

# ETERNAL LIFE MANIFESTED

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**1 JOHN 1:1-4 • TV446B**

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by

**HENRY T. MAHAN**

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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 upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.*

I want you to open your Bible with me, to the **Book of the First Epistle of John**, near the **Book of Revelations**. I'm going to read four **verses: 1, 2, 3, and 4**. Here is the subject today: **"ETERNAL LIFE MANIFESTED."** Eternal life is not talking about how long it lasts. Life is eternal and it does last forever. That is not what the scripture means when it says, "Eternal life." It is not the quantity of it, but it is the quality of it. Eternal life is the life of God. Eternal life is spiritual life. Eternal life is that life that is opposed to natural life; it is spiritual life.

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**First John Chapter one**, verse 1(listen carefully); *“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life: for the life was manifested; (there was life all over this earth when John wrote this), and we have seen it.”*

There is something different from animal life, plant life and human life. *“The life was manifested and we have seen it and we bear witness, and show you that eternal life, (that spiritual life, that divine life, the life that never ends), which was with the Father and was manifested to us. And that which we have seen and have heard, declare we unto you that you may have eternal life. That, you may also have fellowship with us and truly our fellowship, (our life) is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ and these things write we unto you that your joy may be full.”*

There is a lot here. There is a tremendous lesson here. There is something that we need to hear and to see ourselves and experience ourselves. Who is John writing about? *“Of whom does the prophet speak?”* That is what the Ethiopian asked Phillip when he read some scripture from the Book of Isaiah. He said, *“Of whom does he speak, himself or some other person?”* Who is John preaching about, writing about, and talking about? Well, he is speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ. *“That which was from the beginning,”* (that is Christ Jesus). *“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God, the Word was made flesh and the Word dwelt among us.”* That Word is Christ, the Word of life. The eternal life which was with the Father; that is Christ Jesus. Which was manifested to us; *“God was manifest in the flesh. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.”* You see; the subject of John’s preaching was always Christ.

In Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, Matthew presents the Christ Jesus as King of the Jews. Mark presents Christ Jesus as the servant. In Luke, Christ Jesus is presented as the Son of man. In John, Christ is presented as the Son of God. Christ was always his subject. Christ was the subject of all of the prophets. *“To Him give all the prophets witness.”* He was the subject of all of the apostles. It says, *“When Isaiah saw His glory, he spake of Him.”* Phillip began at the same scripture and preached Jesus. Paul said, *“We preach Christ and Him crucified.”* In fact, *“I’m determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.”*

Now, John says, *“That which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;). That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.”*

John was a witness; it was he who laid his head on the breast of the Master at the “Last Table.” He was called the beloved disciple. A witness tells what he has seen and what he has heard. In fact, that is all a witness can tell. If he tells anything more than what he’s seen and heard, it puts a question mark on what he says. The judge will throw it out of court. If he tells anymore than what he has seen and what he has heard they will throw out all of his testimony. He will be putting a question mark on all of it. So, John says, “I’m a

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witness of what I've seen and what I have heard and what these hands have actually handled and touched."

Let's start with verse 1 and look at these verses carefully. Remember what I said to you recently, "*He that hath ears, let him hear?*" All right, **verse 1** says, "*That which was from the beginning.*" Our Lord Jesus Christ has no beginning of days or end of days. He is not an, "I was" or "I will be," He is "*I am.*" John heard Him speak often of His eternity. He said, "*Before Abraham was, I am.*" He prayed in the garden, "*Father glorify thou me with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.*"

Here's a man in human flesh, born of a woman, who walked on this earth. His name is Jesus of Nazareth. They called Him Jesus the Christ. Here He is praying to the heavenly Father and is saying, "I had glory with you before the world was, for you loved Me before the foundation of the world. He's called the Lamb crucified or slain before the foundation of the world." He has no beginning. That is the reason that John begins his gospel with, "*In the beginning was the Word,*" but he begins this epistle with that which was from the beginning, which the apostles saw. That which was from the beginning, we saw. We heard Him speak and we touched Him.

Thomas said of our Lord after the resurrection, "I don't believe He's risen, and I don't intend to believe until I take my hand and put it into the nail print and into the spear marks in His side; I won't believe." Our Lord appeared to the disciples and He said, "*Thomas reach hither thy hand and touch my side and be not faithless, but believe.*" John said, "*I saw Him and I heard Him and I touched Him.*"

I want you to listen and learn three things here. These are three very important things. John goes on and says, "*That which was from the beginning, for the life was manifested and we have seen it and we have heard it and handled it with our own hands.*" Look at **verse three**: "*That eternal life which was with the Father was (literally and actually) manifested to us, that eternal life, (that divine life, that spiritual life, that life of God, that life that has no beginning or end).*"

I hear people say, "Well, Jesus is alive." No, "Jesus is not alive." Listen to me, don't turn me off yet; Jesus is life! You are alive, I'm alive, your dogs are alive, but Jesus Christ is not alive as if He's meeting some standard laid down for life. He is life! Life is in Him and apart from Him there is no life. He is life! "*As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.*" Christ is life! It says in Colossians, "*All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made.*" Now, who made a man? Christ did. Are you listening to me? "*In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God and all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.*"

He made the animals and gave them life. He made a man and gave him life. He made the birds that fly, everything that breathes, the beasts of the forest, and every creature lives by Him, because He is life. "*By Him, all things consist.*" He's not alive; He's life!

