

## **The Life Appeared**

### **By David Feddes**

Today we're going to look at the preamble or the introduction to 1 John. As we listen to this letter, it's helpful to think about who is the one writing it under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The apostle John is sometimes called the disciple of love or the beloved disciple, the disciple whom Jesus loved, and he is the one whom God directed to write this book.

Who was John? Well, just a little bit of information about him. He was a fisherman. He was a fishing partner with his brother James and with their friends Peter and Andrew. The four of them, and maybe others, were involved in a fishing business. He was originally born the son of Zebedee, his father, and Salome, his mother. Salome is a woman who also followed Jesus very closely. One time, she was really looking out for her sons and wanting them to be big shots in Jesus' kingdom and came and asked if James and John could sit on either side of Jesus on the best thrones. But not only did she have a bit of a blunder, she was a woman of great courage and devotion to Jesus. When Jesus was hanging on the cross, the Bible says that Salome was there. When the tomb was opened by an angel on the first day of the week, the women who came to the tomb included Salome, the mother of the beloved disciple.

James was the brother of John. Those two were brothers, and Jesus gave them a nickname: Boanerges, sons of thunder. Sometimes they acted like it. There was a village that they came to—a village of Samaritans, who they weren't very fond of anyway—and that village didn't welcome Jesus and the disciples. So James and John said, "Shall we call down fire from heaven on this village?" And Jesus said, "You don't know what spirit you're of." Then they walked on to the next village. But the sons of thunder could thunder. Even though John, having walked with Jesus all those years and filled with the Holy Spirit, is a tremendous disciple of love who writes so movingly about God's love, he still had a little thunder left in him when the occasion demanded it. When you read in this letter what he has to say about those who teach other than the truth about Jesus, he calls them antichrists. So the son of thunder was not entirely changed from his personality. He's changed, but he doesn't become somebody who's not John anymore. When it's time to thunder, he's still got some in him—from the Holy Spirit, though.

He was also the adoptive son of Jesus' mother Mary. When Jesus was hanging on the cross, he said, "Woman, behold your son. Son, behold your mother." From that day he took Mary into his home and cared for her the rest of her life. So you say, "Well, this is somebody who knew Jesus' mother by living with her for years and years." Oh, and by the way, there is some evidence that would indicate that Salome might have been a sister to Mary, the mother of Jesus. She might have been the daughter of Anna, and so she may have been a sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus. There are some texts which, if you read them, seem to indicate that. So John may even have been Jesus' first cousin, with both of their mothers being sisters.

Anyway, there are tight, tight connections. John is a disciple who accompanied Jesus constantly during his public ministry. He saw what Jesus did. He heard what Jesus said. He touched Jesus. He ate with Jesus. He was one of the Twelve that Jesus chose to be with him and to be his witness. And of that Twelve, there were three—Peter and then the two brothers, the sons of thunder, James and John. Those were the inner circle who Jesus sometimes took with him when

nobody else went with him. When Jesus was transfigured on the mountain and talked with Moses and Elijah, and when Jesus shone with the glory of the Lord, it was Peter, James, and John who were there. When Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, Peter, James, and John were the ones he took a little further into the heart of the garden.

So John is somebody who spent all those years with Jesus, whose mother was a very close disciple of Jesus, whose aunt might have been Mary, but certainly, whether she was or not, she was his adoptive mother, because he cared for her the rest of her life after Jesus went to heaven. John is the one who wrote the Gospel according to John. He wrote the three letters: 1 John, 2 John, and 3 John. And he's the author of the book of Revelation, where he received visions from the risen Lord Jesus Christ. So this is who is writing this book that we're going to be studying in more detail.

If you wanted somebody with credentials, it is hard to match Jesus' best friend—the one the Bible calls the disciple Jesus loved—the closest friend of Jesus, the adoptive son of Jesus' mother, the son of a great woman who followed Jesus and was there at the tomb even before the disciples were. This is the one who's writing these words.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete" (1 John 1:1–4).

What he heard, what he saw, what he touched—what's he talking about? Well, if you go back to that great book that he wrote—the Gospel of John—then you'll get an idea of what he means when he says, "That which we heard and saw and handled with our own hands, this is what we're proclaiming concerning the Word of life."

