Exploring the Bible—Gospel of John (1)

Introduction—In the Beginning was the Word

**Scripture Reading:**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him not one thing came into being which has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. (John 1:1-5)

**Ministry Reading:**

LIFE BEING IN THE WORD

John says, “In Him was life” (John 1:4). God’s speaking not only resulted in the creation of all things, but His speaking enables man to have God’s life. God spoke in Genesis 1, and all things were created. God’s speaking in the Gospel of John brings His life into created man. Verse 25 of chapter 5 says, “The dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.” God’s speaking enables created man to receive His life. A person who hears God’s inward speaking is a person in whom God is moving and living. The extent to which God can work and live in us depends on the extent to which we let Him speak in us. The more He speaks in us, the more He works and lives in us. If we want to be filled with Him, we must be filled with His word.

Not letting God speak in us is like shutting Him outside a door. When we give Him a little opportunity to speak, He will do a little work of “creation” in us. When we let Him speak more in us, He will impart more life into us. The more we let Him speak, the more He will work in us, and the richer His life element will be in us. God reaches us as the Word.

John says, “In Him was life” (John 1:4). Him refers to the Word, not God. Life is in the Word. If God were just God objectively, He could never be our life; He would be hidden and unfathomable to us. However, God is the Word; He has come forth. Furthermore, the Word is not separate from God; rather, the Word is with God and is God Himself. Life is in the Word; whenever we have the Word, we have life, and we are living, fresh, strong, and full of joy.

Regrettably, some Christians only understand doctrines with their mind, but doctrines are powerless and ineffective because they are not with God. The only thing that is effective is the Word that is with God and the Word that is God. Without being the Word, God would have nothing to do with us. Any word that is not with God and that is not God is dead. We want God, but we want God as the Word even more. We want to hear the Word that is with God, not a word that is without God, much less a word that is not God. Many sermons in Christianity convey words that are without God and that are not God. We are for the Word that is with God and the Word that is God. Without this Word, we cannot touch God. Any word that is without God is an empty word; it is only dead letter without life. Only the Word that was in the beginning, the Word that is with God and is God, is life. What we are touching and sensing today is not only the Word but the Word that is with God and the Word that is God. This Word is God Himself, and in this Word there is life; thus, the Word is living.

GOD BEING LIGHT TO SHINE IN US

After speaking of life being in the Word, John continues, saying, “The life was the light of men” (v. 4). The life in the Word was the light of men. The life was the light is a great word. No comparable word can be found in any book by philosophers or in the various religious writings in the world. The life is the light, and wherever there is life, there is light. Conversely, death is darkness, and wherever there is death, there is darkness. When a person touches death, he is in darkness. Since the life is the light, those who are full of life also have the shining of light. Whoever has life also has light, but whoever loses the sense of life within becomes inwardly dead and dark.

The most wonderful aspect of the Lord Jesus’ salvation is that God is no longer hidden in mystery. He did not remain in eternity; He is the Word who uttered Himself forth, speaking Himself into His believers. The Christian life begins with believing in the gospel. The gospel is the word of God; the gospel is God speaking to us. The content of the gospel is the Lord Jesus Himself. When we heard the gospel and were moved, we contacted the Spirit, we contacted the Lord Jesus, and we contacted God. When we opened to the Lord and believed in Him, receiving the word of the gospel, we received God Himself. Our believing and receiving made us living. We may have been sorrowful, but we became joyful when we received the word of the gospel. We may have been depressed, even to the point of considering suicide, but we were uplifted within when we received the word of the gospel. We felt that we were inwardly full of light, and we were willing to live on the earth for God. Furthermore, we also discovered the strength and limitlessness of this life. When we received the word of the gospel, we received the life in the Word. Now we can endure what others cannot endure and bear what others cannot bear, because God as the Word has entered into us to be our life. This life enables us to live a heavenly life on earth, living a life that others cannot live and taking a way that others cannot take.

We also can testify that whenever we touch this life, light shines brightly within us. Before we believed in the Lord, we were not only dead but fully in darkness. Our way was uncertain, and our life was without meaning. Our whole being was in darkness and filled with sorrow, pain, oppression, dejection, hopelessness, and utter despair. We were dead and in darkness until we heard the gospel, believed in the Lord, and received His word into us. Then we were enlivened and filled with light. We became inwardly clear, and the light within us was shining and illuminating the way of glory before us. Our life became bright and full of hope. The shining of light, which began in this age, will continue to the next age and from today unto eternity. This is indeed marvelous.

Proverbs 4:18 says, “The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, / Which shines brighter and brighter until the full day.” The light of dawn has been rising in us since the day of our salvation. The more we draw near to the Lord Jesus, have fellowship with Him, pray to Him, read His Word, and live in the Spirit, the brighter the shining will be in us. It is like the rising sun at dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until the full day. The light within us shines not only upon great matters but also upon small matters. From things high to low, the light shines on everything. When the light shines, nothing is in the dark, and nothing is unclear and confused. All things related to our parents, our spouse, our children, our relatives, our colleagues, and even our clothing, food, housing, transportation, and money become transparent and clear. When we are in the light, we know where we are, what we should do, and where we are going. This is the condition of those who have the light that comes from receiving the life that is in the Lord as the Word.

Reference: Life and Building in the Gospel of John, Ch. 1-4.

Question for Discussion: Do you have an experience of hearing the word that brings life and light to you? Please share with one another.