

John 1:4-13

4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

4 All life came from the Word who is Jesus. He called Himself The Light in John 14:6 and 11:25. We can read of Him breathing life into the first man in Genesis 2:7. Some people so despise the fact that Jesus is the King over all creation, that He has moral boundaries, and will judge those who rebel against God's goodness that they would like to eliminate Him. They are described as living in darkness. They don't realize that if it were possible to eliminate Him, they would eliminate all life!

His life is our light. In other words what He said and did is the revelation of the way things truly are. It is like taking that pill in the matrix. All of the sudden our eyes are opened, and we see that the world lives in delusion and bondage to their fallen nature. We see how mankind thinks evil is good and good is evil. We see them clinging to their selfish nature instead of living the fullest life possible by loving our Creator who loves us and has the best path for our lives. We come to realize that it is more blessed to give than receive. It is more fulfilling to serve God than to serve self and exalt our egos.

5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

5 The truth of God is expressed as light and manifested as Jesus. Jews looked forward to the coming of the Great Light (Isaiah 9:2). He is the Lord - YHWH (Psalm 27:1). Isaiah said He would be the light of the world (49:6). Jesus referred to Himself as The Light of the world (John 9:5). But what is amazing is that He called His followers the light of the world too (Matthew 5:14). That is because we have His Spirit living in us to declare the truth/light that He gave to us.

1John 1:5b tells us that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. Darkness cannot overcome light. In Genesis 1:2,3 there was darkness on the face of the deep as the world was covered in water. Before the sun was formed God said, "Let there be light." It was an amazing creation, not a wave or a particle but acting like both. It was incredibly fast. And where it comes, all darkness is expelled.

Romans 1:20 teaches us that the things God created teach us about His invisible attributes, eternal power, and divine nature. So physical light's power to dispel darkness is a picture of the light of Jesus expelling spiritual darkness. Darkness really has no power. It can't overcome anything. But we can choose to walk in it so that we don't see the light, the truth that is God. The outcome of this spiritual battle between light and darkness is decided by where we choose to walk. That is why Jesus tells us John 8:12b *Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.*"

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

6 John was of the priestly tribe of the Kohathites who ministered in the Holy Place. His parents were elderly when he was born. They died shortly after. He may have gone to Qumran as a record was discovered of a Yohanan who stayed for a while. His message was similar to the Essene message (Isaiah 40:3) to prepare the way of the Lord, in other words, the coming of the Messiah. Like most Essenes, he lived in separation in the wilderness. He was considered by the Jewish multitudes to be a prophet. John was the

forerunner of the Messiah. He came in the spirit and power of Elijah to prepare people to receive Him (Mark 9:11-13).

7 He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him.

7 His sole purpose was that others believe in the light of verses 4 and 5, the Word who was coming as a man. Jews believed that two people had to testify in agreement as a witness to establish any testimony (Deuteronomy 19:15). When Jesus was told His testimony didn't count because he testified of himself, Jesus pointed to the voice of the Father at the baptism (John 5:32, 37; 8:18) and His miracles (John 5:36).

8 He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. 9 The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

8,9 John the Baptist wasn't The Light though he did burn brightly... but the light he pointed to is The True Light, the source of his light and all light.

The light of God is universally distributed to all in one way or another. I love this truth because it explains to us that in some way God reaches out to everyone who is ever born and draws them to Himself. It seems that few respond and accept the Light.

In brief, that light is that God alone is the source of salvation. Nothing we can do will earn it, as we are hopelessly lost in sin. But God is merciful and has provided a way if we will place our hope and faith in Him (See Romans 4). Whatever light of truth there is in any time or place comes from Jesus as the source.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.

10 We saw last week that the world and the invisible realms were made by Him (Colossians 1:16). The people who killed Him didn't know Him (1 Corinthians 2:8). And the world doesn't know us because it doesn't know Him (1 John 3:1).

11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.

11 Even His own people who studied the prophecies and longed for His coming didn't receive Him. Isaiah 49:7a clearly predicts that this would be the case, and yet they fulfilled it even after all the signs He gave them as evidence that He is the One.

12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,

12 This verse tells us how we can begin to walk in the Light. All who receive Jesus/the Word (-receive = to get hold of, accept, obtain, find, take), who believe in His name (-believing = to have faith in, entrust your spiritual well-being, to have confidence in - John uses the verb 99x), He gave the right (-right = ability, authority, power to do, privilege), to become children of God!

That means we are no longer belong to the world. We have a destiny and a heritage that is eternal. We have a heavenly Father who cares for us and plans our journey (Ephesians 2:10). We have joined the heavenly family and Jesus is our BIG brother (Romans 8:29).

13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

13 Spiritual birth has NOTHING to do with man. It is God's work in us. We merely receive and believe. We are not Christ followers because of our parents, though they may leave us a godly legacy. We are not God's children because we obey everything perfectly and try really hard. It was the work of God in our hearts. He gave us the grace to believe and all we did was receive it and act on it, asking to be forgiven and for Him to guide us through this life. His life in us is our new life!

Questions:

What is life?

What is light?

To whom is it given?

What was John's mission?

How can we become Children of God?