

John 1:14
Christmas Day, 2016

You probably don't know Lauren Cleary. Lauren appeared on a game show called "The Moment of Truth" in 2008 on Fox. The premise of the game show was simple. Surrounded by your family and friends on stage, you are hooked up to a lie detector and asked a series of questions. If you tell the truth, you move onto the next round. If you lie, according to the lie detector, you are finished and you walk away with nothing.

Lauren had breezed through the first rounds just fine. Now it was time for the \$100,000 question. With her husband sitting in front of her, a special guest was called on to ask the next question. Her ex-boyfriend came walking out onto the stage and asked, *"Do you think you should be married to me instead of your husband?"* Lauren says, *"I have to be honest. Yes."* She was telling the truth. Her husband looked crushed.

She could have stopped and won \$100,000. It was three more questions to win \$200,000. The next question: on: *"Since you have been married, have you been unfaithful to your husband?"* Lauren answered, *"Yes."* She was telling the truth according to the lie detector. She again had the choice to keep the \$100,000 or go for more. She chose to go on and was asked the question: *"Do you think you are a good person?"* *"Yes,"* she answered. According to the lie detector, *"It was a lie."* She lost everything. She didn't look surprised. She lied about what everyone watching her knew was the truth, she wasn't a good person.

"Are you a good person?" It's essentially the question that God asked Adam when he gave him a chance to confess: *"Where are you?"* The answer Adam gave cost far more than \$100,000. **"I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."** Adam was doing the only thing "bad" people can do. Hide. Adam had a perfect relationship with God. That is until Satan convinced him to throw it all away for a piece of fruit. Now "good" couldn't be his answer to the question anymore. *"Are you a good person?"* We may not like the answer to that question, but we can't deny it, the answer to that question is "no."

Jesus came into this world to change the answer to that question. When God created this world, he simply did it by speaking words. He said, let there be, and there was. He created a world so big that our human brains can't even comprehend how big it is. From all the stars and galaxies to the smallest molecule, God simply spoke a word and it happened. In the middle of this perfect and incredible creation, he placed Adam and Eve. They threw it all away.

That didn't stop God from loving them any less. He loved his creation. Instead of throwing Adam and Eve away, he chooses to save them. He chose to make things once again right. For thousands of years this world would wait for that Savior. Then came the day. The waiting was over - **"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."** THAT is the heart and soul of Christmas! That's why we are here this morning. God is not just someone up there or someone who doesn't care about you. He came and **"made is dwelling among us."** The almighty God left his heavenly home and came to this world and *"tented"* in it for a while.

John makes it sound so simple. In his Gospel, John doesn't give any of the information that was recorded in the other Gospel's about the birth of Jesus. He doesn't talk about the manger, the cattle, the no-room-in-the inn, and any of the other details. He assumes that his readers know those details. Instead, he wants people to know the "why" about Jesus' coming. Later in this book, John states his purpose in writing his Gospel: **"These are written 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 20:31)

That's why Jesus came to this world – so that **"you may have life in his name."** If our greatest need in this world was information, God would have sent an educator. If our greatest need in this world was money, he would have sent an economist. If our greatest need in this world was pleasure, he would have sent an entertainer. But God knew what our greatest need was. We needed a Savior! So, God took on human flesh and became one of us. He came to take our place in this broken world. He took all the temptations that Satan would throw at him, day after day after day. Therefore, he understands all the struggles that we may go through. He knows our frailties. He became flesh and took on everything that goes along with being a human being. Yet, there is one big difference – he never once slipped. He never wavered

from his mission to go to the cross and give up His life. All so that he could say the words: **"It is finished!"** (In Greek, it's one word.) The **Word** came to say the *"Word."* Payment was made. Forgiveness was won.

That is what that child in the manger brings to this world. He comes with **"Grace"** and **"Truth."** God will always pour out his love to us, and he will never lie. Our heavenly Father says to us: *"Here is my eternal gift to you. Here in my Son you have every ounce of forgiveness and grace I have to give to you. All wrapped up in this one little package called Jesus."*

It's a simple question – *"Are you a good person?"* The answer is worth so much more than any money in a game show. Because, you see that in Jesus, the answer is: *"Yes!"* That's the good news that God has for you today. Therefore, let us celebrate the birth of our Savior! Let us treasure the truth: **"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."** Amen.