John was there. John was along with Jesus as guests at a wedding, and they ran out of wine. So Jesus' mother brought Jesus to those who were involved in handling the wedding and said, "Just do whatever he tells you." And Jesus tells them, "Hey, pour some water into these big jars and serve it." And they did. When they brought it to the head of the banquet, he says, "This is the best wine I've ever had. Why did you save it until later?"

So that first miracle—and Jesus, in doing that miracle, is revealing something. Who is it that makes wine that gladdens the heart of man? Well, if you read Psalm 104, the Lord is the one who makes wine that gladdens the heart of man. He usually does a slower process to turn water into grapes and then to wine, but sometimes, if he wants to hurry it up a little bit, he can. This is the one who says, "I am the vine. I am the life from which you draw life and by which you can bear fruit." He's the one who changes water to wine.

And John wasn't the only one who had some thunder in him, of course. When Jesus saw that the temple was being changed into a mall and a big money-making racket, he went in and overturned the tables of the money changers and made some cords into a whip and drove out everybody who

was buying and selling there. John saw it. He heard the coins clanking on the ground. He heard Jesus denouncing and telling them, "You're turning my Father's house into a den of thieves."

John was there when a prominent religious leader came to Jesus—a man named Nicodemus. He heard Jesus tell this man, who was considered an authority and a great leader in Israel, "You must be born again. Nobody can see the kingdom of God unless you're born again. God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:3, 16).

John heard those words spoken from the lips of Jesus to Nicodemus. And not only did Jesus deal with important leaders asking questions, but with people nobody else wanted to associate with. There's a woman by herself at a well, and she's there by herself because nobody else wants to hang out with a woman with her reputation. And Jesus says to her, "If you knew who was talking to you, you would ask him and he would give you living water, and you'd never be thirsty again." They get to talking more and more, and Jesus says, "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth" (John 4:10, 24).

And John and the disciples are kind of shocked that Jesus is talking with this woman. But then she goes—she's a woman who's had five husbands and is living with another man—and Jesus tells her what her life has been but tells her, "I am the Messiah." So she leaves and goes back to her village and brings back a bunch of people. And when those people meet Jesus and hear him speak for a while, then they say, "We know that this man really is the Savior of the world" (John 4:42).

Jesus goes into the temple, and there is a place with five colonnades and a pool called the Pool of Bethesda. And there's a man there. He's been crippled for thirty-eight years—disabled, can't walk. And Jesus says, "Do you want to be well?" And the man says, "Yeah." And so Jesus says, "Well then, get up and walk." And he gets up, and he walks. And the people, of course, are astonished. This man is amazed at what Jesus has done for him. And how does Jesus do that? The life appeared. The life appeared, and those legs that had been dead for thirty-eight years were suddenly alive and strong and healthy again.

Jesus is preaching to a very large crowd with thousands and thousands of people, and they are starting to get hungry as the day goes on. And he says, "Well, how much food do you guys have?" And the disciples scrounge up one boy who's got a lunch with him. And they say, "There's no way we can feed this crowd." And Jesus says, "Well, just bring it to me." And then they start handing out the bread, and before you know it, there is bread everywhere and fish everywhere, and they are all eating, and they are satisfied.

When Jesus does his miracles, John is there. He's one of those handing out the baskets and collecting up the leftovers. He hears Jesus say, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna in the desert, and they died. But anybody who eats this bread is going to live forever" (John 6:35, 48–51). The life appeared.

John was in the boat when Jesus came walking towards them on the water. He was one who cried out with fear and then with relief to discover this wasn't just any ghost or terror, but it was Jesus himself. But who is it that is the commander of the wind and the waves? The Bible says the Lord is the one who rules winds and waves. The Lord is the one who gives wine to gladden the heart of man. The Lord is the one who gives humanity bread. The Lord is the one who controls the wind and the waves.

