

Copyright © Two Journeys Ministry

Andrew M. Davis

Sermon Notes

[www.twojourneys.org](http://www.twojourneys.org)

Please use in accordance with the copyright policy found at [twojourneys.org](http://twojourneys.org)

## **In Him is Life**

**John 1:4-5**

***John 1:4-5 In him was life, and that life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.***

We live in perilous times, both physically and spiritually. And we live in historic times as well. Today is Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. And on Tuesday Barack Obama will be inaugurated as President of the United States at the Capitol Building in Washington D.C.

I will come back to our current events... but I want to speak first to the preciousness of the gift of life itself. I want to link the gift of life directly to the Person of Jesus Christ.

- I want to speak of biological life as the gift of Christ
- Then also of eternal life as the gift of Christ
- I will speak to the current context of our times on the issue of abortion, and where we may be headed on that crucial topic
- And I will finish with a proclamation of the Gospel of Christ, which is our only hope of eternal life despite our many sins.

### **I. “In Christ” Is Biological Life**

#### **A. The Deity of Christ**

1. The purpose of the Gospel of John established at the beginning and end
2. The Deity of Christ... and the life that comes from believing that Jesus is God

***John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.***

From verses 14 and 17 we learn precisely who this “word” is:

***John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.***

***John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.***

So, very clearly in the first 18 verses of John's Gospel... or really from the very first verse, John establishes the theme of His Gospel: Jesus Christ is God in the flesh

At the climax of the Gospel, he sums up that very same theme and applies it:

In John 20, Jesus appeared to His disciples after His resurrection from the dead; Thomas wasn't there and made the pronouncement,

***John 20:25 "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."***

A week later, Jesus proved His resurrection directly to "Doubting Thomas" Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them, and said "Peace be with you."

***John 20:27-29 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." 28 Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."***

Having established Jesus' bodily resurrection as the focal point of all saving faith, John declares that this is the precise reason why he wrote his gospel:

***John 20:31 these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.***

We'll come back to all this later... but the Deity of Christ, and "life in His name"... that is the central theme of John's Gospel, and indeed, of human existence

## B. Christ and All Creation

1. John reveals that Christ not only is God but is the creative instrument by which God the Father made the whole universe

***John 1:3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.***

2. Everything in all creation was made through Christ

John makes it very clear in verse 3 that nothing in a creation exists apart from Jesus Christ's direct involvement in its creation... he stresses this by repetition

***John 1:3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.***

The Apostle Paul extends our understanding of this in two ways... speaking of the physical and spiritual realms...

***Colossians 1:16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.***

And speaking of Christ's ongoing role in holding it all together

3. Christ constantly holds all things together

***Colossians 1:17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.***

### C. Christ and All Life

1. John gets specific about the issue of life as well

***John 1:4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men.***

2. There is a vast difference between non-living and living things in God's universe
3. Life itself is a mystery... very difficult to define
4. But from the beginning of his Gospel, the Apostle John makes it plain that God the Father has linked Jesus with life... there is no life apart from Jesus
5. Here we are simply speaking of physical, biological life at first... though John clearly means far more than that across the scope of his Gospel
6. But the vast array of living things in this physical world all owe their life to Jesus as original creator AND as constant sustainer
7. So what constitutes "life"?
  - a. Websites and biology textbooks testify to the difficulty of defining life
  - b. Many just tend to list characteristics of living things vs. non-living things
    - i) Living things are made up of cells
    - ii) Living things adapt to their environment so as to promote their own survival
    - iii) Living things can reproduce organisms of the same type
    - iv) Living things are capable of growth and development at some point over their life span
    - v) Living organisms obtain energy from the environment and use it in unique ways... plants by photosynthesis, animal life by eating food

- c. Genesis 1 speaks of God creating living things of various kinds: plants of various kinds, sea creatures of various kinds, birds, land animals, insects, beasts of the field, etc. A wide array of living things of all types, and Genesis 1 says God created all of them by the word of His power
- i) God said “Let there be...” and there was
  - ii) John 1:3 tells us it was by the Word Jesus Christ that God did all this...
  - iii) John 1:4 focuses especially on Jesus and LIFE...

