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1 John 1:1-4

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. <sup>2</sup>The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. <sup>3</sup>We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>We write this to make our joy complete.

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The Source of Life

John 1:1-4, 14 – In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup>Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind... <sup>14</sup>The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

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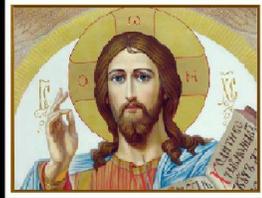
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The Source of Life

- John calls Jesus the "Word of life," "the eternal life," "light of mankind," "the Word who became flesh," and whose glory has been seen and experienced.
- Jesus claims that he is the "way, truth, and life." (John 14)
- We are not told that Jesus *has* life, or that he *gives* life, but that he *is* life.




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The Source of Life

- Most other religions present us with a prophet or sage who then points or directs us to eternal life through an outside source or process.
- Jesus is not a great prophet, pointing toward God and telling us how to save ourselves. The Christmas story tells us that he *is* God and has come to save us because we cannot save ourselves.




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The "Good Enough" Cycle

- Saying "doctrine doesn't matter, but living a good life matters" is actually a doctrine!
- A life from this perspective is plagued by... fear, doubt, and insecurity, because you can never truly know what a "good enough" life looks like.
- --OR-- Pride and judgment of others if you feel like you have met the definition of "good enough" that you have created.
- --OR-- Devastation and hopelessness because you know that you can't be "good enough" and never will.




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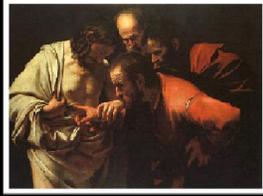
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Not a Fairy Tale

- John makes it abundantly clear that this story about Jesus, which begins with the story of Christmas, is not just a legend or fairy tale...
- "we have heard... we have seen with our eyes... we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim."
- John isn't just making intriguing conversation, he's "swearing a deposition" as if in an ancient court.



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Break the Cycle

- If this story about Jesus is actually true, we don't have to be stuck in the "good enough" cycle. Grace renders the cycle pointless and painful.
- The "eternal life" has already been proclaimed to us and is proclaimed again this Christmas season.
- The appearance of the "Word of Life" invites us, by grace alone and through the exercise of faith, into the assurance of salvation seen in Jesus.

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Closing Reflections

- Thank God for the revelation of the "Word of life" through Jesus Christ.
- Are you stuck somewhere in the "good enough" cycle?
- Ask God to show you which areas of your life might be in need of the new life grace brings.

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