Jesus meets a man who was born blind from birth. He has never seen. And Jesus touches his eyes, and the man can see. And when the man is asked, "Now what happened?" he starts to talk about it a little bit, and some of the authorities say to him, "Well, you know what? That man who you say healed you is a sinner." And the man said, "Well, I really don't know whether he's a sinner or not. I do know one thing: I was blind, now I can see" (John 9:25).

Then he finds Jesus again, and he begins to understand who Jesus really is, and he says, "Lord, I believe," and he worships Jesus. He worships him. Who do you worship but the living God?

Jesus begins to talk to the crowds and to his disciples, and he says, "I am the good shepherd." Who's the good shepherd? Well, in Psalm 23, "The Lord is my shepherd." When somebody says, "I'm the good shepherd," he's making quite a claim. "The Lord is my shepherd." He says, "I am the good shepherd. Everybody who came before me were thieves and robbers, but I've come so that they may have life and have it abundantly." The life appeared. The life appeared.

"I'm the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for my sheep. My sheep know me, and I give them eternal life, and no one can snatch them out of my hand." The life appeared, and he gives eternal life.

As the good shepherd, he comes to a grave where his friend Lazarus is buried, and he says, "Hey, roll back that stone." And Martha says, "Don't roll back that stone. It's going to stink. My brother's been dead a while." And Jesus says, "Roll it back." And they do. And just before he does that, Jesus says, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live even though he dies, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die" (John 11:25–26). That's a pretty big claim. But it's also a pretty big thing to say, "Lazarus, come forth," and the dead man comes forth from the grave. The life appeared. "I am the life."

Jesus is relaxing at dinner, and his friend Mary—there are a lot of Marys in the Bible, but one of them is the sister of Lazarus and of Martha—Mary comes and she anoints Jesus' feet with expensive perfume and wipes his feet with her hair. John is there. He adds this little footnote: "And the scent filled the house." He smelled it. He says in 1 John 1, "What we've heard, what we've seen, what we've handled with our hands." He could have added, "And what we smelled with our noses and what we ate." He could have included all the senses, because all the senses were working when he was seeing Jesus and discovering who he is.

He was there. His hands were grabbing palms and laying coats on the road. He heard the shouts of the crowd when Jesus rode into Jerusalem, "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" John was in the upper room with Jesus. His own feet were washed by the hands of Jesus Christ. Jesus took water and a towel and scrubbed John's feet along with the other

disciples. And John heard him say, "I've given you an example. As I've washed your feet, you should wash one another's feet. As I've loved you, so you ought to love one another. This is how people are going to know you're my followers—if you love one another."

John felt those hands on his feet and heard that voice in his ears and continuing to ring in his heart the rest of his life. John was leaning on Jesus when Jesus was eating at the Last Supper. He received the cup and the bread from Jesus' own hand. That's how close he was to the Lord Jesus Christ.

John was at the cross with Mary, the mother of Jesus, as well as his own biological mother. John heard Jesus say, "Son, here is your mother," and, "Mother, here is your son." John saw them plunge a spear into Jesus' side. "One of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. The man who saw it has given testimony, and he knows that his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you may also believe" (John 19:34–35).

John was the first of the Twelve to reach the tomb when it was empty, after the report of the women, who included his mother. When he went into the tomb, he saw the clothes there, and he believed that Jesus had risen from the dead. He saw. He touched. He knew that grave was empty.

He was there when Jesus appeared. He was there when Jesus said, "It is I. I'm not a ghost. I've got hands and feet. See me. I've got flesh and blood. Give me something to eat." And he ate in front of them, in their presence.

John was there when Thomas said, "I will never believe it," because he'd missed that gathering. And John was there when Jesus came among them again, and Thomas fell at his feet and said, "My Lord and my God!" The life appeared, and John saw it.

John was there fishing with his old buddies when somebody was standing off on the shore and said, "Guys, you haven't caught much. Have you tried the other side?" And so they tried the other side, and they caught so many fish that they were afraid the boat was going to sink—153 when they counted all the fish up. And they got to shore and found that somebody already had fish and was already cooking it and had breakfast going for them. John was there. He felt the sand under his feet. He smelled the fire. He smelled the fish. He tasted the fish that were handed to him by Jesus Christ himself.