***John 1:4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men.***

8. Jesus created and upholds every living thing on the planet

- Every species of plant life on earth was created by Christ and is upheld by Him: every blade of grass that sways on the Siberian tundra, every mass of plankton that floats in the North Atlantic, every coral reef that grows in the South Pacific; every wildflower (the daisy, primrose, aster, and baby’s breath)... every mighty Redwood and lowly fern... all plant life created and sustained by Jesus Christ
- So also every species of fish, from the tropical fish that school in the warm waters of the Caribbean to the mighty sperm whales that grow to 67 feet and swim in pods off the Continental Shelf... all of them created and sustained by Jesus Christ
- So also every mammal—small and great, every insect—solitary or swarming, every reptile
- ***John 1:4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men.***

The vast network of living things, the array of them, the food chain, the interlocking ecosystems with all their marvelous variety and complexity, were created by and for Jesus Christ

#### D. Christ and Human Life

1. Jesus is especially focused on human life, the pinnacle of the physical realm
2. In Christ we were conceived and by Christ we were created, every last one of us
3. Psalm 139 speaks of God’s activity in knitting every baby together in its mother’s womb

***Psalm 139:13 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.***

- a. Putting all this together, we realize that God the Father does this for every single human being BY THE POWER of God the Son
  - b. It is in Christ and through Christ that all of us have our being
  - c. Jesus is therefore directly active in the processes of knitting together a human being in his/her mother's womb
4. The central issue in abortion: the humanity of the pre-born child
- a. Barack Obama, like many others, refuses to render a decision on whether or not a baby is a human person... he says it's "above his pay-grade"
  - b. But the clear evidence of the humanity of pre-born children is conclusive
  - c. The marvelous steps of development are a picture of Christ's compassion and wisdom in crafting every human being as His special creation
- 18 days after conception, the baby's heart starts beating. Most mothers don't yet know they are pregnant at this early stage.
  - 21 days - pumps own blood through separate closed circulatory system with own blood type.
  - 28 days - eye, ear and respiratory system begin to form.
  - 42 days - brain waves recorded, skeleton complete, reflexes present.
  - 7 weeks - photo of thumbsucking.
  - 8 weeks - all body systems present.
  - 9 weeks - squints, swallows, moves tongue, makes fist.
  - 11 weeks - spontaneous breathing movements, has fingernails, all body systems working.
  - 23 weeks - 15% chance of viability outside of womb if birth premature.
  - 24 weeks - 56% of babies survive premature birth.
  - 25 weeks - 79% of babies survive premature birth.

This is what Jesus does to craft every human being born all over the world...And yet, there is all this controversy about when a baby becomes a human

Listen to the statement by Paul E. Rockwell, M.D., anesthesiologist:

"Eleven years ago while giving an anesthetic for a ruptured ectopic pregnancy (at 8 weeks gestation), I was handed what I believe was the smallest living human ever seen. The embryonic sac was intact and transparent. Within the sac was a tiny human male swimming extremely vigorously in the amniotic fluid, while attached to the wall by the umbilical cord. This tiny human was perfectly developed, with long, tapering fingers, feet and toes. It was almost transparent, as regards the skin, and the delicate arteries and veins were prominent to the ends of the fingers."

5. The baby looks like a human, has the genetic make-up of a human, has all the organs of a human in the proper place, all the bodily functions present from TWELVE WEEKS on!! How can anyone rightly say "It is beyond my paygrade to determine when life begins"???
6. My point from John 1:4... all this development of the baby takes place in its mother's womb by the direct power and working of Jesus Christ

## II. "In Christ" Is Eternal Life

***John 1:4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men.***

### A. Physical Life is Not Enough

1. Clearly the Apostle John means more than just that Christ creates physical life
2. Human life is especially crafted for relationship with Almighty God
3. It is not enough to be merely physically alive... the plants and beasts are physically alive... they breathe, and feed, and reproduce and excrete and do all those bodily functions necessary for life
4. But the life of Christ goes deeper than that... it is essentially a relationship with God

***John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.***

5. True life is relationship with Almighty God... Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

### B. The Living Dead

1. If that relationship with God is broken through sin, we are actually DEAD spiritually

***Ephesians 2:1-2 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.***

2. We are surrounded daily by people who are alive biologically, but dead spiritually
3. They never think of God, or if they think about Him their ideas are strange and unbiblical
4. They do not live for God's glory; they do not serve His interests or obey His commands
5. They live for created things, rather than the Creator... they are idolaters, finding pleasure in money, pleasure, sex, entertainment, power, professional accomplishment
6. God says they are dead while they live

#### C. The Life that Christ Gives

1. Here John says "That life was the light of men"
2. Light is that which makes everything visible... it makes things clear and understandable
3. Therefore, the life that Christ lived in front of us was the perfect human life... spiritually, it was what we were made for
4. John's Gospel describes that Christ-centered, Christ-given, Christ-blessed life in many different ways
  - a. The word "life" appears 50 times in John's gospel;
  - b. Usually it is linked to the word "eternal"... which speaks of the DURATION of the life Christ came to give... a life even biological death cannot destroy... a life that lasts forever, well beyond the grave
  - c. Christ also speaks of the nourishment of life in, saying He is a well of water springing up in our hearts, and He is the bread of life which we may eat and live forever
  - d. Christ also speaks as the Good Shepherd who comes to give His sheep joy and freedom

