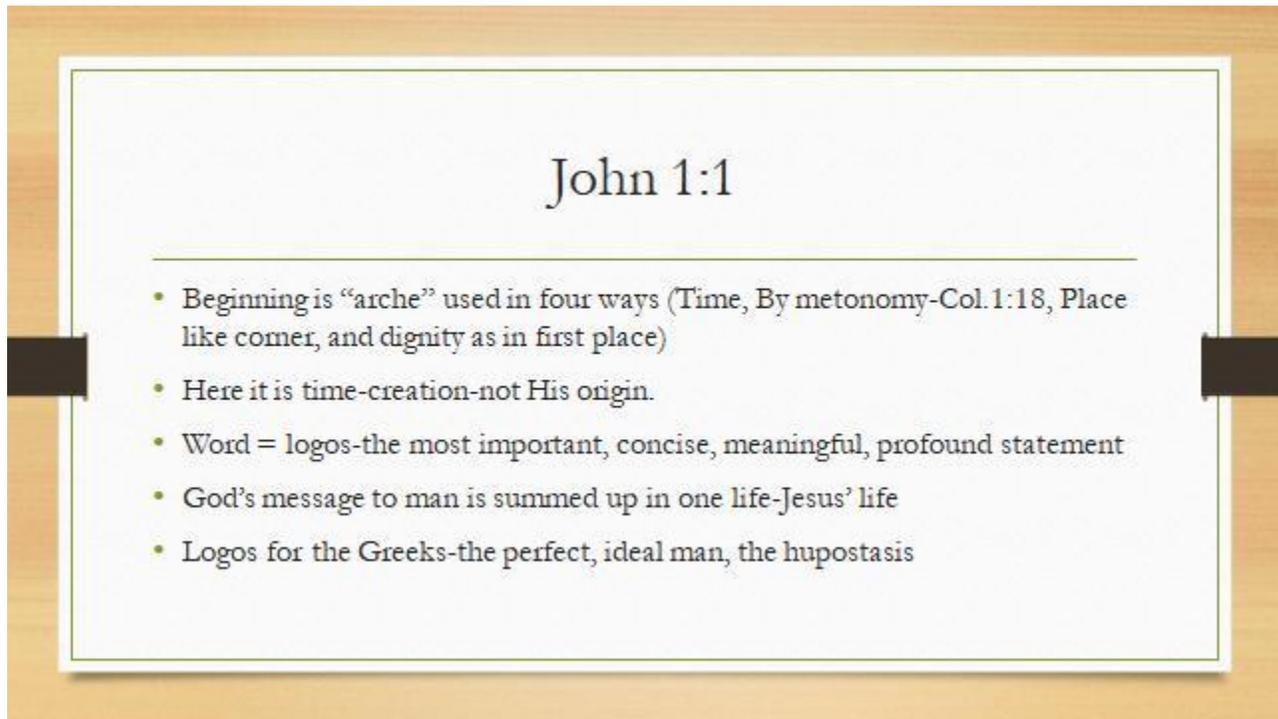


The Mind of Christ

January 30, 2019

Today we are going to talk about the pre-existent Christ. This is from May 11, 2010



‘Meta’ – change or beyond ‘Onuma’ meaning name

Let’s read John 1:1-18 to begin.

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² [a]He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. ⁵ The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not [b]comprehend it.

I wrote what I’m teaching tonight on May 11, 2010.

Today the descent into the Challenger Deep begins. We’re about to step of the pier we talked about last week. {To know the mind of Christ, we need to read Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. In following A. T. Robertson’s plan, I begin in John 1-18 to explore the nature of the preexistent Jesus.

Since Jesus’ is the same yesterday, today and forever, his nature is not dependant on his body. I AM that I AM is who He is. The Apostle John, by inspiration, pulls back the curtain for the incarnation of Christ and shows us the person who Jesus really is. So now we jump off the pier with John 1:1. ¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The word “beginning” is from the word begin or ‘archay’ {αρχη}. This is where we get the word ‘arch’. When they were building the Roman arches, they were the beginning or the most important part. The arches were the main support or how they would keep the building held up. My first inclination is to take this passage as the ‘beginning of the world’ as in Genesis 1:1. But I must be careful not to assume this. In other words, like “in the beginning was the Word”, we have to be careful not to assume that Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”. Now it may be and I have come to the conclusion that it IS, but I won’t rule out other options.