"That which we've seen"—that's what he's talking about. This is the disciple, he says at the end of that great Gospel of John, "This is the disciple who testifies to these things and wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true" (John 21:24).

So when you read the Gospel according to John, and now when you read this letter by John, you're not hearing it from just anybody. You're hearing it from the one who was in the room when it happened, the one who was there when it was all going on. "We've heard. We've seen with our eyes. We looked. Our hands have handled and touched. We have seen it. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard." And he says later in this letter, "We have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world" (1 John 4:14). If all those things

that he saw and heard and touched and smelled and tasted still haven't added up and you're not quite sure what he's talking about, he's saying, "Here's what I'm talking about: God sent his Son, who is very God himself, to be the Savior of the world. The life appeared. And I was there."

"That which was from the beginning"—now who's he talking about? I've given you an idea of who John is as well as who Jesus is, but I've emphasized the eyewitness aspect. Now let's look at that again—the fact that the life appeared.

What does he say about Jesus? "That which was from the beginning, this we proclaim concerning the Word of life." So he's from the beginning. He's the Word of life. He is the life. "We proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us." The life was manifested.

What does he mean by that? Well, we might just think that God came to give us eternal life so that we can live forever. But John means more than just that. That's certainly true, but that's not all that he means. When he says, "That which was from the beginning"—who's there at the beginning, before it's begun? Well, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). Or to quote from John's own Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men" (John 1:1–4).

So when John speaks in his letter of the Word of life, he's talking about the very same one whom he's talking about in his Gospel. He says the Word was God, and he was the one who brought life into the world. In the Old Testament, sometimes you read this phrase: "the living God." John is just calling him "the life." There is a life that is beyond all life, before all life, not dependent on any other life—a life that just is, that lives and reigns apart from anything else ever made. Apart from anything that existed or was made, there is life. And this life is a Father and a Word and a Spirit. And this life is eternally generated from the Father through the Son and issues forth in the Holy Spirit. That which is from the beginning—he is the Word of life. He is the life.

Sometimes people say, "Why couldn't God just give eternal life apart from Jesus?" Well, that's an oxymoron. An oxymoron is saying something that contains a contradiction. You can't give life without giving the Life. Sorry—there is only death apart from the Life. You can't give life without the Life. He's the eternal God. He's from the beginning. He's the Word of life. He just is the Life.

At the same time, the Bible makes it very clear that in the person of Jesus Christ, that One who is the Life before anything was ever made—Jesus did not begin to exist when he entered into Mary's womb or when he was born in that stable. Jesus, as the Son, as the living Word, was there at the beginning—and indeed before the beginning, in endless ages. Jesus, as Son of God, as God, had no beginning.

But he took upon himself a human nature, and he took upon himself real human flesh. He could be heard. He could be seen. He could be touched. And that is what is so remarkable. The invisible—the God whom nobody can look upon and live, the God who is unknowable unless he

chooses to make himself known in some fashion—this eternal Life that is beyond all life and all living things came in a form and as a man who could be heard and seen and touched.

We will never, ever fully understand this. People have been writing about this for two thousand years and haven't got it figured out—how God can be Trinity, how Christ can be fully human and at the same time fully divine and the eternal Life. We'll never understand it. But the Bible makes it very clear that this is the reality: the eternal God took on human flesh.

"The Word was with God. The Word was God," and as John says in the prologue of his Gospel, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only—the only begotten—who came from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). "No one has ever seen God, but God the only begotten, who is at the Father's side, has made him known" (John 1:18). That's what John says. Nobody's ever seen God, but the only begotten God who's at the Father's side has made him known.

The life appeared. The life appeared.

And so, when you understand who Jesus is, you know that he's eternal God. You know that he is human flesh that can be heard, seen, and touched. And that he's God incarnate, which just means God made flesh. He's the Life, but the Life appeared. He's the eternal Life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.

That is the core of the Bible's message about who Jesus is. He is God. He is human. And he has appeared to us in order to bring us participation in that Life.

