

**God Becomes One of Us
December 24, 2006 (9:30 AM)**

John 1:1-14

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Synopsis:

The psalmist cries out, “As the deer pants for the water, so my life longs for you, O LORD.”

All people long for God; even if they don’t believe in God, they wish there was a God to fulfill their longings. My prayer for you today and tonight is that your longing will encounter God present in Jesus Christ. Here’s the good news: The God for which people longed has shown up on earth. This is the Christmas message.

I.

People Long for God These Days

John 1:4 “and the life was the light of all people”

Amazing! Given the last 40 years

God is Dead: the rejection of the sacred

-April 8th 1966 “God is Dead” on cover of Time

-culmination of Nietzsche (19th cen)

“God is dead, and we killed him”

-*The Secular City* (Harvey Cox of Harvard)

*40 years and secularism has left us cold, longing

God is Alive and Well: the embracing of the sacred

-Rise of religion in US (all kinds)

-Rise of Islam in world

-Rise of Christianity in southern hemisphere

*Secular proclamation has waned, sacred has gained

People Now Long for God: Echoes of a voice (NT Wright)

Justice = put things right

E.g. Somalia, Middle East, homeless and immigrants

Spiritual = in touch with more than self

E.g. More than material world
Relationships = want restored and healthy relationships
E.g. *Bowling Alone*: wanting friends, family, intimacy
Beauty = expressions of goodness and truth
E.g. Italy, Sistine Chapel, Messiah (Handel)

*People long for God as the deer pants for water

II.

People Longed for God in John's Day **John 1:6 "There was a man sent from God"**

John the Gospel Writer

- Asia Minor around Ephesus in 90's
- Last of Gospels
- God in culture: Options in John's day
 - Jewish = God in Torah
 - Mystery = God in experience
 - Emperor = God in state

John's Prologue:

- to Jews and Gentiles
- Categories: Creation, Tent, Wisdom

*People who long for God find him in Jesus =
Word of Creation from Genesis
God living among us as in exodus
Wisdom/Order in person as in Prov 8

READ: First part of John in Plain English

III.

God Meets Our Longing in Jesus Christ **John 1:14 "And the Word became flesh and lived among us"**

God meets our longing then and now in Jesus Christ

What Are You Longing for Today?
What and Who Will Fulfill It?
How Will You Fulfill Your Longing?

Here's what I long for:

- My life would have meaning for others
- My family would come to know God in Jesus Christ
- My relationships would be restored
- This church would know Jesus, read Bible, and go

*I pray you may find your longing fulfilled in Jesus Christ,
the Word become flesh living among us full of grace and truth.