This word, ‘beginning’ is used in various texts such as the beginning of time, or as in Col. 1:17-18, ¹⁷ He [y] is before all things, and **in Him** all things [z] hold together. ¹⁸ He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. In this text, He is the beginning of all things. That’s not relationship or time. He is the forefront of everything. He is not at the tail end of anything. He is the start of everything so the ‘part’ stands for the ‘whole’ of everything. He is all-inclusive. (But note – in answer to a question, “He is outside the system. He is not a part of the system. He’s the beginning of the process of time but He is outside of time and space. He is the beginning of all things that are in time and space and things that are not. In a place, a corner is a type of beginning. It can also refer to dignity, as Jesus is in first place. He’s on the ground floor. He began it all.)

Regarding time, Arché is normally used with a preposition. In this case, the preposition is “in”. The other senses may and do apply to Jesus, but what is John’s **intent** here? And since he goes on to His making things, it is reasonable to believe that he is speaking of the beginning of the world. (Without Him nothing was made that has been made – so I would think that in the beginning of the world was the Word, and that pushes him back several thousand years from the time of his birth. He goes back to the beginning of the world.) It does not mean that he **had** a beginning; he was there **at** the beginning. But this is not speaking to His origin. But Jesus’ identity at this point is described as “the Word” – “the Logos”.

Logos is a very important term here. The word ‘Logos’ is most basically used of something that **is said**. That is the most usual way it is used—something that is ‘said’ or something that is written. It is an expression of something. It can be like an **idea**, and the **word** is the expression of it.

This afternoon, Molly was talking to me. I was having a little trouble understanding her. She was having no trouble understanding what she was saying, but I have not decoded her language yet. But she was definitely speaking words and I’m sure they were very intelligent...probably profound words. But I didn’t know the code so I couldn’t tell you exactly what she said.

Jesus is the most important, concise, meaningful, profound statement ever made by God. The single Word is “God”. Now imagine God being able to put Himself into one word ... to embody Himself into one word. The Word is “Jesus”. The one Word that can express the totality of God is “In the beginning was the Word” and the word is Jesus. (Verse 14 – ‘the word became flesh’). So I am not saying just the five letters J e s u s. I’m saying Jesus, Himself, as the person of Jesus – the embodiment of God. He is and was the most important, concise, meaningful and profound statement ever made by God.

Man struggles on his own, to use words to express himself, to communicate who we are, what we think, and we die trying to be understood because we can’t find the right words to say what we want to say. Most of us struggle all of our lives to try to be understood. Even those people that we are closest to – husbands, wives, parents, siblings – many times we still feel like that there is still some barrier between us and the other person that we really can’t put totally into words exactly what we’re trying to say or communicate.

Pat Landes – We talked in our prayer group about not being able to do that with God. The magnitude, the grandeur that we can even begin to communicate with God is amazing.

With all the words that we have in the universe, and all the languages that we have from the most primitive to the most sophisticated languages among us, are not sufficient to capture all the meaning that needs to be made. But **not so** with God; He said “Jesus” and that said all. The deep things of God are embodied in Jesus and in a language we can understand. Jesus communicates God more clearly than all of nature, all of our God-ordained feelings, and all of the Bible. Now, I am not discounting those things. We learn something about God from nature, from our inherent feelings because we are created in His image, and we can learn things about God through His written Word, the Bible. But there is no more concise word than Jesus Himself.

The answer to “who is God”, “what does He want” and “what is His message to me” is compacted into one life – and that life is Jesus’ life. There is no other life worth studying compared to the life of Jesus. I’ve read a lot of biographies in my life. I like to read Biographies about people and see how they lived, and so forth. But there is just **no** more profound life than the life of Jesus. Now, I really think we ought to be talking about that more. We ought to be talking about people about that more. I think we’ve sold Jesus short and we have so much part of our culture that we have lost the awe of who He really is and how profound He really is.

