

The background features a dark, starry night sky with numerous small, bright yellow and white stars. Overlaid on this are large, flowing, ethereal waves of light. On the left side, the waves are primarily orange and yellow, resembling fire or a sunset. On the right side, the waves are primarily blue and purple, resembling a nebula or a starry field. The waves flow from left to right, creating a sense of movement and depth.

Eternal Life

A Study of 1 John

What Do You Think?

- What comes to your mind when you hear the word *life*?
- What does the world think *life* means?
- What does God mean by *life*?
- How do we get *life*?

1 John 1:1-4

- Vv. 1-3 are one *long* sentence in Greek
 - “The sentence is not good Greek, and it is only by paraphrase that it can be rendered into good English.” C. H. Dodd
- Invites inquiry and investigation (cf. *he who has ears to hear* – Mark 4:9)
 - Compare / contrast with John 1:1-14

1 John 1:1-4

- The main subject and verb (*we proclaim*) appear in v. 3 – after the object (vv 1-2)
 - John wants to emphasize *the message*, not the *proclamation* of the message (see v 5)
 - His goal is to proclaim that Jesus is God and the source of eternal life (which is what he was called to do -- cf. John 20:31)

Paraphrase of 1 John 1:1-3

We proclaim to you **what we have seen and heard** concerning the Word of Life (i.e. - what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands), so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

1 John 1:1-4

- God's Message to Man
 1. The Substance of the Message
 2. The Significance of the Message

The Substance of the Message

- In a word: *LIFE*
 - God is the living God (Jer. 10:10)
 - The Father has life in Himself (John 5:26)
 - This life was from the beginning (1 John 1:1)
 - This life was with the Father (1 John 1:2)
 - God wants man have life (John 5:21)
 - Knowing God is life (John 17:3)

The Substance of the Message

- In a word: *LIFE*
 - God plainly revealed Himself in creation so that all may know Him, yet men suppress that knowledge in preference of their own desires (Rom. 1:18-23; Eph. 4:17-19), even though they know this brings death (Rom. 1:32; 3:23)
 - Yet knowing God is life (John 17:3; 2 Pet. 1:3)

The Substance of the Message

- In a word: *LIFE*
 - God used wisdom in creating the world, and *infused* wisdom into the world for men to find (see Prov. 8).
 - God's wisdom leads to life (Prov. 3:2, 16, 18, 22; 4:10, 13, 22; 8:35; 10:16; et.al.); all those who hate His wisdom love death (8:36)

The Substance of the Message

- In a word: *LIFE*
 - God gave Adam life and told him he could eat from any tree in the garden, with the exception of *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*. Adam chose to disobey God's command and eat from that one forbidden tree, which resulted in death (Gen. 2-3)

The Substance of the Message

- In a word: *LIFE*
 - God brought Israel to the promised land and told them that loving Him and obeying His commandments would bring them life, while rejecting and disobeying Him would result in death (Deut. 30:15-20)

The Substance of the Message

- In a word: *LIFE*
 - Throughout human history God has offered Himself and His life to mankind
 - All of this was anticipating and pointing to the Messiah who was to come
 - He is the ultimate self-revelation of God
 - He is the manifestation of God's life

The Substance of the Message

- *The Word of Life*

- *The communication of the life of God to man*
- He was involved in creation (Col. 1:15-16)
- He is the wisdom of God (Col. 2:3; Prov. 8)
- He is the new Adam, who brings life (Rom. 5)
- He is the end of the law (Rom. 10:1-13)

The Substance of the Message

- *The Word of Life*

- In Him was life (John 1:4)

- He is the Life (John 14:6)

- He is the Light of the world – the light of life (John 1:4; 8:12)

The Substance of the Message

- *LIFE*

- Jesus *has* life and *is* the life?
- If the Father *has* life in Himself, and Jesus *is* the life, does the Father *have* Jesus?
- Difficult concept to put together: sometimes abstract, sometimes Personal
- Exercise caution to avoid confusion

The Substance of the Message

- The Son is NOT a *thing* or a *concept*
- The Son is a Person who is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father (and the Holy Spirit)
- John's focus is on Jesus as the manifestation of the life of God (1 John 1:2)

The Significance of the Message

- Jesus the Son of God is eternal
 - “**what was from the beginning**” (1)
 - He *was*, not *came to be*
 - Cf. “in the beginning” (John 1:1)
 - Refutes the Gnostic claim that Jesus was the end of a series of emanations from God

The Significance of the Message

- The life of God was manifested for man to hear, see, behold, and touch
 - The very-same One who was from the beginning became an actual, physical human being in space-time history
 - Not a phantom (cf. Luke 24:39)
 - Not possession of a man Jesus by *the Christ*

The Significance of the Message

- *Seen* and *testify* and *proclaim*? (v 2)
 - To *testify* you must be an eye-witness (*seen*)
 - “you **are** witnesses...” (Luke 24:48)
 - 500+ saw Him, too (see 1 Cor. 15:3-8)
 - To *proclaim* requires authority / commission
 - “you **will be** My witnesses” (Acts 1:8)
 - “He ordered us to preach” (Acts 10:39-42)

Jesus,
*The Word
of Life*

“Tell
others”



John



- *Heard* – lasting effect
- *Seen with our eyes* – physical sight
- *Looked at (beheld)* – scrutinize, grasp
- *Touched with our hands* – physical

Jesus,
*The Word
of Life*



John



“This is what I
heard, saw,
looked at, and
touched!”

The Significance of the Message

- John proclaimed this message so that others might join him in sharing life with the Father and with His Son, now and into eternity
 - with (x2) -> distinction with equality
 - Father and His Son -> Their relationship
 - *His Son Jesus Christ* (v 3) connects the *Word of Life* with Jesus of Nazareth

The Significance of the Message

- True fellowship and joy come from believing the apostolic message
 - Gnosticism is always looking for new, esoteric knowledge (even today!)
 - Yet John says: “let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning” (1 John 2:24)

So What?

- John wants us to know that we have eternal life (1 John 5:13)
 - Life comes only from God
 - Life comes only through His Son
- We must believe what the apostles proclaimed
 - “and that believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:31b)

So What?

- Pattern: God presents man with life & death
 - “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”
(John 3:36)
 - “He who has the Son has life, he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.”
(1 John 5:12)