

**Slide** John 1:3-5

Sermon #3

## God Has Spoken – Jesus is the Light of Life

**Blank** God has spoken, but man has not heard Him. Even those who believe there is a god, some thinking god got everything started and now history runs its course. Like building a watch, they think god built the universe and like the watch god wound it up and is letting time run – sitting back and just observing.

As I observe my grandchildren I see their curiosity, their exploring and their discovering the wonder around them. As we grow older we still search for knowledge, our world grows larger, but our wonder can begin to wane as we search for solutions to the problems of the daily living of life – we begin only to see the physical world and we forget the wonder and the amazing creation all around us, both visible and invisible. Man has always wanted to know if there is a god. This is evident by all the different religions in the world. What is the difference in man-made religion trying to solve the problem of who the gods are and having a spiritual life that is in relationship with the one true and holy God who created the universe and everything in it? The difference is a matter of life and death.

The problem is men see the effect, but not the cause. Since they cannot see or taste or feel the spiritual world it does not exist or it exists in concept, but it certainly does not exist in daily reality. One of the best examples of how limited we are in knowing the reality of the spiritual world is found in **Slide** 2 Kings, chapter 6, beginning in verse 8, “Now the king of Aram was warring against Israel; and he counseled with his servants saying, ‘In such and such a place shall be my camp.’”<sup>9</sup> The man of God sent

word to the king of Israel saying, 'Beware that you do not pass this place, for the Arameans are coming down there.' <sup>10</sup>The king of Israel sent to the place about which the man of God had told him; thus he warned him, so that he guarded himself there, more than once or twice.

<sup>11</sup>Now the heart of the king of Aram was enraged over this thing; and he called his servants and said to them, 'Will you tell me which of us is for the king of Israel?'

<sup>12</sup>One of his servants said, 'No, my lord, O king; but Elisha אֵלִישָׁע (*ĕlī-šā*), the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom.'

<sup>13</sup>So he said, 'Go and see where he is, that I may send and take him.' And it was told him, saying, 'Behold, he is in Dothan.' <sup>14</sup>He sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city.

<sup>15</sup>Now when the attendant of the man of God had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city. And his servant said to him, 'Alas, my master! What shall we do?' <sup>16</sup>So he answered, 'Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.' <sup>17</sup>Then Elisha prayed and said, 'O LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.' And the LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. <sup>18</sup>When they came down to him, Elisha prayed to the LORD and said, 'Strike this people with blindness, I pray.' So He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha. <sup>19</sup>Then Elisha said to them, 'This is not the way, nor is this the city; follow me and I will bring you to the man whom you seek.' And he brought them to Samaria. It reminds of the movie Star Wars when Obi Won says, "This is not the person and droids you are looking for." He waves of his hand and the storm troopers move on. Movies seem, at times to do a better job in helping our minds to understand there is a realm beyond the physical. Now back to 2 Kings.

<sup>20</sup>When they had come into Samaria, Elisha said, 'O LORD, open the eyes of these men, that they may see.' So the LORD opened their eyes and they saw; and behold, they were in the midst of Samaria. <sup>21</sup>Then the king of Israel when he saw them, said to Elisha, 'My father, shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?' <sup>22</sup>He answered, 'You shall not kill *them*. Would you kill those you have taken captive with your sword and with your bow? Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master.' <sup>23</sup>So he prepared a great feast for them; and when they had eaten and drunk he sent them away, and they went to their master. And the marauding bands of Arameans did not come again into the land of Israel." **Blank**

What I want you to see is the Bible is filled with the spiritual life of the universe that God created and is actively controlling. The movies can do a better job showing the unseen power behind the physical universe. We will let our minds go there in a movie and yet, when we read the Bible, the very words of God, we struggle in letting our minds go there. Today as we look at the first five verses of John we need to unshackle our minds and not only hear God speak through John but visualize the realm of the spiritual for it is as real as the physical world you can touch, taste and smell.

Let me begin with praying for our time seeking to know God more deeply this morning.

Let me begin in verse 1 of John chapter 1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being." We seem to be able to get our head around Jesus – for He was a real person, in real time, who lived in the real world. But, who is Jesus? He is both God and man or – God incarnate. We learned last week that The

Word always was and existed before time. The Word was Jesus and as the Word Jesus is with God, meaning God the Father who is completely spiritual. Jesus became man that mankind might know God who is spiritual and the Creator of everything. John now takes us a step deeper in the spiritual realm of God by explaining that “All things” exist because God said they would and therefore they do. How many is “All things”? Absolutely everything; every atom existing in the universe, a universe whose expanse spans a distance of millions of light years and it is all there by God’s desire and design and was created by His Word. Simply, that is beyond my ability to imagine. The comforting thing is I do not have to imagine it all, but I need to believe and just trust in God the Creator. The universe or something a little easier to grasp, our galaxy, or even smaller - our solar system, or even smaller yet, our planet earth would spin out of control and destroy itself in a moment of time if it were not for the sovereign power of God that keeps it all together. Since history has proven that mankind is slow in understanding John states this principle first in the positive and then the negative in verse 4 of our study. The positive – “All things came into being through Him.” In chapter one of Genesis God spoke and it was so and all that exists was created by His mere Word. Now, if you did not catch this, John says the same thing in the negative, “apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.” We have been taught that God makes Himself known to mankind by all that is created around us. God makes Himself known through the God-man Jesus. But now John is going to take us into the unknown for many. Get ready to journey into the spiritual realm of God.