So in 1 John 1:1 Jesus is called “The Word of Life”. [What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life](#). Revelation 19:13 says, [“¹³ He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.”](#) For me, in the beginning, in my life, I want my communication, I want my word and deed to be more precise and more profound to reflect the Jesus within me. Jesus dwells within me and He is going to be reflected out of me by what I do and what I say. I have to fine-tune my words and my actions in order to more precisely convey who Jesus is while I live my life. So, if God was to take the vast amount of who He is, the deep things of God, and He was able to hone them down into one single, solitary life, it would be / and is, Jesus. And now that that life lies ‘in’ me, and that life within me gets expressed out into the world, it has to be an expression of the *true* Jesus within me. It can’t be a characterization. Jesus can’t be just a caricature of Jesus. It has to be as accurate as possible or I will confuse people and they will not know who Jesus is in my life, unless I am able, in a sense, to channel Him out to the world. So I want the parts of my communication that are confusing and unclear to be brought into submission to the head.

Let’s talk about the word Logos – and why John was spiritually led to use this term. The Greeks were seeking a perfect, ideal man. They were always looking for the “ideal” man or the ideal person – something or someone who embodies the ideal. All their philosophers and religionists of the Greek world saw a focal point – a way to explain the existence or the essence of man. They were looking for the hypostasis—the most basic or fundamental truth. The Greeks were philosophers at heart because they were searching for the most fundamental truth that they could find. They said that when they found it, they would have found the LOGOS. They would have found the one single, solitary Greek thought (what was the most profound thought) that would encapsulate all of life, all of existence in that one thought. They searched and searched for it. Jesus was born into a Hellenistic world, so when John began to describe who He is, he uses a word that the Greeks would understand. He uses the word Logos (λογος). In the beginning was the logos. So what John is saying to the Greek mind, not so much to the Jewish mind, ‘I will tell you who the logos really is’. I will reveal him to you. I am going to show him to you.

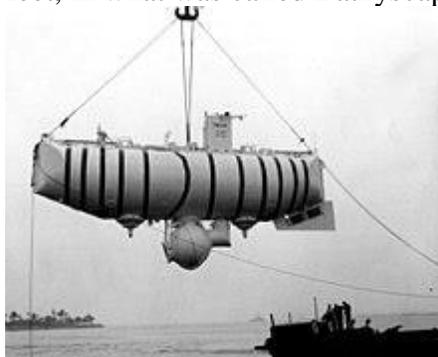
It's almost like Paul telling the Greek men in Athens that he could explain to them the unknown God in their Temple. Acts 17:22-23. "Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. ²³ For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you." Paul told them that he would reveal the unknown God to them. John is saying to the Greek world that they are looking for this most important logos, this most important, ideal, perfect person, and I am going to tell you about him. He is **the** logos of God. And, of course, that was Jesus.

John 1:1

- January 23, 1963 Jacque Piccard and Don Walsh, Bathyscape named Trieste
- The life they saw was a flatfish-and Piccard was amazed to find any life
- "Was"=imperfect tense, continues to be the Word
- Theos=God or Deity
 - John 20:28; Rom.9:5; Phil.2:6; Heb.1:8; I John 5:20
 - Rom.11:33-34 Difficulty of the search

I read this morning, and Ron will like this, that when Jacque Piccard and Don Walsh descended to the floor of Challenger Deep, the first two men to go to the bottom of the 36,000 feet, I'm wondering if they did the series, they named captain Piccard after this man. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques_Piccard

Jacques Piccard (28 July 1922 – 1 November 2008)[1] was a Swiss oceanographer and engineer, known for having developed underwater submarines for studying ocean currents. In the Challenger Deep, he and Lt. Don Walsh of the United States Navy were the first people to explore the deepest part of the world's ocean, and the deepest location on the surface of Earth's crust, the Mariana Trench, located in the western North Pacific Ocean. He had a twin. His brother was Jean Luc Piccard. They went to the floor of Challenger Deep around 36,000 feet, in what was called Bathyscaphe, named **Trieste**.



