

# The Light of the World

## John 1:1, 2, 14

### Introduction

One of the traditions around Christmas time has always had to do with lights

We put lights on the tree / lights on the house - -we light Christmas candles

There is a significance to the practice

Jesus once said: 'I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness but shall have the light of life.' [John 8:12]

One of the messages of the Bible is that this world is a dark place spiritually

The darkness is due to sin - - - but there is hope – there is light / the light of the Savior

Back in May, 1935 – a dramatic change took place in the sports world - - - The Cincinnati Reds beat the Phillies [2-1] - - - that was no big deal. What was different was that this game was played at night – while it was dark outside – the field was lit up – made possible by advances in technology and lighting - - - today – such a concept is hardly revolutionary at all

Scripture portrays our world as a dark place – there is a pall of spiritual darkness over humanity

Evil / sin are both manifestations of the darkness – and results of it

We need the light of a Savior - - - Jesus is that Savior

Matthew when he began to describe the onset of Jesus' public ministry – quoted from the book of Isaiah 9

**Matt. 4:16 - 'The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light, and to those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, upon them a light dawned.'**

Christmas is the celebration of that light coming into the world

### **I. In the Beginning - John 1:1-5, 14**

This is John's Christmas story

Light coming into the world / Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us

When one compares the 4 gospels and their treatment of Jesus – we see something like different camera angles – focusing in on different aspects of his life

Matthew begins his gospel with the genealogy of Jesus – His lineage linked back to David / Abraham

Luke focuses in on the birth / humanity of Jesus  
Mark – goes right to the public ministry

John – begins in eternity! / Deity

John clearly intends to draw a parallel between the beginning of His gospel and the beginning of the book of Genesis

*Gen. 1:1- 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.'*

Sinclair Ferguson: 'The first readers of this Gospel were almost certainly very familiar with Genesis chapter 1. Given our tendency to word association, whenever they heard, 'in the beginning', the next word in their minds would have been 'God'. But in fact, John takes us by surprise. He writes, 'in the beginning . . . was the Word.'

Jesus is God – He was there in the beginning

Jesus did not begin to exist in Mary's womb – or at His Bethlehem birth

He is from eternity

*Micah 5:2 - 'But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you one will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.'*

John 17:5 – 'Father, glorify Me with the glory which I had with you before the world was.'

John 8:58 – 'Before Abraham was born, I am.'

The message of the gospel is that Jesus – the Son of God left the glory of heaven – to become incarnate – and die for our sins

Significantly - John includes no human genealogy for Jesus

John doesn't begin with Mary and Joseph or Bethlehem

He begins with God the Father and the existence of the universe – then moves to the incarnation – 'the word became flesh and dwelt among us'

That is what happened in Bethlehem

*C.S. Lewis: 'If there is a God who created us, we could not discover Him by going up into the air. God would not relate to human beings the way a man on the*

second floor relates to a man on the first floor. He would relate to us the way Shakespeare relates to Hamlet. Shakespeare is the creator of Hamlet's world and of Hamlet himself. Hamlet can know about Shakespeare only if the author reveals information about himself in the play. So too the only way to know about God is if God has revealed Himself.

The claim of Christmas is infinitely more wonderful than that. God did not merely write us information about Himself; He wrote Himself into the drama of history. He came into our world as Jesus Christ to save us, to die for us.'

John connects the person of Jesus to the work of creation

**John 1:3**

All creation owes its existence to Jesus – angels, people, animals, the universe itself

This is His world – the triune God wanted to bring this world into existence / it was God's plan

**Rev. 4:11**

Jonathan Edwards once commented on God's purpose in creation: 'The End for Which God Created the World':

"We may justly infer what God intends, by what He actually does; because He does nothing inadvertently or without design." [God's Passion, p. 146]

We see something of what God wanted by what He did

He wanted to create a universe – so He did

He wanted to populate the world with moral creatures who could image His glory

**Gen. 1:26 - God said, 'Let us create man in our image and according to our likeness'**

God wanted people to mirror and reflect His glory

Although man was originally created in the image of God – we know that man is today a fallen creature who does not properly reflect that image

The image of God is now distorted and disfigured because of sin / there is darkness in our world

The first man and woman – Adam and Eve – were rational beings – with the capability of sin

They chose to sin and rebel against God

But – God also had a plan in place to remedy the situation

The program of redemption – that Jesus would come into the world and redeem sinners

That first Christmas night – God lit up the night sky with His glory

**Luke 2:8-14**

The angel of the Lord / the glory of the Lord shone around them

The shepherds were afraid

They don't need to be afraid – it's just God turning on the lights in our world / sending His Son

What will this Savior do?

He will restore sinners properly to the image of God

**Rom. 8:29 - 'For whom He foreknew, he also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.'**

Thru Christ – God is restoring the image of Himself in the redeemed

He is dispelling the darkness

He calls us now to be light reflectors as we follow Christ

**Conclusion**

**Matt. 5:16 - 'Let your light so shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and so glorify your Father who is in heaven.'**

We show that we understand what Christmas is all about – as we follow the One who said He is the light of the world - - - and our lives are transformed thru faith in His atoning death and resurrection

He came into the world – during the night – that He might dispel the darkness