

Today we're going to take in the words of the last apostle who ever lived.

1 John 1:1-4

"The Word Of Life"

*A lot of people have a lot of ideas about who Jesus is. A lot of people have a lot of ideas about who *God* is. (He's the Guy w/the giant flyswatter in the sky, waiting, ready to smack us down when we start having fun or get out of line. Or He's the Gentle Giant, the Man upstairs who's there to give us warm fuzzies & make us feel good. Or He's the One who is just always angry at me. He's determined to send me to hell & there's nothing that's ever going to change that.)

A lot of people have a lot of ideas about who *we* are. (As Christians we no longer sin. Or, no matter what, because of past painful things that have happened in my life I'm forever marred & never going to be able to get certain things right).

1 John is all about setting the record straight. John's heart is to teach us the *truth* of who God is. The *truth* of who Jesus is, the relationship that He has w/the Father & His role in our lives. The truth of who *we* are, what our relationship is (as Christians) *to* the world & w/one another... Translation? This book is gonna be good! *☺ So w/that we read.

Vs 1-4

The 1st thing that John draws our attention to is the fact that what He's going to teach us *about* & set the record straight *concerning* is, "That which was from the beginning..." – 3 Times & in 3 places the Bible speaks of the beginning.

Genesis Ch 1 & Vs 1 brings into focus for us the beginning of creation, the beginning of time. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."¹ The word "created" is the Hebrew word "Bara" & it always only has God as the subject. It means to create something out of nothing. There was nothing (pertaining to a material universe). God spoke, & there was something. There's another word in Hebrew that shares man as the subject & it's the word "Asah". It means, the creation, or assembly of something out of things that already exist...

Now, you don't have to do too much deductive reasoning to come to the conclusion that if time (as we know it) began when God created the heavens & the earth, & God was the One who spoke time/matter into existence, that means that God exists outside of time, which points to the *eternal* nature of God...

Enter the 2nd time/place the Bible speaks of the beginning. The gospel of John, 1:1.

¹ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Ge 1:1). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

***“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”**

² Here, we have a *couple* of things. #1. A progressive revelation as to the Person/nature of God. In Gen 1 we see the word, “Elohim”. I’ve spoken to you before of the fact that when you add the “im” on the end of a Hebrew word, it takes us from the singular to the plural. “Cherub” = 1. “Cherubim” = 2 or more. So, in Gen 1:1 we’re introduced to the idea of the plural nature of the 1 God... The gospel of John kind of parses it out a little differently & gives us just a bit more clarity.

But what he’s doing is taking us back *before* the beginning of time, *before* creation so as to give us a greater depth of revelation regarding the *eternal nature* of God. However, He also introduces us to the 2nd Person of the 1 & only God, “The Word”. The Word was *with* God, & *the Word was* God. Notice that, “In the beginning was the Word...” By the time there was a beginning, the Word was already there. “Was” places us in the past tense. Or another way to understand it, drift back in your mind as far back as you can possibly comprehend (billions/trillions of years). Once you go back so far that you genuinely can’t comprehend time beyond that, Christ (God the Son) comes to you from *before that point* to meet you. He was already there.

John carries on, **“He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”³ He (the Word) predates *anything* that was made. In fact, He Himself made “all things”. Therefore, He Himself *can’t be* made. He’s the Creator, being Himself the *Uncreated* One. He has no beginning, no end, He’s eternal in nature. **“All things were made through Him & w/out Him nothing was made that was made.”*****

This is the One whom John is drawing our attention to here as it pertains to this 3rd mention of the beginning. * “That which was *from* the beginning.” This One, who comes out of eternity past, Who has always existed, entered *in* to time & space. The One of whom the prophet Micah foretold, **“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”⁴ & Again, it doesn’t take too much deductive reasoning to conclude that if this One whom John wrote of was eternal in nature (& only God is eternal in nature) than this One who was manifested (whom they’ve seen, heard & touched) is God. ■ John simply assumes this in the text.**

² *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Jn 1:1–2]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

³ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Jn 1:2–3]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁴ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Mic 5:2]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

The gospel of John was written (basically) to prove the *Deity* of Jesus, His *Humanity* being assumed. The 1st Epistle of John was written (basically) to prove the *Humanity* of Jesus, His *Deity* being assumed. John wants His reader to know, the eternal God, who was from the beginning, entered into time/space (never sacrificing His deity) yet as completely human as you & me. God Himself, entered our world & He took upon Himself *real/actual authentic humanity*.

*He says, “We have *heard* Him.” What he’s going to drive us to is the fact that he’s not delivering a message of hearsay or tradition. What he says isn’t conjecture or theory, it’s not some carefully crafted philosophy or a “once upon a time” story... John wants us to realize that he experienced this eternal God in the fullness of humanity *personally*... He wasn’t a phantom (or spirit being). He wasn’t some *emanation from* God, He was the *incarnation of* God!