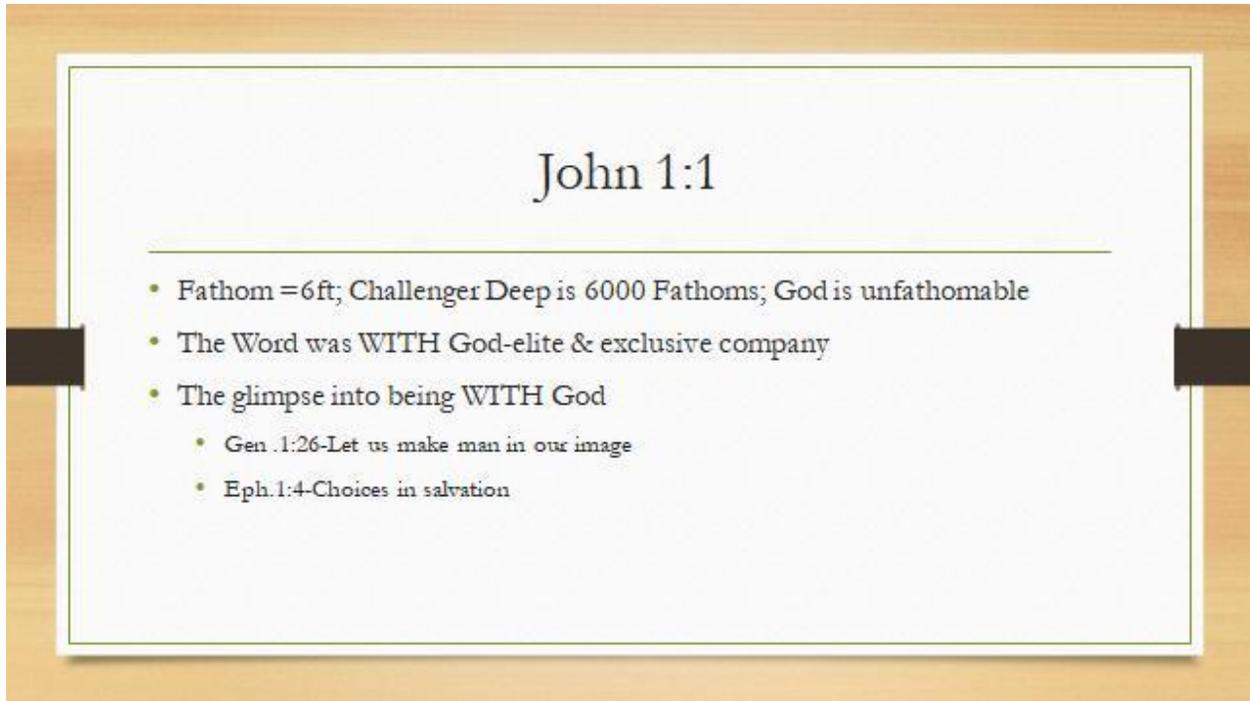
Trieste



Flatfish

On January 23, 1960 they descended down. They accomplished what no two people have ever done. And the only form of life that they saw when they reached the bottom, was a flatfish. They went all the way down 36,000 feet, and the only life they “saw” was a flatfish. They could only stay there for about 20 minutes because they had to come back up, so they may have been other life that the men did not see. They only had a very limited range of vision from that depth.

I tell you that to say that if we go down to the ground level of our very existence, the very existence of God’s nature – to the furthest that we, humans, can go into the mind of God, what are we going to find? What are *we* going to see? What life are we going to experience? And I maintain that what you are going to see is the logos. You’re going to see Jesus. He is going to be the life at ground zero.



Then John uses the term “was”. **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.** He uses the term was. In no sense of the imagination am I a Greek scholar, but I *can* look up the tense of the verb. The tense of the verb “was” is the imperfect tense. The imperfect tense means that Jesus “continues to be” the Word; not just that he was at the beginning. This tense shows that He continuous to be the Word. That truth had a beginning but it continues to be. It didn’t change. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. The word determines its use for God in this text. The word Theos “θεος” is a very popular name for God. We understand that “θεος” is deity. Other references to connect Jesus’ identity with God might include:

John 20:28 When Thomas went to touch the Lord Jesus in His side, what did he say?

Thomas answered and said to Him, **“My Lord and my God!”** He testified that Jesus was God.

Romans 9:5 Paul refers to Christ in the flesh as being God

... from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, **who is over all, God blessed forever.**

Phil. 2:6

... although He existed **in the form of God**, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped

Heb. 1:8 But of the Son He says, **“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, Amen.**

1 John 5:20

...and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. **This is the true God and eternal life.**

What they are showing us here is that the Bible is consistent in designating Jesus as being God. He is deity. In this verse we are told, he has given us understanding so that we might know of Him, – so Jesus facilitates our understanding. We have understanding because He facilitates it. He makes it possible for us to know, not only Him, but the God that He has come to reveal.

