John 1:1-4 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made: without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

 On Christmas Eve we had a worship service where we had the opportunity to hear those wonderful words from the Gospel of Luke that lay out for us the events of the birth of Jesus. It is such an eloquent history, simple and to the point and yet it is a history that has impacted the world and mankind like no other event of history has done.

 Like I said, the Christmas history is so simple. A man and his wife are forced to make a trip right at the time when she is soon to give birth. They make their destination and pow, here comes the baby. They end up in a barn where the baby is born. His first bed is a manger. Meanwhile, shepherds out in the fields nearby are confronted by a host of angels who tell them, “A Savior has been born to you. You will find this Savior wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger.” The shepherds do just what we would do….they go to see the baby and tell everyone they saw what they have seen and heard. That’s it. Simple and sweet. A Savior has been born!

 Now if that is all we ever knew about this child whose birth we celebrate then we might have to question what’s going on here and what this is all about. Yet it is not all that we know. We know the history of this baby, the important parts of his history, and it is pretty earth changing. We know he grew to adulthood and began a ministry that was filled with miracles, signs and wonders such as this world has never seen in numbers too great to comprehend. We know this Jesus would eventually end up on a cross to die because of peculiar and “makes no sense” circumstances. We know this Jesus dies and is buried. We also know this Jesus came back to life, gave ample proof to all around Him that he was alive and then He ascended into heaven. It is when you know the whole story, the whole history of this baby whose birth we celebrate, that you begin to suspect that there is much more to this child than meets the eye! Which is why we celebrate his birth. Because we know there is much more than meets the eye with this child!

 As the Apostle John sets about to write for the world, the truth of this child born for the good of the world it is clear John writes with a full and comprehensive grasp of the wonder before us. John endeavors to share that wonder and almost from the very first line of his Gospel you are brought to the realization that this child, this Jesus is someone we need to pay attention to. Let’s marvel at Jesus as we contemplate the words of our text. Our theme will be: **JESUS! 1st. The Word. 2nd. The Power. 3rd. The Life!**

######  What does John say when he begins to tell us about Jesus? He starts this way, **“In the beginning.”** In a direct reference to the very first word found in our Bibles, the very first utterance that God has Abraham record for us, John quickly grabs his readers’ attention. He tells us that what we are going to contemplate has always been, that the wonder before us goes all the way back to that moment of creation: **“In the beginning.”** In the beginning, before any kind of matter or solid substance of this world existed there was God. God the power and master of all the universe and more is the cause. He is the Creator of everything before us, what we see and what we don’t see. That’s where John starts the story of Jesus. Not with his birth into this world, but rather at the birth of the world. Why?

 John continues to instruct us. **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.”** Do you see this baby laid in a manger? While it is true that this is the beginning for this baby in this world, this is not really the beginning when you contemplate who and what this baby is. This baby is God’s Son. This baby is a unique and wonderful combination of man and God, united into one. For you see, behind this baby, united to this human flesh and blood is the Lord God, the second person of the Lord God, but nonetheless the Lord God. Paul in his book to the Colossians says of Jesus, **“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.”** And again, Paul in that same book says, **“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.”** Yes, here in this baby is none other than God.

 But note that John wants you to grasp even more. As if we don’t have enough trouble contemplating the infinite God in finite human form, or the One who is eternal, who has no beginning or end now with a beginning, John expands our horizon of knowledge and tells us this One who is born is **“the Word.”**

 I can tell you I have given many an hour of thought as to the implications and depth of what this name for Jesus means. He is the Word! He is the embodiment of God, the unique God-man who has come to our world but who even before He came to this world revealed himself. He revealed himself in the Word. Think of that for a moment while I remind you of how Jesus made it clear that to know Him is to know the Father. How Jesus testified to the fact that He and the Father are One, not just close, but in essence the same. In other words, this Son of God, this human revelation of God, the way we know God and receive God is the Word!