He wants us to know that God made Himself accessible to man, that He can perfectly identify *with* man because He Himself became a Man & revealed Himself to us in this way.* He says, “We’ve heard Him.” Again, “I’m not guessing about what this eternal One taught or what He meant. I was there, I listened to God speaking to me & those around me regularly, repeatedly at length in the Person of J.C.” **The way John constructs his grammar here is like the repeating of a scientific experiment over and over again so as to check results. “We heard Him. We heard Him again, & again, & again, over & over, the results are in & irrefutable.”**

“That which we’ve seen w/our eyes.” Notice the sensory affirmations to what John is telling us. “We’ve heard” (ear-gate). “We’ve seen” (eye-gate). & Here, John adds another layer of depth & confirmation concerning what he’s developing for us. It’s not only, “We have seen w/our eyes” (which means exactly what it sounds like). He says, “we have *looked upon*...” **This is a different word. It’s the Greek word, “Theaomai” from which we get our word “theater”. It means, “to gaze intently”, “to study attentively” & “to contemplate carefully”. When you go to the theater, you don’t just take a passing glance. You rest your eyes on something, you’re trying to pay attention & take in (understand) what’s going on.**

He’s saying, “I want you to know that we studied this ‘Eternal One’ intensely & intently, very carefully.” – Remember when Jesus was teaching & He said (in speaking of J.B), **“What did you go out into the wilderness to see?”**⁵ That’s the same word John uses here.

⁵ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Mt 11:7). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

He says, “You didn’t go out to John to just glance at an anomaly. You went out there to listen to & view him attentively/carefully, you were trying to put together the pieces of this mystery of *who* he was & *what* it was that he was proclaiming.” John says, “Man, we really paid attention to this *One*. We examined Him thoroughly, we wanted to know who He was *exactly*.”

& Notice, not only did John hear the Lord audibly, & see Him (study Him carefully), he says, “we handled Him” physically. (He’s establishing complete authority, absolute certainty regarding what he writes). – When John says, “We handled Him.” Don’t think of John leaning back on the chest of the Lord at the last supper (as awesome as that is & would have been). Think of his encounter w/Him after the resurrection. To touch this Man named Jesus prior to His death wouldn’t necessarily ratify anything for his readers. But to handle Him post resurrection would mean everything...

There he & the disciples were. It was the 3rd day after Jesus had been placed in the tomb. There had been rumors & whispers of resurrection, but they hadn’t see Him personally. (The empty tomb was there, the ladies were ecstatic but just seemed crazy to them). **Out of nowhere a couple of disciples burst into the room huffing & puffing having ran back to Jerusalem from Emmaus & they’re going on & on about how Jesus was alive, He’d appeared to Simon, He was made known to them in the breaking of bread & then suddenly Jesus is standing right there in their midst & He says, “Peace to you.” & They all start freaking out! Then He says, “Hey, hey, why are you guys so out of control here? Throttle back a little bit.” & He says, “Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.”⁶**

John says, “We *handled* Him. There He was, risen from the dead... It wasn’t a spirit, we weren’t hallucinating, we touched Him, handled Him, placed our hands in His wounds... He was alive.” Again, this word “handled” means, “to handle w/a view to investigation.” He was flesh & bone... “The Word of life.” *

John begins to work toward revealing who this One (who was from the beginning) was/is. He’s the “Word” of life. The “Logos”. That by which God has chosen to reveal Himself fully/completely to man. Through the Word... “In the beginning was the Logos, & the Logos was w/God, & God was the Logos...” The gospel of John continues, **“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.”⁷** He is the wellspring of light... & life.

⁶ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Lk 24:39]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁷ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Jn 1:4]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

“& the life was *manifested*.” Meaning to make visible or known what has been previously hidden or unknown (to make plain/evident that which already exists). This of course takes us to the 14th Vs of the 1st Ch of the gospel of John. “*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld (theaomai) His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*”⁸

This life, (which God is), previously invisible (though always existing) was made visible to man in the Person of J.C. God revealed all that He embodies through the Person of His Son (He who has seen Me [Jesus said to Philip] has seen the Father). Col 1 tells us that Jesus is the “image” of the invisible God.

One commentary put it this way. “We put light which is invisible through a prism, break it up into its component parts, and it becomes visible. The beauty of the life that God is, broken up into its various parts such as love, grace, humility, kindness, etc., is seen through the prism of the human life of our Lord...” (I like that).

But this life, (Jesus said, I’m the way, the truth, & the life...) was brought out into the open where men could see it. It was plainly/physically, tangibly revealed.

