

When I was in High School, I was talking about the Bible with one of my friends. I said: “I read through the first three Gospels and now I’m going to read the Gospel of John.” My friend who was very active in Church looked at me and said: “Wow, Gospel of John! I haven’t read that one yet, for I don’t think I’m mature enough to understand it.”

Well, I read it anyways and found out that the Gospel of John is a bit different from the first three Gospels. It was written little bit later and it tells the story of Jesus in a different language from a different perspective. Mostly because it’s dealing with Gnosticism which was a movement during the early church period denying the humanity of Jesus.

But once I read the Gospel of John, I didn’t find it too difficult to read or to understand. In fact, I could say it became my favorite. For it contains many unforgettable passages witnessing about Jesus and God’s plan for us. Among others John 3:16.

And so today we read the beginning of the Gospel of John, about the birth of Jesus, but we start way back at the creation of the world. John says: In the beginning, and he means of all times, there was the Word, with capital W. In Greek John uses here the word Logos which could be translated as the Word. But Logos, in the time the Gospel of John was written meant much more than just a word.

The word Logos in early Christian Church was understood as the second person of the Holy Trinity, Jesus Christ. And so we could read or translate the beginning of the Gospel of John like this: In the beginning was Jesus, and Jesus was with God, and Jesus was God. He was in the beginning with God. Now this is the important part: *“All things came into being through him, and what has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.”*

And what has come into being in HIM was life. You know John doesn’t beat around the bush too much; he goes directly to the core of the thing and talks about life, the biggest miracle of this world. We experience this miracle of life for we live it daily, right?

Well, sometimes we do, and sometimes we don't. Some time ago I was watching one of these Christian Stations, and there was an interview with a pastor I don't remember his name, but he was sharing one eye opening story. He said that when he was a teenager, and was involved with a gang in his town, his father took him to a cemetery and asked him: What do you see? He answered: I see dead people, lying in graves. And then the pastor said: My father looked at me and said: Many of these people were dead long time before they got here. (pause)

Do you see where I'm going with this? John says: What has come into being **in him** was life. **In Him, meaning Jesus**. And so we could say that what lives without him, doesn't really have the life. (pause) And so the question is very simple: Do we have the life, or we don't? Do we really live, or are we just surviving? Do we walk in the light, or stumble in the darkness? For John says: The life was the light of all people. And the light which is the Christ shines in the darkness.

There are times, when I feel like I'm walking in the darkness. I know you have those moments, too. When you feel down. When you just had an argument with someone you care about. When your loved ones are sick or struggling with something and you can't help them. When you don't have enough time to spend with you kids. Or when you do something that you can't be proud of.

In the moments like that I feel far away from Christ. I feel like the life within me wastes away. And I don't feel that way because Christ left me in the time of trouble, but the trouble tends to come when I walk away from Christ. I eventually start feeling down, when I don't find time for morning or evening devotion. I start treating others poorly when I don't find time to read the Bible. And I have no strength when I don't find time to quiet down and pray. (pause) John says about Jesus: He came into what was his own, and his own people didn't accept him. We are his people that sometimes don't accept him, that are too busy to walk with him and so we go down the hill. You know what I'm talking about? (pause)

But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God. Not just the privilege, not just a gift, but the power to become children of God. God gave us the power to be his children. And as His children, we're not alone when the darkness creeps upon us. As children of God we're not alone when we feel down, when we struggle with sin, pain, or doubt. As children of God we have the power of God.

But did you realize one thing? John talks about children of God! That's plural. And I don't think it's a coincidence. I think that is a very important fact. What he's saying is that the point of Christ's coming was to give life to as many people as possible. The Word became flesh and lived among us. In Christ God was made known, in real and visible way. And John says: We have seen his glory, full of grace and truth. (pause)

Have you seen his glory, full of grace and truth? Have you seen the Word made flesh? Did you find comfort, peace and strength, in this Word? I believe that all of us did at some point of our lives. For Christ is still among us, he's very present and visible. I most certainly felt him here in the past six months. For He lives in us, in our hearts and he acts through us. Giving us the strength to go forward. Giving us the love so we can love. Giving us forgiveness so that we can forgive. Giving us peace and joy so that we can share it with people around us. Speaking to us through his Holy Word and listening to us when we pray. But mostly Christ is here to give us life, not just any kind of life, but life that continues in heaven. (pause)

If this is the promise we're given, wouldn't it make sense to start this year fresh. Start to live for real with Christ. We have everything we need in order to do so. We have his grace, his Word of truth, his promises; we have a community of joyful believers where Christ is made visible. Let us then walk in the glory of God and experience what it feels like to be alive again. You don't have to be mature to understand it as my friend in High school though. Everyone can get it, for all who received him, and believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God.

Amen