

John 1:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

Analysis

The dual concepts of 'life' (Greek 'zoe', referring to spiritual life) and 'light' introduce John's major themes. Christ is the source of both physical and spiritual life, and illuminates humanity's path to God. This echoes Genesis 1 where God creates light before all else, suggesting Christ as the eternal Light present at creation.

Historical Context

John's first readers, familiar with Greek philosophy's emphasis on 'logos' and light imagery, would recognize this as positioning Christ above all philosophical systems. The connection between life and light was common in Jewish wisdom literature (Proverbs, Psalms).

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. In what areas of your life do you need Christ's light to illuminate truth?
2. How does recognizing Christ as the source of life change your perspective on eternal matters?

Interlinear Text

ἐν	αὐτῷ	ζωὴ	ἦν	καὶ	ἡ	ζωὴ	ἦν	τὸ	φῶς	τῶν
In	him	life	was	and	^{G3588}	life	was	^{G3588}	the light	^{G3588}
G1722	G846	G2222	G2258	G2532		G2222	G2258		G5457	

ἀνθρώπων·

of men

G444

Additional Cross-References

John 8:12 (Light): Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 12:46 (Light): I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

John 5:26 (Parallel theme): For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

John 9:5 (Light): As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

John 11:25 (Parallel theme): Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

John 14:6 (Parallel theme): Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

1 John 5:11 (Parallel theme): And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

Ephesians 5:14 (Light): Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

John 12:35 (Light): Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

Colossians 3:4 (Parallel theme): When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

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