John says, “We’ve seen & bear witness & declare to you that *eternal* life which was w/the Father & was manifested to us—” *

*Notice, Jesus doesn’t only *give* eternal life. He *is* eternal life. The one who has Christ has life (eternal life). The one who doesn’t have Christ, doesn’t have life, but the wrath of God abides on Him. *

& Again, we note the distinct separation in the oneness of God. “That eternal life which was *with the Father*.” You might write it down & look it up later, John 6:46-48. This also reminds us of the high priestly prayer of Jesus in Jn 17. “*And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.*”⁹ John is highlighting for us the eternal relationship that exists between the Father & the Son. & At the risk of redundancy, you can’t be *eternal* in nature unless you’re God. Mankind has a definite beginning. God alone has no beginning. He exists outside the boundaries of time... So in no uncertain terms John in plainly stating, “God, was made manifest to us (became visible, tangible, touchable) in the Person of Jesus.” (Now it’s a bit of a spoiler alert because John has held off telling us specifically Who this “Word of Life” is who has been made manifest, but he’s leading up to it.)

⁸ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Jn 1:14]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁹ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Jn 17:5]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Vs 3

* Ladies and Gentlemen: This is the role/responsibility of every believer. “That which we have seen & heard we declare to you.” Listen to me. Once you’ve experienced eternal life. You’ve heard the gospel, been changed *by* the gospel, the Word of Life has *given* you life, you *want* to declare it, to share it w/other people! *You want to make known that which has been made known to you! That forgiveness of sin, everlasting life, a relationship w/the God who created the heavens & the earth is available to you! Jesus is real! He’s alive! He’s defeated death! He loves you, & He wants to know you & for you to know Him!*

Now, truth be told, not everybody wants a relationship w/God. To them, the offer of a relationship w/God sounds about as fun as offering an 8th grader a relationship w/the principal in their school... ☺ They think, “Why would I want a relationship w/the guy who lives to punish me, to look for every little thing I might be doing wrong & scold me?” *You see? They don’t know the truth of who God is, how He loves them, & what He’s done for them in making a way where there was no way... When you know the truth, that’s when you want to know & have a relationship w/God. It’s the truth that sets people free & it’s up to you & me... to give it to them. **

* So, John brings up this concept of *fellowship*. It’s the Greek word “koinonia”. It means to share or have in common. Typically, what Christians mean today by the word “fellowship” is, “We get together, hang out & talk about life or whatever hobby/interests we have.” That’s not really how the Bible would define “Fellowship”. *John said that they could have fellowship w/him, but he was nowhere near them (& they definitely weren’t going to be face to face talking life over any time soon). Fellowship revolves around sharing something in common. In this context, he’s declaring who Christ is in truth, sharing Him as the common bond & saying that we share the things of Christ w/one another.* Of course, before you can share the things of Christ, you have to not only know *about* Him, you have to know *Him* (having been saved by Him). But the idea is that we share the same *resources* & we’re bound by the same *responsibilities* that stem from the same essential *relationship* that we have w/God.

& Naturally (supernaturally), sharing the same *resources as* Christ, having a *relationship w/Christ*, sharing in the very life *of* Christ means we should be becoming more & more *like* Christ. *

& It’s here that John finally makes the big reveal...

He names, “That which was from the beginning.” “The Word of Life”. “That eternal life which was w/the Father, yet distinct *from* the Father & was manifested to us...” It’s, “His Son Jesus, who is the Christ.”

Vs 4 Close

Some translations say, “...that *our* joy may be full.” So, which is it? Is it that *your* joy may be full, or that *our* joy may be full”? I say, “Yes”. It applies either way! When Christ is in your life, when you know Him in truth, when you share who He is w/others & *they* receive Him in truth... There’s no greater joy.

*& The thing about joy is that it’s different than happiness. Happiness is circumstantial. There you are, you bought the latest smartphone & my aren’t you happy! & As you’re walking out of the store, you drop it on the pavement & the screen spider cracks in about 1,000 different directions... Suddenly, you’re not happy anymore. ☺

But in God’s presence there is *fullness* of joy, & at His right hand, pleasures forevermore. Now, I should say that it’s completely possible for our joy (on this earth) to be stolen. Satan came to steal, to kill & to destroy... Sin in our lives can steal our joy. It always promises joy, but only delivers sorrow. The joy John is talking about is based in a relationship of fellowship & love that we can share in w/God the Father & His Son J.C.

If our relationship w/God is broken... our joy will be absent. A relationship w/God should always be eager to repent & draw near *to* Him, abiding (as it were) *in* Him (in His word, in prayer, in true *fellowship* w/other believers). *

You share the same resources, the same responsibilities in Christ. Love one another, encourage one another, serve one another, let your light so shine... & God will be glorified in your life.

Prayer Points:

Father, thank You that we can call You “Father”. That we can have a relationship w/You through the work of Your Son Jesus. Thank You that You love us & that You’ve made a way *for* us that we might be saved...

John writes, “Whom we have seen w/our eyes.” We look to Jesus in faith for salvation. It’s not found in something we need to do, but in what He’s already done upon the cross. Turn from your sin. Trust in Him, believe on Him & you will be saved.