

A Savior for all time

The gospel for Christmas Day is John 1:1-14. This text John takes us all the way to the beginning of the world and points out that the Word/Jesus was already there at the creation of the world.

The term Word, or Logos, is strictly a Biblical expression or designation for the second person of the God-head, for Jesus Christ. He is no creature, no part of the creation, for He existed when no part of that existed. He is the Word which God spoke from eternity, begotten of God from eternity. And He existed, not as a dead substance or thing, but He was alive and active. He is the Word which God spoke from eternity, begotten of God from eternity. And He existed, not as a dead substance or thing, but He was alive and active.

The Word created every bit of universal matter. He is the source and embodiment of life. As the source of all created light, he provided the sphere/context in which life can grow and flourish. Unafraid, the Word of life faced down the darkness of sin—and won! The victory goes to the living Word, who is our Life!

John uses “life” 36 times. The Word is God’s life (Jn 11:25, 14:6). In him is the life of the “living God” (Jer 10:10), the great “I am,” who alone is immortal and eternal (1 Tim 6:16), upon whom all life and existence depend (Jn 10:10). A few Greek manuscripts have “In him is life” to convey that he is the ever present source of life eternal.

The Word’s life is light. “The Lord is my light and my salvation” (Ps 27:1). The life that Christ gives enlightens and illuminates the dark heart and mind of man. The full revelation of God’s life and light is precisely in the incarnation.

St. John introduces us to the Baptist’s mission: he is the supporting player, the best man at the wedding. He came to offer a true witness to the Light so that all people could have the opportunity to believe in the Messiah. John prepared people for the arrival of the Light, whose coming had long been proclaimed by the ancient prophets.

“God of God, Light of Light” was now coming into the world. The participle “coming,” like the present “shines” (v 5), points to the continuing entrance of the light into the world as the Gospel spreads to every dark corner of the globe.

Here is one of the central passages of John’s gospel, along with 3:16 and 20:31. God the Father incarnated his Son among us; the divine Word takes on the limitations of human flesh. He came filled with glory, glory that consists of God’s grace (merciful love) and truth (complete fidelity to God’s character and promises).

By taking on human flesh, God the Son comes into the world He created. He graciously brings deliverance from spiritual darkness and authorizes believers to become God’s children. Those who do not receive Christ by faith remain in darkness. Christ, the true light, has overcome the darkness, and he promises His forgiving grace to us and all people.

Prayer: O Word made flesh, be present with me this day, and fill me with your limitless grace. Amen.
(TLSB)