Brian - We also have Jesus talking to the Pharisees in particular like, “[Before Abraham was, I AM.](#)” The Pharisees knew that He was equating himself with God which is why they tried to kill him on several occasions. But you also have the miracles. It comes up in Jonah 1:5 and also in Isaiah 43:2. He calms the waters. He is God and the waters become immediately calm. It’s the same as Jesus calming the waves and the storm. Immediately the Apostles worshiped Him. They realized that this was evidence of deity.

Rod – there are many lines of evidence for Jesus’ deity.

Wayne mentions the Holy Spirit coming down from heaven to testify about Jesus. Jesus had done many miracles while He was here on Earth.

Rod – When we say that Jesus first miracle was changing water into wine, really, that is the first miracle that is recorded for us. Yet, in reading John 1, the first miracle recorded is really the creation of the world. That’s a little bit better than turning water into wine.

Sometimes is really wonder, are miracles just miracles because they are out of the realm of the natural world – what we experience in this world? Miracles may be just the way God operates. Maybe it’s just God’s way of doing things.

Brian – every work of God is a miracle.

Rod – I’ve had debates with people about “does God do miracles today” and I answer, “Well, does God do **anything** today? If he is doing anything today, and it is outside of this universe, isn’t that a miracle? I mean, it’s supernatural, at least. Everything God does is supernatural.

But the signs and miracles were not for his benefit, but for us . . . to get our attention. A sign is a sign because it “points to something else”. That’s why Jesus was so frustrated with them. They wanted another sign, and what it was pointing to, was standing right in front of them! It’s like going down I-4 and seeing a sign for Disney World and you say, “I want to see another sign so I can be sure.” Then you arrive at the gate and you say, “I just want to see one more sign for Disney World.” And you think, “Why don’t you just walk through the gate? You’re there. Why do you want another sign.” “Well, I just love signs!”

So getting to know Jesus’ mind is getting to know the mind of God – or at least the parts He wants us to know! Just as the explorers of the depths risked it all to discover, so I wish to see into the deep cavern of the mind of God.

Yet, Romans 11:33-34 speak of the difficulty of the search we are going to have. ³³ [Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How **unsearchable** are His judgments and **unfathomable** His ways!](#) ³⁴ [For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor?"](#) NASB In sea terms, a fathom is six feet (approx. 1.8 m in reference to depth of water. Challenger Deep is about 6,000 fathoms – the height of 6000 men.) Knowledge is unfathomable. There is no measurement. And Jesus was seeing what we are not allowed to see.

Since John says Jesus was God and He was with God, what difference does the preposition “with” make to my understanding? Again, John says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Why would John put the words “with God” in there? How did He get in there to see God? What does the word “with” convey to us?

There are a variety of meanings here, but I think the most obvious should be pursued. Since John is going to make the case later that the Word became flesh, and He’s talking about Jesus, then in our study, “in the beginning was the word and the word was with God,” It certainly puts Him in elite company. And since Jesus **was** God, it puts him in exclusive company. I have no problem believing that the term God, is an exclusive class which includes three Persons – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, all of whom are God but are individuals in mysterious ways from one another. Therefore Jesus can be both God and **with** God.

Now again, I don’t want to get too much into the godhead and how do we understand this, but when I began to think in sorts of categories, I saw that there is a category of angels, for instance. Angels are in a different category than man. There are different categories of “God”. There are a certain finite number of angels that God has created. We don’t know what that finite number is, but there are probably millions of them. We get a hint of that. Man is a finite number; men who **have** lived on the face of the earth or **will** live on the face of the earth. Again, I don’t know what that finite number is, but there are billions, at least, of people who **have** lived on the face of the earth or **will** live on the face of the earth. And they are all in the category of ‘man’. And then there may be some other categories, like, I don’t know ... the four living creatures. I don’t know if they were angels or they were in a class by themselves. I’m not exactly sure who the _____ were up there. (The word sounded like “velvers”). {Maybe the creatures of Rev. 4:5-11?} They were in a class by themselves.