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He raised the ruler's daughter. She was dead and the master came to the house and the people said, "*Don't trouble the Master; she is dead.*" You need not trouble anybody else because nobody else can do anything about it. The Master can, He is life. He came in and touched her and she arose. Lazarus is dead and his sister said to the Lord, "*Don't roll away the stone.*"

Isn't it amazing how unbelieving we are? The Lord Jesus said, "*Roll away the stone.*" She said, "*Don't do that; he's dead. He's been dead four days and he stinketh.*" He said, "*Martha, I'm the resurrection, I'm the life.*" She said, "*Oh, I believe he will be raised from the dead.*" But Christ said, "*I'm the life.*" Don't you believe that? The Lord says, "*I kill; I make alive.*"

When John talks here about that life, (the life), "*We have seen the life.*" He had seen a lot of things. When he saw Christ he saw the source of life, and the fountain of life. He saw eternal life and he saw the life of God. God isn't speaking here of natural life, he's talking about eternal life and spiritual life. Jesus Christ is eternal life too. He says, "*I'm come that they might have life.*" What do you mean that they might have life; we have a good life? Well, they have a fleshly life, a carnal life that will die. They will keep dying and dying and die eternally. Christ said, "*I come that they may have life and have it more abundantly.*"

You see; eternal life is to know the Father and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. John wrote again and said, "*The Son of God is come and given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true. This is the true God and this is eternal life.*" You see; eternal life and physical life are different. Christ is life!

That morning that John sat in the boat mending nets with his father and with his brother, this man Jesus Christ came by. He looked at John and said, "*You follow me; I will make you a fisher of men.*" Something happened! John laid down the nets, left his father, left his job, left his income and profession and followed Christ. He followed Him all the days of his life until he died in exile, 90 some years old, on a deserted island. There, God revealed to him the glory to come.

Oh, I tell you, "*Verily I say unto you he that heareth My Word and believeth on Him that sent Me hath everlasting life and shall never come into condemnation but is past from death to life.*"

John heard Him that day and John believed Him, and John lived. Have you heard Him? He said, "*I'm the way, the truth and I'm the life.*" This is what this is all about. Read it for yourself. Sit there and read it until God gives you an understanding. John says, "*The life was manifested,*" (the life, the true life, the life of God) was actually revealed and manifested and that eternal life which was with the Father. Jesus Christ is indeed a man but He's more than a man; He's the God-man.

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Paul wrote in **First Timothy 3:16**, “*Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifested in the flesh.*” Isn’t that what John said? That eternal life that was with the Father was manifested unto us and we’ve seen it and heard it and touched it. That life which was with the Father; “*God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of the angels, believed on in the world, preached unto the Gentiles, received up into glory.*”

I could give you so many scriptures that teach that Jesus Christ is God. Now, you sit there and listen to me for a moment. Jesus Christ is God! I know He’s a man, born of a woman, but He is God. He is God in human flesh; God was in Christ.

Now, listen to these scriptures: **Isaiah 7:14**, “*Behold a virgin shall conceive and thou shall call His name, Immanuel,*” (God with us).

Listen to **Isaiah 9:6**, “*Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be on His shoulders and His name shall be called, Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.*”

In **John 1:14**, “*The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of God.*”

In **Hebrews 1:3**, *He’s the express image of God.*” He’s the exact likeness of God. He was with God and He was God.

In **John 10:30**, He says, “*I and the Father are one.*”

In **John 14:9**, “*He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.*”

In **Acts 20:28**, Paul says, “*Feed the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*” It was God that purchased it.

In **Hebrews 1:8**, “*But unto the Son, He saith (the Father says), thy throne, O God, is forever; let all the angels of God worship Him,*” that eternal life which was with the Father.

There is one God. They are in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. There’s only one God. You’ll never see but one God, even in glory (and that is Christ). “*He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father.*” That life was manifested to us. “*He dwelt among us and we beheld His glory;*” (we actually saw His glory).

My friends, if Christ had not come into this world, we would never have known God. “*No man knoweth the Father but the Son and He to whom the Son will reveal Him.*” If Christ had not come, we would have never known God. If Christ had not come, we never would have known the love of God. We sure know His justice and His Holiness, they are revealed by our conscience. “*The power of God is revealed by the heavens.*” The love of God is in Christ Jesus. That is what **Romans 8:39** says, “*The love of God which is in Christ Jesus.*”

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If Christ had not come, we would still be under the curse. Because, “*Cursed is everyone that continueth not in everything written in the law to do it. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.*” If Christ had not come, we would have no way to God. I want you to listen to me for a minute; the whole Bible bares witness to this, that there is no way to God for any human being except through Christ.