***John 10:9 I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture.***

- e. He calls this joyful experience of relationship with God through Him as "abundant life"

***ESV John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.***

#### D. The Ultimate Definition of Eternal Life is Relationship with God

***John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.***

1. There can be no life apart from God... neither physical nor spiritual
2. The great joy of the gospel is that God made us for a relationship with Him... God designed this universe that we may know Him and love Him, that we may see His magnificent glory and live in it forever

#### E. Only By Repentance and Faith in Christ Can We Live

1. Christ came to die for us
2. We deserved to die for our sins... but by His death Christ has atoned for our rebellion
3. By simple faith in Christ, we can know God and live forever

***John 20:31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.***

This is what it means, "In Him was life and the life was the light of men..."

### III. Understanding Our Present Times

#### A. Barack Obama and Abortion

1. As has been proven by his policies and his votes as a state senator in Illinois and as a US Senator in Washington, Barack Obama is the most radical legislator in the US today on the issue of abortion

Robert P. George, Professor of Jurisprudence at Princeton University, October article for Public Discourse:

Barack Obama is the most extreme pro-abortion candidate ever to seek the office of President of the United States. He is the most extreme pro-abortion member of the United States Senate. Indeed, he is the most extreme pro-abortion legislator ever to serve in either house of the United States Congress.

For starters, [he supports legislation](#) that would repeal the Hyde Amendment, which protects pro-life citizens from having to pay for abortions that are not necessary to save the life of the mother and are not the result of rape or incest.

He [has promised](#) that "the first thing I'd do as President is sign the Freedom of Choice Act" This proposed legislation would create a federally guaranteed "fundamental right" to abortion through all nine months of pregnancy, including, "a right to abort a fully



developed child in the final weeks for undefined 'health' reasons." In essence, FOCA would abolish virtually every existing state and federal limitation on abortion, including parental consent and notification laws for minors, state and federal funding restrictions on abortion, and conscience protections for pro-life citizens working in the health-care industry—protections against being forced to participate in the practice of abortion or else lose their jobs. The pro-abortion National Organization for Women has proclaimed with approval that FOCA would "sweep away hundreds of anti-abortion laws [and] policies."

It gets worse. Obama, unlike even many "pro-choice" legislators, [opposed the ban](#) on partial-birth abortions when he served in the Illinois legislature and condemned the Supreme Court decision that upheld legislation banning this heinous practice. He has referred to a baby conceived inadvertently by a young woman as a "[punishment](#)" that she should not endure. He has stated that women's equality requires access to abortion on demand. Appallingly, he wishes to strip federal funding from pro-life crisis [pregnancy centers](#) that provide alternatives to abortion for pregnant women in need. There is certainly nothing "pro-choice" about that.

But it gets even worse. Senator Obama, despite the urging of pro-life members of his own party, has not endorsed or offered support for the Pregnant Women Support Act, the signature bill of Democrats for Life, meant to reduce abortions by providing assistance for women facing crisis pregnancies. . . . This legislation would not make a single abortion illegal. It simply seeks to make it easier for pregnant women to make the choice not to abort their babies. Here is a concrete test of whether Obama is "pro-choice" rather than pro-abortion. He flunked.

It gets worse yet. In an act of breathtaking injustice, as an Illinois state senator Obama opposed legislation to protect children who are born alive, either as a result of an abortionist's unsuccessful effort to kill them in the womb, or by the deliberate delivery of the baby prior to viability. This legislation would not have banned any abortions. Indeed, it included a specific provision ensuring that it did not affect abortion laws. The federal version of the bill passed unanimously in the United States Senate, winning the support of such ardent advocates of legal abortion as John Kerry and Barbara Boxer. But Barack Obama opposed it and worked to defeat it. For him, a child marked for abortion gets no protection—even ordinary medical or comfort care—even if he/she is born alive and entirely separated from his/her mother. So Obama has favored protecting what is literally a form of infanticide.

Obama's extremism bottoms out in the area of using human embryos for stem cell research—in effect growing them for that expressed purpose; AND he would make it illegal for anyone of these artificially cultivated human embryos ever to be implanted in a human mother and brought to term. . . .

