with God, but distinct from the Father.
3. The Holy Spirit sets Christ apart from all others for He was born sinless.
4. His perfect life said, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.” Matthew 5:17
5. The disciples witnessed glory greater than angels or good people saying, “We have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father”
6. The same Lord still rules in glory before a sinful world.
7. Jesus has this right for “…he upholds the universe by the word of his power” Hebrews 1:3b
8. He does not “lord it over” sinners for God became man to declare, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Matt 28:18-19
9. We cannot behold the same glories that the disciples saw from Jesus, but Chrysostom tells us. “We admire Him not only on account of miracles, but also by reason of the suffering; as that He was nailed upon the cross” (Study-Bible 1777).
10. Glory reigns with Jesus forgiving our sins and His sacrament stating, “God is with us” until He returns in all glory.

**This fullness of God is love fit for giving salvation.**

1. Jesus is full of grace for our life.
2. Everything He does and says is good.
3. It begins at Christmas, goes to the cross, and remains forever.
4. His undeserved love is a gift given to the loveless.
5. “We love because he first loved us” 1 John 4:19.
6. Jesus is full of truth to save our lives.
7. There is no way to God by human strength of love.
8. Christmas falls apart in the hands of men, but Christ gains the attention today.
9. He told us, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” John 14:6.
10. To abide in His Word is a promise to believe in Him who was born to set His people free.

 Christmas is all about the fullness of God for us in Jesus. The Lord fill you with love in your families, food on your tables and presents for all and God give you His fullness to celebrate His love all our days and most certainly in heaven. Amen. In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.