



From "The Chosen"

# ΚΑΤΑ ΙΩΑΝΝΗΝ

According to John

...εγω ειμι 'η 'οδος,  
και 'η αληθεια,  
και 'η ζωη;  
ουδεις 'ερχεται προς τον πατερα  
ει μη δι' εμου.

## The Seven “I Ams”:

“I am the bread of life” (6:35)

“I am the light of the world” (8:12)

“I am the door for the sheep” (10:7,9)

“I am the good shepherd” (10:11, 14)

“I am the resurrection and the life” (11:25)

“I am the way, the truth, and the life” (14:6)

“I am the true vine” (15:1)

*The Gospel of John* by F.F. Bruce, 1983, p.132 on John 5:26 “life-in-Himself”

None but God the Father, unbegotten and uncreated, inherently possesses life-in-Himself. He is in His very being ‘the living God’. Human beings, in common with all other living things, do not possess life-in-themselves: their life is derived from God, the source and stay of all life.

To the Son alone, begotten but not created, has the Father imparted His own prerogative to have life-in-Himself...

Nor is the Father's bestowal of life-in-Himself on the Son something which began with His ministry on earth, or with the Incarnation; it is an eternal act, part and parcel of the unique Father-Son relationship which existed already ‘in the beginning’.

In the eternal order the Father, as Father, imparts to the Son, as Son, that life-in-Himself which it is the Father's to possess and impart; on the temporal plane the Son reveals that life to men and women.

“That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”      John 20:30-31

**Life** ζωη      *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, IVP, 1992, pp. 469–471

11 times ζωη is the object of the verb “to have” and used in the context of a promise, invitation or statement about those who believe in Jesus (Jn 3:15, 16, 36; 5:24, 40; 6:40, 47, 53, 54; 10:10; 20:31)

By reading these eleven passages together, one comes to see that in the Fourth Gospel life or eternal life is not limited to a future age but can be realized in the present by the one who believes in Jesus.

John can still speak of life as future (5:28-29; 6:27; 12:25), but it is also something that one may possess in the present (5:24).

The definition of life in the fourth Gospel has various traits.

First, the life was the light of humankind (Jn 1:4).

... as John goes on to describe life and light in his Gospel, life in John 1:4 probably is referring to life before God or eternal life.... This life was in the Word. And it was through this word of life (cf. 1 Jn 1:1) that light (revelation) came to humankind.

The revelation (light) brought through the communication of this word of life brings both salvation and judgment (Jn 3:19-21).

Second, the words which Jesus has spoken are life (Jn 6:63).

Peter says to Jesus, “You have the words of eternal life” (Jn 6:68).

... Thus, life and the Word of God are intimately connected. But the Word is not merely the source of life; it is life itself in the sense that nourishment becomes a part of the body (thus Jesus is the bread of life, Jn 6:35, 48).

Third, Jesus Himself claims to be the life (Jn 11:25; 14:6). True life traces its source to Him (Jn 10:10). But He is more than its source, He is its sustaining power, apart from whom nothing can be accomplished (Jn 15:5). He is life itself.

The definition of eternal life in John is summed up in Jesus' final prayer: "This is eternal life, that they might know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (Jn 17:3).

Here life is related to knowledge. This knowledge has been revealed to those the Father has given to the Son (Jn 17:2). In that sense it is **objective cognitive knowledge**.

But the knowledge revealed is also a knowledge of persons--God the Father and God the Son. In this sense it is **subjective relational knowledge**.

So true life consists in knowing the Word of God. Thus, Christ's words are life and He Himself is life. And the reason that life is bound up with Christ and His words is that He explains (*exegeomai*) the Father (Jn 1:18).

John 14:6 “I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the father except through me.

This seems offensively exclusive, let it be borne in mind that the one who makes this claim is the Incarnate Word, the revealer of the Father. If God has no avenue of communication with mankind apart from His Word (incarnate or otherwise), mankind has no avenue of approach to God apart from that same Word, who became flesh and dwelt among us in order to supply such an avenue of approach.

Jesus' claim, understood in the light of the prologue of the Gospel (1:1-18) is inclusive, not exclusive. All truth is God's truth, as all life is God's life;

...but God's truth and God's life are incarnate in Jesus.

... Jesus is not only the way to God; He is the truth of God - how could He be otherwise, since He is the embodiment of God's self-revelation? - and He is the life of God, 'the true God and eternal life' (I Jn 5:20), manifested on earth to give His flesh 'for the life of the world' (Jn 6:51).

To come to God by this way is to know Him.