And so John goes on to say, "We proclaim to you what we've seen and heard." Why? "So that you also"—you who are reading this letter—"may have fellowship with us," the apostles, the writers of the New Testament Scriptures. So that you'll have fellowship with us. And who's our fellowship with? "Well, our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete" (1 John 1:3–4). **Fellowship and joy!**

I've spent quite a bit of this message emphasizing the facts. John was there. He knows. You can take it to the bank when he writes and tells you this—and not just because he's an eyewitness but because he's filled with and guided by the Holy Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the living God.

But it's not just getting our facts straight and our doctrines in line that is so important. He wants there to be fellowship. Through the word of the apostles, through Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit, he wants us to have a living fellowship—with the apostles and their message, but above all, with the Father, with his Son Jesus Christ. And as he'll say later in his letter, through the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

And he says, "We write this to make our joy complete." Now, about half of the best manuscripts say "our joy," the other half say "your joy." There is something about sharing Christ—that your joy is really not complete until you've shared it with somebody else and until somebody else is all excited about it.

In one of his later letters, John says, "I have no greater joy than to know that my children are walking in the truth" (3 John 1:4). He gets great joy from sharing Christ and seeing more people come into fellowship with Christ.

But he also is writing so that our joy will be complete—so that we who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ will have that fullness of joy that Jesus intends.

You see, the Scriptures are given—and Jesus is given—so that you and I can have a relationship with God, a fellowship with God, an interactive relationship with God. He wants us to have fellowship with the Father, with his Son Jesus Christ, and he wants us to have the joy of that fellowship.

When Jesus was here, John was with him in the room when Jesus said, "I've told you this so that my joy may be in you and so that your joy may be complete" (John 15:11). He said, "You're going to grieve and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again, and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy" (John 16:20, 22).

Once John had seen Jesus risen and was filled with his Holy Spirit, no matter what happened after that, nothing could take away his joy. His brother James was the first of the apostles to be killed. He was killed with the sword on the orders of King Herod, but nothing could take away John's joy. One by one, the other apostles were murdered in the process of preaching the gospel, but nothing could take away his joy. He was exiled on a desert island, but nothing could take away his joy. In exile, he was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and Christ appeared to him and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One. I was dead, and behold, I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades" (Revelation 1:17–18).

When you know somebody like that, who's going to take away your joy? Nothing that goes wrong in the world can take away your joy when you know the Life, when the Life has appeared and you have met him.

So he wants us to enter into not just true doctrine and correct belief—although that's very, very important—but into fellowship with the church of God and with Jesus Christ, with God himself, so that we together as believers can have complete joy in him.

When we think about this fact—that the Life appeared—and the way that John communicates it to us, John's an eyewitness. And through eyewitness John, the Spirit of truth gives sure knowledge of Jesus.

You'll notice a title that I give to John but also to the Holy Spirit, because these are ways that the Bible describes the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of truth wants us to know. And as I mentioned before, I think forty-nine times just in this short letter, he uses the word "know." He wants us to know. And through the words of this one who was there when it happened, the Spirit of truth gives sure knowledge of Jesus.



Through John—that disciple who was hand-picked to walk with Jesus, to live with Jesus, to be a believer in Jesus—the Spirit of life shares eternal life by faith in Jesus. When you put your trust in Jesus, when you believe in him, something happens. This Life that existed from eternity becomes part of you, and he becomes your Life. "Your life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ, your life, appears," says the Bible, "you also will appear with him in glory" (Colossians 3:3–4).

You have a Life. You have that eternal Life that is there. It's not just that your life now gets strung out so that it lasts and lasts and lasts and lasts. It means that the eternal Life of the living God is put into you—and you have his Life. And of course, it lasts and lasts and lasts. But it's not just long—it is divine. It is glorious. It is love. And it is joy.

And of course, through beloved John, the disciple Jesus loved, the Spirit of love guides us into a joyous and growing fellowship with Jesus. Those are the purposes of this letter: to be in a relationship with Jesus, to know the Lord God, the Father of Jesus Christ, as your Father, to know that you live in him and he lives in you, and to know that by the Holy Spirit whom he gives you—to be one of those who worships God in spirit and in truth.

