

# Jesus Gives Himself

By John Fox 12.23.2023

**Text: John 1:14**

**<sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

Main Point: Jesus Gives Himself

## Introduction

I love stories. I love myth, fiction, and fantasy. I love to see the worlds that people create where imagination is the only limitation. I love to get enveloped in a good story. Many people do. I'm sure you do.

This is why we spend so much time and money on movies and Netflix. Once we find a good story whether it is reading or watching, we can spend all of our free time on it. We get the sense that we are actually part of the story. And this fascination of being in the story is not just for the viewer, it is also often for the author.

We see this in books like when C.S. Lewis writes himself into the second book of his space trilogy, *Perelandra*. We also see it in movies often as well, like M. Night Shyamalan appearing in almost all of his movies like *The Sixth Sense* or Stan Lee appearing in the Marvel movies.

Why talk about story? It may strike you as odd, but this is actually what we are celebrating in the Advent season (Incarnation) in Christmas: story.

## The Author

As the Apostle John writes his account of who Jesus was and why he came he begins with an important truth: God is the author of *THE* story.

Before anything was that is, there was God- the Trinity. And we see that it is God the Son who is the agent of God the Father's will. He is the 'word' that creates the world and everything else in creation. He is the author of the story.

**As 1 John 1:1-3, 14 says,**

**1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 All things were created through him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created.**

14 The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed his glory, the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Jesus made all things and they exist for him. He is the Author.

## The Incarnation

But we also see something else about God in John's Gospel. Not only is he the author, but he also writes himself into the story. Why?

John tells us that, **"<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him."** The people that God created to worship him had forsaken him. So what does God do? He writes himself into the story to fully relate with them.

This makes all of creation a gigantic stage, or as Shakespeare has said, **"All the world's a stage/and all the men and women merely players"**<sup>1</sup>

In one sense, all of your life and the people who have come before you, and the people who will come after you, are all a part of a huge drama. But more than a drama, too. In fact, I believe a better word is **Eucatastrophe**. What is that?

### Definition of Eucatastrophe

Eucatastrophe is a word coined by J.R.R. Tolkien, who wrote *The Lord of The Rings*. One of the best stories ever written. It comes from the Greek word for "destruction" (*καταστροφή*) with the prefix *εὐ-* on it, meaning "good". This is a "good-catastrophe", or a "good-destruction." How can that be?

Tolkien said it this way in his essay, *On Fairy Stories*.

Eucatastrophe is **"*the sudden happy turn in a story which pierces you with a joy that brings tears.... ... the Resurrection was the greatest 'eucatastrophe' possible in the greatest Fairy Story – and produces that essential emotion: Christian joy which produces tears because it is qualitatively so like sorrow, because it comes from those places where Joy and Sorrow are at one, reconciled, as selfishness and altruism are lost in Love.*"**(Letter 89)<sup>2</sup>

Eucatastrophe is not all grief or lightheartedness. Rather it is a mingling of the two that produces something totally unique. This was the essential quality of every good fairy story in his opinion, and the best stories.

Speaking on eucatastrophe, he further said,

**"The Gospels contain a fairy- story, or a story of a larger kind which embraces all the essence of fairy-stories. They contain many marvels—peculiarly artistic, beautiful, and moving:"**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/god-is-the-author-who-enters-his-story/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://tolkiengateway.net/wiki/Eucatastrophe>

“But this story has entered History and the primary world; ...”

“The Birth of Christ is the eucatastrophe of Man's history.

Think about that for a second. He is saying that the birth of Christ is the “good destruction” “Happy Ending” of Mankind’s story. Another way he talked about it was to call it a “happy ending.” But there is more to it still. He further says,

“The Resurrection is the eucatastrophe of the story of the Incarnation. This story begins and ends in joy.”<sup>3</sup>

Tolkien is saying that unless you know Christ you will never really experience eucatastrophe. You will never experience good-destruction. You may experience some goodness, and a lot of destruction, but the destruction will never be mingled with goodness to produce in you, joy.

But for the believer, it is different. The Apostle Paul said it like this in **Romans 8:28**,  
“<sup>28</sup> **And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.**”

**Only those who believe in Christ will have all things, even the darkest times of life, end up being good for them and ultimately resulting in joy.**

This is what we celebrate, this Christmas and every Christmas. That God the Son became a man, to enter into the story and save man from their sin and judgment. Jesus came to defeat God’s greatest enemy, Satan, by giving up his life and in return ransomed for himself a people from every tribe, people, and language.

This is a story with a eucatastrophe. It is better and more joyous because of the sorrow that is involved in it.

Because Jesus came as a man, suffered, died, and rose, Christians have a joy that is unlike anything the world has. It is a **joy-sorrow**. A good-destruction.

So I ask you, where are you at in this story? Have you believed in Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins, or are you trying to be your own author?

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<sup>3</sup> On Fairy Stories, my pdf, pg 23-24.