AND he opposed federal funding for any research of alternatives to human embryos as the source for stem cells. . . . its as though the cells HAVE to come from aborted babies

## B. Rough Times Ahead

***John 1:4-5 In him was life, and that life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.***

The prevailing darkness is powerful... a Satanic darkness emanating from human hearts; not just the heart of Barack Obama concerning abortion, but the prevailing spirit of the age is anti-Christian

**We have now passed the 50 million mark in abortions... 50 million!!!!**

Only the light of Christ can shine through it... and His life and the light that shines from it must be seen more clearly than ever before

1. The church will have to be active in prayer and witnessing as never before
2. The comfortable relationship Biblical Christianity has had here in America with the surrounding culture and with the government may soon be changed, drastically for the worse
3. We may see a raft of new legislation assaulting the sanctity of human life
4. We have to be willing to stand up and defend life... not by force or violence, but by the power of the truth

***2 Corinthians 10:3-5 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. <sup>4</sup> The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. <sup>5</sup> We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. but by the force of truth—biblical truth***

C. Pray for Our (Soon to be) President

1. Despite the radical and shocking nature of President-elect Obama's views, God can transform ANYONE'S heart
2. Two prime examples of this: Saul of Tarsus and King Nebuchadnezzar
3. Saul's conversion on the Road to Damascus... from **breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples** to becoming one himself
4. King Nebuchadnezzar's humbling... from being an arrogant tyrant who with one word could order the execution of all his advisors, and who constantly crushed the poor and oppressed of his empire, to being a meek, humble king who knew that someday he will have to give an account of himself to the King of kings
5. We are commanded to PRAY

***1 Timothy 2:1-4 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone-- <sup>2</sup> for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. <sup>3</sup> This is good, and pleases God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.***

The logic of this passage is this: though kings and those in authority may seem the least likely to be saved, we should still pray for them

Why?

- 1) So that we may live peaceable and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness... this involves the practice of our Christian faith; but it also involves ridding the land of unjust laws like legalized abortion
- 2) So that kings and those in authority may be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth

#### D. Realize that “Victory” in Abortion is Bigger Than the President’s View

1. America as a whole has embraced the “pro-choice” ideology
2. The “genie is out of the bottle”... the laws will be very difficult to change
3. People’s hearts must be transformed
4. This is an ongoing, daily battle... individual women facing desperate situations need to see the value of the human life they are carrying; they need to have friends around them who will offer them hope and material support
5. Abortion doctors and nurses need to be reached with the truth of the gospel; so do radical lobbyists and demonstrators for abortion rights... hearts must be transformed from a culture of death to a culture of life
6. Only the gospel of Jesus Christ can unleash this kind of transforming power
7. The church must be active in putting Christ’s light on display
  - a. In parents teaching their children the sanctity of life... and of marriage; teaching them that the marriage bed is pure and must not be defiled by premarital sex and by adultery
  - b. In Christians living openly before the world the superior JOY of a life lived for the glory of God
    - i) Satan promises the excitement of pleasure in sexual temptation

- ii) The church has to fight this with the infinitely greater pleasure of knowing and loving Christ
- c. [Put Christ's light on display]...In crisis pregnancy centers, that offer women the truth about the baby they carry and about God's view of that baby; and that also offer them hope for the future with their child, and with God who can meet every need
- d. In political activism, standing clearly for the truth of the humanity of life from conception
- e. In private conversations with people, challenging their thinking and urging them to change

Now I want to finish by shining the light of Christ's life as brilliantly as I can... to give you joy in Christ, even as we are surrounding by the encroaching darkness of sin and despair

#### IV. A Word of Grace... and of Life

***John 1:4-5 In him was life, and that life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.***

- A. In Christ is Life... Eternally
- B. Christ Came to Give Life
- C. True Life is Knowing God
- D. Eternal Life is Experienced Now and After Death
- E. That Offer is Made to You Now
- F. A Tender Word Spoken to Broken-Hearted Sinners
  1. Whenever I preach on the sin of abortion, I am mindful that there may well be some here who have sinned in this very area
  2. Perhaps you are a young man who sinfully had relations with a girl and urged her to get an abortion
  3. Perhaps you are a father whose daughter became pregnant and you felt more about your own shame and embarrassment and pride and convenience, and sinfully urged her to get an abortion
  4. Perhaps you are a woman who chose to get an abortion, and now have to live with the memories of that act the rest of your life
  5. Perhaps you are a public official—a legislator or judge—who used your position to establish even more deeply the sin of abortion

6. Perhaps you are a medical professional who aided in the taking of innocent human life in abortion
7. WHATEVER the case may be, there is abundant grace at the cross of Jesus Christ! There is a river of grace and mercy flowing from the cross, and a promise of complete forgiveness for any sinner who is willing to confess his/her sins and ask for forgiveness
8. Come to Him NOW and seek it... and you will find it!