So as we read this letter together, as we study it, as we meditate and pray upon it, may God give you knowledge—sound knowledge of Jesus. May you rejoice in the Life that comes through Jesus. And if you don't have that Life, the Bible says: trust him.

Jesus himself said: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

The Life appeared, and he's eager to share his Life with everyone who knows and trusts him. And that's not just a fire insurance policy. That's not just, "I want my theology straight and my beliefs correct." It's not just, "Okay, now I know what's going to happen to me when I die. I won't go to hell. I will live forever." Those are enormously important—and I'm not making light of them at all.

But there is fellowship. There is walking with God now and knowing that as you walk through life, somebody else is going through that life with you. That when you talk to God and pray, he is listening, and he is answering according to his perfect will.

To fellowship with the Father. To fellowship with the Son. To fellowship with the Holy Spirit. To be fellowshippers with the divine nature—as John's buddy Peter would put it. You know, we're partakers—or fellowshippers—with the divine nature.

So again—knowledge. Life. Fellowship. That's what God gives. That's what we can have because the Life appeared.

## **Prayer**

O Lord, may our thoughts ever be focused on you and our souls and our love be poured out to you—you who are our Life. May we, Lord, always rejoice that you have been there from all

eternity and that, in your own purposes and design, you chose to make yourself known fully in the fullness of time. And that you have come among us and that you have taken on flesh and blood so that we might be partakers of your divine nature and fellowship with you.

Lord, draw us more and more into that. Where, Lord, we've been confused or uncertain or in error, shape us, Lord, by the Spirit of truth, so that we have a sound knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the living God. Where, Lord, we have been living in death—where we are without your strength and without your gladness and trapped in darkness—may the Spirit of life help us to know Jesus Christ, the Lord of life, and fill us with your eternal life—that life that proceeds forever from the Father through the Son and by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

And Lord, draw us more and more into fellowship with you. Help us, Lord, not to walk alone. Help us not to live as though we're on our own, but to spend every day in conversation with you. Help us, Lord, when we're reading our Bible, to hear the living voice of the Life. And help us, when we pray, to know that we are praying to the Lord of life—the living God—the very Life who appeared among us and has claimed us for your own.

May we live, Lord, always in gladness and in fellowship and in communion with you. May we know the reality, Lord Jesus, of what you prayed when you said, "This is eternal life: to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent" (John 17:3). May that Life, Lord, flourish in us and overflow from us, so that our joy may be full—as our children come to know you, the Life; as our neighbors come to know you, the Life; as our world—more and more people in it—come to know you as the Life. Amen.

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### **By David Feddes**

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#### **Beloved disciple John**

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- Beloved, dearest friend of Jesus
- Wrote Gospel, 3 epistles, Revelation

<sup>1</sup> That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. <sup>2</sup> The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. <sup>3</sup> We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup> We write this to make our joy complete.

#### **Firsthand testimony**

One of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe. (John 19:34-35)

This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true. (John 21:24)

We have heard... seen with our eyes... looked at... hands touched... we have seen it ... We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard. (1 John 1:1-3)

We have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. (1 John 4:14)

#### **The life appeared**

That which was from the beginning... this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared... we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. (1:1-2)

## Word of life

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. (John 1:1-4)

## Only begotten God

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth... No one has ever seen God. The only begotten God, who is at the Father's side, has made him known. (John 1:14-18)

## I am the life

As the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself... The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life... I came that they may have life and have it abundantly... **I am... the life.** (John 5:26; 6:63; 10:10; 11:25; 14:6)

## The life appeared

- **Eternal God:** from the beginning, Word of life, the life
- **Human flesh:** heard, seen, touched
- **God incarnate:** The life appeared... the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.

## Joyous fellowship

We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have **fellowship** with us. And our **fellowship** is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our **joy** complete. (1 John 1:3-4)

## The life appeared

- Through eyewitness John, the Spirit of truth gives sure **knowledge** of Jesus.
- Through disciple John, the Spirit of life shares eternal **life** by faith in Jesus.
- Through beloved John, the Spirit of love guides us into a joyous and growing **fellowship** with Jesus.