*The Gospel of John* by F.F.Bruce, p.298

## Questions for Groups

1. How does the OT (Hebrew thought) use the concept of 'light' when speaking about the Lord Jesus?

Ex. 13:21 - and the LORD was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night.

Ps. 27:1 - The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the defense of my life; whom shall I dread?

Ps. 36:9 - For with Thee is the fountain of life; in Thy light we see light.

Isa. 60:19 - No longer will you have the sun for light by day, nor for brightness will the moon give you light; but you will have the LORD for your everlasting light, and your god for your glory.



2. What other attributes does John connect with 'light' in relation to Jesus?

1:4—"In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

5:26-27 – <sup>26</sup>"For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; <sup>27</sup>and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man."

### 3. How does Jesus describe His very exclusive claim?

8:12 - ..." I am the light of the world; He who follows me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life."

9:5 - ... "while I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

12:35-36 – "for a little while longer the light is among you. Walk while you have the light, that darkness may not overtake you; He who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. <sup>36</sup>While you have the light, believe in the light, in order that you may become sons of light."

12:46 – "I have come as light into the world, that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness."

#### 4. What was John the Baptist's role in the coming of Messiah?

1:6-8 – <sup>6</sup>There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came for a witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He was not the light, but came that he might bear witness of the light.

Cf. 5:35 He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

## 5. How are we to become children of light?

1:9 <sup>9</sup>There was the true light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.

8:12 <sup>12</sup>Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

12:36 <sup>36</sup>“While you have the light, believe in the light, in order that you may become sons of light.”

6. How does the story in chapter 9 of John illustrate our need for the light of Christ?

7. How does John use “light” to express his view of salvation?

1:5 <sup>5</sup>And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it

3:19 <sup>19</sup>and this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil

8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

12:35, 46 <sup>35</sup>“For a little while longer the light is among you. Walk while you have the light, that darkness may not overtake you; He who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes.

<sup>46</sup>“I have come as light into the world, that everyone who believes in me may not remain in darkness.

8. What is John's understanding of sin based on these verses?

12:36 “While you have the light, believe in the light, in order that you may become sons of light.”

12:46 <sup>46</sup>“I have come as light into the world, that everyone who believes in me may not remain in darkness.

9. How does the light expose those who accept or reject its illumination concerning judgement?

3:19-21 <sup>19</sup>“And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil.

<sup>20</sup>For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, unless his deeds should be exposed.

<sup>21</sup>But he who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.”

10. How do light and darkness function as indexes to human character in these 3 cases?

Nicodemus: 3:20 - <sup>20</sup>For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, unless his deeds should be exposed.”

The Jews: 9:40 - Those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things, and said to Him, “We are not blind too, are we?”

11:10 – “But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.”

Judas: 13:30 - and so after receiving the morsel he [Judas] went out immediately; And it was night.



## 11. How does John express his ethics?

8:12 <sup>12</sup>Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

12:35 <sup>35</sup>“For a little while longer the light is among you. Walk while you have the light, that darkness may not overtake you; He who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes.

12. How might one today communicate the Biblical idea of light in a world that sees light simply as a physical phenomena?

that God is light

1 John 1:5

‘οτι ‘ο θεος φως εστιν

**Truth as a Person**

**Jesus is way, Truth, & life**

**Is truth ever in a person rather than a proposition?** Out of the hundred or so times that “truth” is used in the NT, only one passage indisputably uses truth of a Person (**John 14:6**). Other texts refer to truth being in a person (John 1:14, 17; 8:44, 1 John 2:4). However, the context of these clarifies that the truth is tested by the correspondence between the person’s behavior and God’s commands, which are propositions. So even here truth is correspondence. **Persons, their character, and conduct can correspond to reality as well as propositions can.**

The emphasis of the biblical text is certainly on propositional truth. And passages where truth is used of a person can be understood as relating to the truthfulness of that person’s words or works, as to whether or not they correspond to God’s reality.

Even if some passages do use truth as a quality of persons, only the correspondence view can accommodate both interpretations. The **personal view** says that truth does not reside in propositions, but a **correspondence view** can say that the persons or actions in question must correspond to God’s expectations. And the passages where truth is clearly seen as propositional and correspondent cannot all be explained in a non-correspondence way.

Just to top it off, any attempt to deny that truth is expressible in propositional is self-defeating because it is a truth claim expressed in a proposition. Hence, the correspondence view must be accepted for truth to reside in both persons and propositions.

*When Skeptics Ask* by Norman Geisler, p.264-265