We will begin this journey in verse 4, “In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.” The themes of “life” and “light” run throughout John’s gospel. Here in this verse John choose to use **Slide** ζωή (zōē) Zoe that is translated as “life”. Zoe is referencing the spiritual life rather than the physical. John uses the word “life” 35

times in his gospel and the term “to live” at least another 15 times. This is a theme that runs through the entirety of the Gospel according to John. **Blank** *Bios* is the Greek word for physical life. As John uses *Bios* in his 2<sup>nd</sup> letter, **Slide** “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life (here John is referring to physical life), is not from the Father, but is from the world.” (2 Jn. 2:16) God is the origin of both all physical and spiritual life and both are equally as real. **Blank** God created the first man from dust, a physical element that had been earlier created by God. In order to give lifeless dust an entirely new purpose God breathed and man came alive. All through the Bible and history God uses common substances or in my case a common man to do His work. He does this so men will not be able to claim the glory, but all glory belongs to God. For those of you who are saved by faith in believing in our Lord Jesus think back to your life before salvation. You were like the dust in Genesis – you were spiritually dead until God breathed spiritual life into you. In Paul’s **Slide** 1<sup>st</sup> letter to the Corinthians this is clear, “<sup>26</sup>For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; <sup>27</sup>but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, <sup>28</sup>and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, <sup>29</sup>so that no man may boast before God. <sup>30</sup>But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, <sup>31</sup>so that, just as it is written, ‘LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD.’” (1 Cor. 1:26-31) **Blank**

Even though one is spiritually dead and unable to discern the spiritual until God the Holy Spirit regenerates one's soul this does not mean all mankind are in the same

state of corruption. Our physical life is corrupted and we live but for a moment in history. You may remember the daughter of Jairus had been dead but a few moments when Jesus arrived, but dead she was. Although there was not yet corruption of the flesh she was indeed death until Jesus brought her back to life. In Luke's gospel chapter 7 there is the story of village of Nain and a procession carrying the body of the young man, the only son of a grieving mother, to be buried. Jesus took pity on the mother touched the coffin and by Jesus the young man was brought back to life. His flesh had been more corrupt than the little girl for his body had been dead a day or two. Then when Jesus arrived at Lazarus' tomb the sisters told Jesus not to go near for by this time he would be stinking for he had been dead 4 days. Yet, Jesus brought Lazarus to life. There are degrees of corruption, some people are less offensive or stinky than others, but until their souls are regenerated all people are spiritually dead. It is for this reason Jesus, who is God and who is Spirit lowered Himself to become a man of flesh and descended to earth, as it says in Ephesians chapter 4, to give spiritual life to all who believe. As mortal people we live in a corrupted state, but when we are saved we begin to live spiritually for eternity. The life you have begun to live spiritually is the same life you will live in a pure state in heaven without the corruption of your body. This is why, even though we physically live in a corrupt world, a world filled with evil and pain – if we understand who we are spiritually, we become a testimony to the world of Jesus Christ – lives lived in joy, peace and lived to the fullest and lives that are a blessing to others. My brothers and sisters do not limited yourselves to the physical world for that is only partially who you are. Live like Elisha אֵלִישָׁע (*ĕlî-šā*), the prophet will faith and knowledge of the spiritual world. If you live in both the physical and spiritual world, you will then know and experience God in a greater way. You will enable

others, like the servant of the prophet, to have their eyes opened to God the Creator of all.

We are now ready to move onto verses 4 and 5 of John chapter 1, “In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.”<sup>5</sup> The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.” We have already been working on verse 4 and what life in Christ is. Now we look at Light. Let me take you back to the beginning Genesis, chapter 1 verses 1 to 4. **Slide** “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” We know Jesus was there before and at creation. The word for “God” used in verse 1 is a singular word with plural meaning, so from the very beginning God is teaching mankind about the Trinity. **Slide**<sup>2</sup> “The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. Now in verse 2 the 3<sup>rd</sup> Person of the Trinity is introduced as the chaos of the void will be put into order. **Slide**<sup>3</sup> Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.”<sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. When God brought light into the world the darkness and void was pushed back. Not only was their physical light, but the spiritual light of Jesus has always been the Light of the world. **Blank** His light pushed back the darkness and exposed true from false, good from evil and right from wrong. Yet, the world rejected the Light because the world preferred the darkness.