But what I am saying here is that there are classes of beings. Obviously there are classes of animals, classes of insects, classes of plants and in all those things, **one** is not the **other**. But there is a class that is called “God”. And in that class, there are only three persons; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, but each one of them is God just like each one of us is man. Okay, I’m not Annie and Annie is not me, but we are in the same class. We share, in **some** ways, a common DNA, because we all came from the first two people. So, we all a common DNA, so there is part of you in me, and me in you. We’re all cousins. We are all cousins—some more distant than others. So there is a connection between all of us, among all of us physically, because we all share the same DNA, but we recognize the distinctiveness between us—between each individual person, even though there is a biological connectiveness through us in our DNA. Now, I don’t understand **that** very well either. And I surely don’t understand the spiritual connectiveness between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and how they can all ‘be’ God, and yet how they can all ‘be’ distinct. 'How can they be distinct? Well, we accept it in the human realm but we struggle with it in the Spiritual realm.

So when John says that He **was** God and that he was also **with** God, it doesn’t particularly cause any problems for me because I see Jesus as distinct. Is there one God? Yes, there is one classification of God.

Wayne brought up that some people believe that when Jesus ascended to heaven, He had previously been less than God, but when he ascended, He became God. He may have been an angel, but when he ascended to heaven He became a God.

Rod – There are lots of theories out there. Some see Jesus as a demigod. . . a little god. And some believe that they may become God one day, but I don't think that's possible because of their certain classifications. It's like people talk about when people die they become angels. No they don't—they're still people. People don't become angels and angels don't become people. Angels may **look** like people, but they're still angels.

Now Jesus was God. He could **look** like a person, but He was still God. The nature of who He **is** didn't change. Now, the miracle of the incarnation is that He was all God **and** all man. He connected all of that DNA into one Person but He also connected it to the Godhead as a 'person'.

Comment: (His name, Emmanuel, **means** "God with us".)

I have no problem believing that the "GOD" was in an exclusive **class** being the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. All of them are God but are distinct in some mysterious way. This "Word" that became flesh is in a very exclusive inner circle or community. {How can we} try to imagine what it was like to be with God? Okay, here is where I am going with this. You may ask why we are going through all this to try to understand the mind and life of Christ. It is because I am trying to understand the experiences that Christ had in the pre-existent form. What did He experience with God? What did he experience being **with** the Father and the Holy Spirit? I ask because that is part of His mind! That is part of who He is! And if I am going to understand the mind of Christ, I have to understand some of the experiences He had pre-existently, . . . at least the parts that are **revealed** to me.

So this "Word" who became flesh was in a very exclusive inner circle or community. I am trying to imagine what it was like to be God the way Jesus **was** with God, which is probably beyond the realm of knowing. But we get a glimpse of it in places like Genesis 1:26. This gives us a glimpse of what it was like to be in a community before there was any community of man. "**Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness...'**" There seems to be a conversation going on here among the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit before they actually created man that said, "Let's create them in our likeness."

Now if I try to "knee drop" (wrestle or bring down) from that verse into a conversation that is going on in the pre-existent Jesus' mind, then I get some insight into what that mind was thinking. Why did He think that way? Now, I'm not going to flesh that out too much. But where this exclusive community is discussing **making man**, it is discussing making man **in our image**. They have an idea; they have a plan; they have an agenda which resulted in what—in making man. How does Jesus think? He thinks in terms of "we are going to do something (the Father, Son and Holy Spirit) that will result in "this". It will have "this" kind of **quality** to it . . . this kind of **nature** to it. That tells me something about how the Godhead thinks. Now, why did they think that way? There is a lot I don't understand about it, but I got a little "peek, or peephole" into the mind of God, of the pre-existent Jesus.

We also see this interaction with the Godhead in creation with Salvation. In Ephesians 1:4 we read, "... **just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before [d] Him.**" He is saying that before the creation of the world, God had choices. He chose a certain path of salvation for man before man (or men) who had not yet even been created. Where do I get some insight into the mind of God or the mind of Christ before any of us was ever created? It is certainly before He ever came to earth in AD 3 or AD 0 or whatever.

Carole – Well, before, you said the word “companionship”. The Godhead is a fellowship. So we are in a family — a people of fellowship.”