 Here is what I will tell you. Behind the very knowledge we have of God is the Word. To grasp God, to know God, to experience God is the Word. We are not talking some sort of spiritual encounter type thing, what some would call the “internal Word” where God speaks to you directly and personally. I do not believe that happens today because too often what you claim to hear and what you claim is God has not a single tie to the real written Word. No, what we are speaking of is the fact that Jesus, the Word, who is God and who was with God has in history revealed God through the Word, the written word, the Holy Bible. Behind the Bible is the majesty, the wonder, the authority and fullness of the deity in bodily form. Yes, behind the Bible is Jesus! From the beginning God has made himself known. From the beginning God has shown how He has worked, moved and acted. From the beginning, the Word, the power and revelation of God has been given. And all of that is in this baby, laid in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes.

 What this means is simple. You cannot disown God’s Word. You cannot turn away from, excuse, ignore, tear apart, degrade, put your own twist on or refuse to believe the Word without it having an impact on your faith and your relationship with Jesus! He is the Word! It is for that reason that we are warned not to add, subtract or deny the Word. How you treat the Word, the Bible, is how you treat the power behind that Word…Jesus! It is your faith you are playing with.

 Did you notice that I also called Jesus the Power? That is evident from what is said in our words. **“He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.”** If you would, again let me combine those words with some others found in Scripture. Colossians says, **“For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is the beginning of all things, and in him all things hold together.”** And Romans states, **“For from him and through him and to him are all things.”**

 Shall we decide that these words are worthless and foolishness? You can if you wish to deny the authority and power of Jesus. Note that Scripture very adequately tells us that the creation is of the Creator. Without the Creator, without the Father, Son and Holy Spirit there would be no world and what is in it. As you study and contemplate the wonder of what John wrote it is clear that John is telling us that the Word, Jesus, is the power and the very reason for creation in the first place. Everything was made through Him. Everything was made by Him. Everything is sustained and maintained, preserved and founded on Him. Yes, Jesus is the embodiment of the very power of God.

 Do you wonder how this impacts us? Well if Jesus is the Word and Jesus as the Word is the very power of God, they why would you not trust the Word? Since God says he is always with his followers, why would you deny that or not believe that? Since God says all things serve Him, why would you think God has no control or that God is not directing all of life for the benefit of His glory? Since God says He will not give us more than we can bear, why would we act as if we can’t bear it, unless we don’t believe in the power of God’s Word, in the power of Jesus? Such is the reason that baby laying in the manger has come! He has come to demonstrate his power and authority over this creation and us. He has come to use that power of his to bring to us life.

 And that is the last part of our study for today. Jesus is life. Our text put it this way, **“In him was life and that life was the light of men.”** I don’t know if it is possible for us to grasp the wonder and joy of what it means that Jesus is Life. When we look in Genesis at the creation of the world, did you know that every living creation is described as having “the breath of life.” At the creation of man we are told that God breathed into him “the breath of life.” I believe that life is from Jesus.

 As you study the Scripture you will find God called the path of life, the stronghold and fountain of life. You will discover it is God who preserves life and grants life. And I take it you understand life is much more than just breathing and existing in this world. Jesus said to us, **“Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for me will find it.”** Are you aware of the fact that when Jesus spoke of entering heaven he spoke of **“entering life?”** Again Jesus says to us, **“I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.”** Or, **“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.”** The Apostle Paul applies it this way, **“And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit, who lives in you.”** I could go on and on. Scripture makes it clear that the Life that Jesus is and gives is a reference to the eternal life that is ours in Him.

 That’s why the baby came. To offer his life for us and give us life, true life, eternal life with God. Not because we deserve it, but rather because He so loves and cares for us. God understands what a hole this world is, yes, what a “valley of the shadow of death” we walk in. God provides the solution. God in Jesus offers us life. He offers us the promise of his kingdom, the adoption as his children, the eternity of living with Him in His perfect kingdom. All because Jesus came. All because Jesus is the Life and our light.

 Well, you notice I didn’t get to a lot of other things that this text said. That’s okay, it will wait for another time. For today, rejoice in that Savior Jesus. The Word has come and is among us. The Word has with His power saved us and given us life. The Word has come to reveal the wonder of God for us. This is Jesus, the babe laid in a manger, our God and Lord, our Savior and our Life. Amen.