

# The Beginning of Real Life

## John 1:1-5

**1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. **4** In him was life, and the life was the light of men. **5** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Two of the most profound questions in life are: 1) “What is life?” and 2) “How do I obtain it?” John’s gospel beautifully answers these questions for us. In fact, in John’s gospel, he leaves no question about his purposes when he says, “these are written so 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). We all know what physical life is—the capacity to grow and change, to reproduce and to function intentionally. Many have physical life who still lack the sense of wellbeing that comes with “psychological life.” Most psychologists suggest that good emotional health consists of feeling valued, being included in primary social groups, and being empowered to be self-directed. Yet John teaches that there is a life even beyond this sense of wellbeing. He uses the noun “life” more than 35 times in his gospel and the verb “to live” more than 15 times. It is obviously an important concept to him.

Perhaps one of the most famous references to this life by John is in Jesus’ high priestly prayer when He says, “And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (John 17:3). John teaches also that there is no spiritual life outside of Jesus Christ. In John 14:6 he cites Jesus’ words: “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” This eternal life has two important aspects. First of all, obviously, it is everlasting. It never ends. Secondly, it is the life of God in the soul of human beings. Peter says that by virtue of faith in Jesus Christ, we actually participate in the divine nature. In today’s text, John gives us three ways in which Jesus Christ is eminently qualified to give us this life.

### **I. Jesus Christ lives outside of space and time (vv. 1-2)**

Ludwig Wittgenstein, who was not an evangelical believer, but a brilliant philosopher, once said, “The solution to the riddle of life in space and time lies outside space and time.” It only makes sense. In order to understand this world, one must view it from the outside. That is precisely what Jesus does. Notice in verse 1 John, unlike Mark, does not begin with the baptism of Jesus; and, unlike Matthew and Mark, he does not even begin with Jesus’ nativity. He does not even begin with Creation. John begins from all eternity. Here, uniquely, John refers to Jesus as “the Word.”

### **II. Jesus Christ created space and time (vs. 3)**

Whether it be the wonders of the astronomical world or the wonders of the microscopic world, nothing was made that Jesus didn’t make! Jesus is qualified to bring us life because He made it in the first place. He is able to fix our lives, because He is our Creator (cf. Colossians 1 and Hebrews 1).

### **III. Jesus Christ has entered space and time (vv. 4-5)**

We will learn more of this in verse 14, but here John teaches us that “in Him”—that is, in Christ, human beings find this real life, because Jesus Christ has entered this life in order to invite us into union with His very self. In John 15, Jesus describes this intimate, organic relationship by saying that He is the vine and we are the branches. This life is what enables us, the people of God, to be the light of God in a dark world, as John explains in verse 5. Furthermore, John wonderfully teaches us that the darkness that is in this world cannot snuff out the light that comes by virtue of life in

Jesus Christ. That means that none of the evil forces of our day can extinguish this radiant, eternal light of Jesus Christ. Glory be to His name!

### Discussion Questions

1. Why is the doctrine of the Trinity the only plausible explanation for what is taught in verse 1?
2. Why is the deity of Jesus Christ necessary for our salvation?
3. How is your view of Jesus Christ changed by reflecting upon the truth of verse 3?
4. Describe the experience of receiving the “life” that John describes in verses 4 and 5.
5. How does one receive the life that is in Jesus Christ?
6. How are you encouraged by verse 5?
7. What is the significance of the present tense of “shines” in verse 5?

### Going Deeper

1. Do you believe that you have truly received the life that is in Jesus Christ? If so, do you believe you are continually being renewed in that life? If not, do you believe that you know how to receive the life that is in Him?
2. Given the fact that the darkness of this world has not overcome the light of Christ, what should you be encouraged to do with that light in your own life in the coming months?