This great image, Jesus the Light of the world is the second theme that John now introduces. “In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.” John reveals Jesus as the One who knows God the Father and who makes God known to men. Since the creation of the world as we read in Genesis “Light” has been the universal image of the illumination of both the world – separating day from night and of the mind; however, for most it is intellectual light only, but for those who are saved by Jesus’

Light the mind and our soul are illuminated spiritually, as well and brought out of darkness. Before Jesus came into the world physically the world in general did not know God. Some in the world knew of God, but they did not know God. A few in the Old Testament experienced the light of God, for God revealed Himself not to all men, but to some men through the Holy Spirit. In Psalm 27:1, King David wrote,

**Slide** “The LORD is my light and my salvation.” And then he wrote in Psalm 36:9,

**Slide** “For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light.” **Blank** We know from John that it is Jesus who is the Word and that the Word is God. So as God the Son, Jesus is the image of the invisible spiritual God and Jesus is the Light of the world and in Him we see and know God the Father.

Not only does Jesus reflect for mankind who God the Father is, but it is by His light that the works of darkness are exposed – <sup>5</sup>“The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.” Jesus then not only brings light into the world that the world is exposed to God and no man is with excuse for not knowing God.

As Paul tells us in Romans, **Slide** “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes (*spiritual realm*), His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.” <sup>(Rm. 1:20)</sup> Jesus stands before the world in perfect purity and holiness and by

His light exposes the world’s corruption that was brought into the world by the evil one. **Blank** There is no blending of light and darkness in Christ, as there is in man.

Christ is pure and holy. Mankind reacts to Jesus in but one of two ways. They hate Christ as many do and work to discredit Him in order not to have their sins exposed. For if this was not true, John would not have said, “The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.” The light pushes back the darkness and overtakes it. The darkness cannot push back the Light of Christ. Our world tries to



blend the darkness with the light and live in the gray – were truth is relative and wrong is not always wrong and there is no absolute truth. But for believers, who Christ brought out of the darkness into the light, it is the Light of Christ that enables us to say, “Lord, I can now see that I am imperfect, but, You Lord are perfect, please Lord remove the darkness from my heart by Your light. I understand, Lord, that I am a sinner who can never earn my way to heaven – but You Lord give me heaven by Your goodness, Your holiness. I trust You Lord and believe in You Lord to remove my sin and accept me as Your child.” For us, we no longer belong to this corrupt world and because of this we, too, offend the world by living truth, by living in the light and pushing back the darkness.

Depending on the translation in your Bible is the word that stands out in the second half of verse 5 when it says, “the darkness did not comprehend it.” Is the word translated as “comprehend” or “overcome” or “understood.” The Greek word here can also mean to “overtake” as to overtake in a pursuit. Our Lord Jesus is quoted in chapter 12 of John saying, **Slide**<sup>35</sup> “So Jesus said to them, ‘For a little while longer the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes.’<sup>36</sup> While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light.’” God’s light shines out from the darkness and darkness cannot overtake it. **Blank** However, if we, as humans, do not stay in the Light of God the darkness of this world will overtake us. Just as a plant needs physical light to grow and will turn itself toward the sun, if we desire to grow spiritually and not let the darkness overcome or overtake us we need the Light of both the written Word and the living Word, Jesus. We must turn towards Him and let His light nourish and grow us. May we truly be sons and daughters of the Light!

In our world today Jesus is the Light in the hearts and souls of Christians and the world knows Him not. For the world to see the Light of Christ, Jesus has called us to be His ambassadors and to reflect His light. Jesus has ascended to heaven. This is why Matthew tells us to follow the words of Jesus when He said, **Slide**<sup>14</sup> “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; <sup>15</sup> nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. **Slide**<sup>16</sup> Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” (Mt. 5:14-16) Jesus is saying, John is saying, Paul is saying and Matthew is saying, as Christians, we are Christ’s light to the world and His light in the world. Christians can only be the light of the world when Jesus is our Light, when we reflect His Light and when Jesus’ light burns brightly in us. **Blank** What an awesome responsibility, what a blessed privilege.

Then the question that is posed to each one of us is this, “Is Jesus your light?” If He is, then His light in you is as the Light of God that came when **Slide** “The earth was formless and void (just as we were spiritually before God saved us), and darkness was over the surface of the deep (like the darkness of our prior spiritually dead souls)... **Slide**<sup>3</sup> Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. **Blank** It is the Light of Christ in you that will penetrate the darkness of the world and show what is really there. Live the Light and do not play the hypocrite. You are a sinner, but a sinner redeemed and turning towards the Light of God and growing in the Light of Christ and exposing the darkness of your own heart and the world by reflecting the Light of Christ.

This is the difference between religion and a relationship with God through Christ. Religion uses the word of God to separate itself from not only the world, but other Christians trying to show their own righteousness and that they are better than others. A relationship with the Living God is as Paul says in 1 Timothy, **Slide**<sup>15</sup> “It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost *of all*. **Slide**<sup>16</sup> Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.” You were once dust, but now you are to live truth and light, you are to love the unlovable as Jesus did and reflect Jesus’ light into their lives.

**Slide** John 1:4