

John's Gospel for Men's Table Talk

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And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. And from his fulness have we all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only One, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known. John 1:14-18

This Word-made-flesh, himself God, is nevertheless differentiable from God, and as such is intimate with God; as man, as God's incarnate Self-expression, he *has made God known*.... From this Greek term [Gk: exegesato, "to make known"], we derive 'exegesis': we might almost say that Jesus is the exegesis of God. Elsewhere in the New Testament the verb means to 'tell a narrative' or 'to narrate' (Lk. 24:35; Acts 10:8; 15:12, 14; 21:19). In that sense we might say that Jesus is the narration of God. 'As Jesus gives life and is life, raises the dead and is the resurrection, gives bread and is bread, speaks truth and is the truth, so as he speaks the word he is the Word.'" D.A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1991), 135.

John 1:18 Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε. **μονογενῆς** (*single of its kind, only*) θεὸς ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν **κόλπον** (*came forth from the being of God*)

τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκεῖνος **ἐξηγήσατο** (*to unfold, declare to unfold, declare*)

^{ESV} John 1:18 *No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.*

^{MIT} John 1:18 *God has never been seen by anyone. God divulged himself in the one uniquely born, the one embraced by the father.*

^{NET} John 1:18 *No one has ever seen God. The only one, himself God, who is in closest fellowship with the Father, has made God known.*

^{NAU} John 1:18 *No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained (Him).*

The *NIV* and *NASB* represent theologians who believe that the original text read “*ho monogenes theos*” = “the unique, or only begotten God,” while the *KJV* is representative of theologians who believe that the original text was “*ho monogenes huios*” = “the only begotten Son.” The Greek texts vary. Many the Church Fathers, such as Irenaeus, Clement and Tertullian, quoted the verse with “Son,” and not “God.” This is especially weighty when one considers that Tertullian argued aggressively for the incarnation and is credited with being the one who developed the concept of “one God in three persons.” If Tertullian had had a text that read “God” in John 1:18, he certainly would have quoted it, but instead he always quoted texts that read “Son.”

Moses and others heard his voice, and saw the cloud and the fire, which were the symbols of his presence; but such a manifestation of God as had now taken place, in the person of Jesus Christ, had never been exhibited to the world. It is likely that the word (orao) seen, here, is put for known, as in John 3:32; 1 John 3:2, 1 John 3:6, and 3 John 1:11; and this sense the latter clause of the verse seems to require: - No man, no matter how highly favored, has fully known God, at any time, in any nation or age; the only One - unique - who is in the bosom **κόλπον** of the Father, who was intimately in the Most High, he declared him, **εξηγησατο**, announced the Divine nature, itself.

1. The name “Jesus Christ” first appears in verse 17 -versus 17 and 18 may be a later edit to the text
2. “Grace and truth” (see verse 14 are the realities of God that only God may bring
3. Moses is limited to the Law
4. The disclaimer in verse 18 is stressed later: (5:37; 6:46; I John 4:12, 20)
5. No one has seen God is a reference to Exodus 33:18
 - a. Jesus reveals the “things hidden”
 - b. He is the One and the only. **μονογενής**
6. “In the bosom” is not “upon the bosom”
7. The Gospel is written to proclaim and explain Jesus - Jesus is God exegeting his Godself - here we see God