You see, God taught this to Adam when he fell. He taught it to him on the outset. When Adam fell, sin came upon the whole race. Adam died in trespasses and sin, a spiritual death. God put him out of the garden and he put a flaming sword to guard “*the tree of life.*” The scripture says, “*That flaming sword pointed every way.*” There was no way back that wasn’t defended by a flaming sword. Adam couldn’t get back to God.

When Christ Jesus came, what did He do? Did He, (by His sovereignty) do away with the sword? The answer is no! Did he find a way around the sword? No! Then how did He deliver us from the sword of God’s wrath and justice? He took it in His own heart. He took our place. The sword of God’s wrath, anger and justice destroyed Him; it killed Him in our place. Now, He says, “*I’m the way; I’m the truth; I’m the life. No man cometh to the Father but by Me.*” I go to the Father in Christ and through Christ because He has taken all of the penalty, the punishment, the curse, the condemnation and the wrath of God. There is no sword in my way.

In the Book of **Exodus**, **Leviticus** and **Numbers**, God taught this to Israel. He had them build a tabernacle. That tabernacle was divided into two parts. There was the “Holy place” and then there was the “Holy of Holies.” In the “Holy of Holies” were the Ark of the Covenant and the Shechinah glory of God overshadowing the mercy seat. No human being was allowed in that “Holy of Holies.” No human being! Men tried it but were destroyed and killed. No human being was allowed in God’s presence except one, the High Priest.

The High Priest was an emblem or a symbol (of Christ our High Priest). He was not allowed in there without blood. He could only come once a year into that “Holy of Holies” into the Shechinah glory and in the presence of God once a year. There was just one man, the High Priest. He was appointed of God and He couldn’t come without blood. When he came with the blood, he sprinkled it on the mercy seat (making atonement), waving the incense and went out. A great four-inch thick veil separated it from the Holy place. God said, “Don’t anyone come into my presence except the High Priest once a year on ‘*the Day of Atonement.*’”

Christ came. He’s our High Priest. We have a Great High Priest. He came and He went to Calvary, shed His blood and He went not into the Holy Place made with hands, which is a figure, but He went into heaven itself. He went into the Shechinah glory, into the very presence of God. He went into the throne room and put His blood, not the blood of an animal, His blood. His blood was Holy and perfect. It was put on the mercy seat of glory and obtained eternal redemption for us. When that was done, the scripture says, “*The veil in the temple was torn into from top to bottom.*”

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Now, the scripture says, “*Seeing we have a High Priest, over the House of God, which is Jesus Christ the righteous, let us come boldly to God’s very throne of grace that we may find mercy and grace to help us in our time of need.*”

John is so insistent upon these three things. That eternal life which we have seen and heard, which was with the Father, was manifested to us. “*He was born of a woman; He was made under the law;*” He was obedient in life. He suffered a vicarious death. Do you know what vicarious means? It means, (in the stead of). It is a substitution! That’s the reason it is wrong to call any man on earth a “Vicar of Christ.” There are no substitutes for Christ. There is no one that stands in Christ’s place and stead. Jesus Christ suffered vicariously in our place and stead. He became what we are not that we might become what He is. He arose and ascended to glory and the good news is that by believing on Him and trusting in Him, resting and looking to Him, you and I can live, looking to Christ. He said, “*Look unto Me be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; I am God; there is none else.*” There is no other way. You, look to Me (the Lord Jesus Christ).

Don’t look to the law of works. People talk all the time about doing enough. If you can do it all, it wouldn’t be enough. Your works are tainted with sin. Don’t look to the law of works. Don’t look to your spirits. You might say, “Well, I just don’t know about my experience.” I don’t know about it either, but it doesn’t matter.

Feelings come and feelings go,  
And feelings are deceiving.  
Trust the ever-living Word of God,  
There is nothing else worth believing.

It is not experience, it is not feelings, and it is not looking to your religious leaders. “Well, I just lost all confidence in men.” That’s good and that’s fine. You shouldn’t have any confidence in yourself either. Don’t look to religious organizations; look to Him for that eternal life which was with the Father and is manifested unto us.

John had a three-fold reason to tell them about Christ. He gives it here in **verse 3 and 4**. He says, “*Now, what we’ve seen and heard declare we unto you,*” (number one), *that you may have fellowship with us,*” that you might be a part of the family of God. It is a special family in which its members have so much in common. They have “*one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one body, one hope of your calling, and one Father.*” The reason being, “*That you might have fellowship with us, that you might have a fellowship with the Father and His Son. And, that your joy might be full.*”

You know, my friends, on this earth there is no joy that is full. We have some joy. I’ve had plenty of joy through the years but it is just temporary and it is all fleeting. It doesn’t last. It can be called the fullness of joy. John says, “*In Christ your joy will be full.*”

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Swift to its close  
Ebbs out life's little day.  
Its joys grow dim  
It's glories fade away.  
Change and decay  
In all around me I see.  
Oh, thou that changeth not  
Abide with me.

I've got lasting joy and it will never fade. It just has to get better because David said; "*I'll be satisfied when I awake with His likeness.*"