Rod – Right. And that is the community we find ourselves in. We find ourselves in community because the Ones who ordained that community were in community – the Father Son and Holy Spirit.

We are made in their nature and in their likeness, and therefore it is natural for us to be in community with each other. That is why it’s “not good for man to be alone”.

Pat – Community is what blows my mind. The way you explained it and how Jesus Christ creates this community by living in us because of His nature; because of His community. Oh my word! (I hope I got it all)

Rod – Yes! And again ... when you get inside, back into, back into their nature and how they created man and how they designed man, you need to understand something about . . . It’s like an inventor. You know what is inside an inventor by what he invents! Jesus gives us insight into His mind. In this case we can use the word “invent” because the Godhead invented man. They designed him; they came up with a plan; all throughout their specifications. When they did it, that made it so, but it all existed in the mind of God before it ever existed in the Garden of Eden. Before Jesus ever went to the cross, it was thought about; it was in the mind of God before the creation of the world. So we are getting insight into the mind of God through the preexistence of Jesus!

Being with God involves the Word in some pretty amazing projects, if you will. The project of creating man in the beginning and the project of saving man was already on the drawing board, was being thought about and discussed. This is true in whatever God does. And this is the same Jesus who walked for a while among us! This is the same Jesus. He’s not a different Jesus than the One who was planning to create us in His image or planning to save us before He ever created us! And people are walking around here among us . . . Again, this is where I went with this study.

John 1:2

- Puts Jesus at the creation of the world
- Lessons to knowing His Mind:
 - Mind is vast beyond understanding
 - His nature is relational
 - His administrative ability, diversity, bringing many parts into a unified whole
- This is a template for my being like Him

Now, in John 1:2, “**He was in the beginning with God**”, John repeats the truth by directly connecting the Word as being with God in the beginning. He repeats himself. This phrase is simply to show His relationship to time (Genesis 11:1) and he places the word, Jesus, at the scene. This was Jesus in space and time to be involved in the creation. John’s point was to establish Jesus’ deity, and His involvement in creation would do it on at least two different counts.

1. Only God can create. If you want to establish the deity of Christ, put Him as the creator of the universe. Only God can create something out of nothing. No man was there.
2. The second reason these words show the deity of Christ is that no man was there at creation by the very nature of things. If there was no man there, and we’re talking about it, who was there? Moses wasn’t there when he wrote Genesis 1:1. Moses wasn’t standing off on the side taking notes on a notepad saying, “I’m an investigative reporter and I’m going to tell you how God created the heavens and the earth.” The only reason Moses knew how God created the heaven and the earth is because God revealed it to him. Moses wasn’t even thought of. Neither was his mommy or daddy.

Since all of this is so exclusive to God, what does this amazing discovery mean for my knowing the mind of Christ and being changed into His likeness?

First, His mind is vast beyond understanding.

Second, his nature is relational. That preposition “with” tells us volumes about Jesus. He was meant to be **with...** What if Jesus wasn’t meant to be **with** me ... or I wasn’t meant to be with **Him**? That little preposition changes the whole ballgame, because now I am **in relationship with** Christ.

Third, his involvement in creating and in planning demonstrates his amazing administrative ability and His diversity. He had the ability to get so many parts into a unified whole. Imagine what Jesus and the Godhead did in bringing about all the different manifold parts and variations . . . I mean, it is amazing how this universe is put together. All of that flowed through the mind of Jesus. If I am going to know the mind of Jesus, I am at least going to have to consider that He has the most amazing, inventive, creative, administrative mind that ... I mean that this is just beyond anything I could even begin to impress (i. e. to make someone feel admiration and respect. This is vast. His mind is vast.

I have to understand the nature of the mind that I am looking at. I am seeing just a little sliver of what is being expressed in a three-year-period of time – and there is so much more in that mind that I can’t even see or understand. I’m just getting CliffsNotes on the mind of God.

Pat – Does it say in the Greek that “we have the mind of Christ?”

Rod – Yes. It does say in the Greek that we have the mind of Christ at the end of that Philippians passage in Philippians chapter 2:16, “**For who has known the mind of the Lord, that He will instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.**”

I’m going to end with this. I believe, part of knowing the mind of Jesus from Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, is the realization that we can only understand a minuscule amount of the knowledge we want to know of the mind of Christ. Let’s continue this next week.