

## The Life Appeared

Եւ Կեանքը Յայտնուեցաւ

### 1 John 1:1-4

Today is the Fourth Sunday of Advent, as well as Christmas Sunday. It is the Sunday before Christmas Day. I am not reading the Christmas narrative from Matthew or Luke. I am reading to you from our brother John, the beloved disciple:

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 (announce) 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. (1 John 1:1-4 NIV)

And “**the life appeared**” Յայտնուեցաւ was revealed *Phaneroo (manifest, visible)*.

Christmas is all about incarnation: life appeared in human form that could be seen, touched, and experienced.

We sang the carol: “**Hark! The Herald Angels Sing**” from Charles Wesley. There is a line that says: “**Veiled in flesh, the Godhead see. Hail the incarnate Deity.**”

What do we see in these four verses?

There is a **doctrinal and theological** explanation of the **Logos, the Word**, we see a **historical reality**, and a **practical application**.

**This is Christmas.**

Please notice, John is not just describing an abstract doctrine about Jesus, “It is the reality of Jesus’ personhood—his incarnation or his entry into history.”<sup>1</sup>

We are talking about the LOGOS, the WORD, not an idea. A reality of the living GOD.

The Word is the creative self-expression of God by which the cosmos was made. It is the divine reason that gives the universe coherence and purpose.<sup>2</sup>

We did discuss this several months ago when we covered the Gospel of John:

**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**<sup>(1)</sup>

**Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.** <sup>(3)</sup>

**The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.** (John 1:1,3,14 NIV)

What do we see here?

Jesus existed from limitless eternity. And he has no end as well.

Such a God is incarnated...

Such a God enters the limited space, into the world, where there is Covid...

**-Life appeared:** John describes Jesus as the LIFE three times in two verses:

this we proclaim (announce) 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.** (1 John 1:2)

John is making an important point here. **Eternal Life** is not an enlightenment base on some mystical thoughts.

It comes from God, and only can be found in JESUS CHRIST.

Again, it is not an ideology; it appeared. **Twice** he says **life has appeared.**

As one of my pastor friends say:

“The core of our Christian faith is not found in a system of thought, or adherence to a set of rules, or in some nebulous self-awakening, but in the person and work of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”<sup>3</sup>

This is real; it is a historical reality:

**which we have heard,**

**which we have seen with our eyes,**

**which we have looked at and our hands have touched**

John speaks graphically of the sensory confirmation (**hearing/seeing/touching**) that accompanied this revelation.

**They did experience Jesus in their lives. PERIOD**

**-Christmas is the doctrine of incarnation.** The invisible becomes visible. The infinite becomes finite. Unbelievable!

**-Christmas is historical fact:** they heard, saw, and touched.

-I can sense that John was facing people in the church with a disagreement concerning who Jesus is, his identity. People did not believe in incarnation.

-There were **Gnostics** for example who did not believe in deity of Jesus. The Son of God cannot be crucified. They said someone else was killed. *Hmmmm*. They believed that a physical realm could not be united with the divine.

-Today we have people who have difficulty to believe in incarnation of God.

**No Christmas without humanity and divinity joined in Jesus.**

Can I explain scientifically? I don't know. But please notice how John says:

**which we have heard,**

**which we have seen with our eyes,**

**which we have looked at and our hands have touched**

People heard, saw, and touched.

**Thus, it is historical fact.**

You see either those eyewitnesses are liars not telling the truth, or they saw, heard and touched, they experienced Jesus Christ in their lives, and it is true. They are telling the truth.

-Some see Christmas as a tradition, a legend, a beautiful ancient story.

Christmas is not a "Star Wars" novel.

God became human.

**<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,**

Do you know about this historical Jesus?

I have not seen and touched him. I have faith in Him and because of my faith I have seen, heard, and touched him in a spiritual way. My life was transformed, and it is still transforming.

Jesus walked on the water; Jesus called the disciples; Jesus healed the blind man; Jesus fed the 5000; Jesus touched the leper; Jesus raised Lazarus; Jesus said he is

the I AM; He is light to the dark world. John saw and experienced all these events. Most importantly John saw the resurrected Jesus Christ.

### **-Practical Application: Fellowship and Joy**

What is the purpose of all this?

Beside theology and Christology and the historical fact, there is a practical implication for our lives:

**<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.** (1 John 1:3-4 NIV)

We see the threefold application:

1. Christmas means we have fellowship (*koinonia*) with God the Father and God the Son. (I will add the triune God based on John's gospel).

**Fellowship (*koinonia*)** means: association, community, communion, joint participation, the share which one has in anything, intimacy...

I believe Jesus asked us to remain in him, abide in him, have a *koinonia* with me. God comes and abides in us having relationship with us, so we can have intimate relationship with HIM. Fellowship... we will be community.... We will have communion....

That is definition of healthy home. A home where we can have fellowship with each other.

HOME....Our fellowship with triune God... and is "safe home"

In my quiet time I read this:

We are a home to God, at home in God, and God is preparing a home for us. But not just in the by and by; here and now we can find resemblance of home and be God's home to others. We can "bring good news" and invite others to join us. (Isaiah 52:7) Who wouldn't want to be in such a home?  
(Marlena Graves)

Christmas: "We are home to God, at home in God, and God is preparing a home for us."

2. Second fold: **so that you also may have fellowship with us...**

Our fellowship with God reflects to have fellowship with others.

We can "bring good news" and invite others to join us.... Go tell it on the mountain...

**"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.** (Mark 16:15 NIV)

We should not hide our faith in Jesus Christ. I keep stressing this point. But also, it is fellowship with believers as well. Please be careful with Covid, but do not stop of having safe fellowship with each other.

One commentator describes it this way: “Fellowship is not just the coincidence of a shared experience of God, where we compare our private spiritual walks; it is living and experiencing the Father and the Son together as believers. Christian fellowship is triangular: my life in fellowship with Christ, your life in fellowship with Christ, and my life in fellowship with yours.”<sup>4</sup>

John likes to have fellowship with his audience.

With whom have you had fellowship lately?

3. Third fold:

This fellowship results in JOY.

**We write this to make our joy complete...**

The purpose of John’s proclamation is not just mental knowledge about nature of Jesus Christ. Together when we have fellowship, we will experience greater JOY.

Theology, Christology should be expressed in relationships.

Jesus in his pastoral prayer to His Father said:

**My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,<sup>21</sup> that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.** (John 17:20-21 NIV11)

Notice, generation after generation continues to have fellowship with the triune God and the joy of Christ continues to be spreading to all creation.

John knew about this joy. He quotes from Jesus saying:

**I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.** (John 15:11 NIV11)

This is the Christmas message to us:

The Logos became a man.

Emmanuel, God is with us. Go and have fellowship with the triune God and with each other. Go and tell to others the JOY that God shares with us.

1. Gary M. Burge; *The NIV Application Commentary: The Letters of John* P 54

2. *ibid* p 54

3. Andrew Drake, *The Word of Life Became Flesh For Us*, PBCC , 2,21,2010

4. Gary M. Burge; *The NIV Application Commentary: The Letters of John* p 55.