

The Word

I. The Word – Divine nature of Jesus (1-5)

- A. Why does John refer to Jesus as “the word”?
- B. Jesus - The Word of The Father
- C. Jesus is the light sent from God

II. Word became flesh - The Human Nature (6-14)

- A. The Word became flesh
- B. The Word dwelt among us
- C. We beheld His glory

III. John the Baptist’s testimony to Christ (15-18)

- A. When the Light had appeared, the witness called attention to it.
- B. The Law entered thru Moses
- C. Grace entered the world thru Jesus.

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THIS IS THE FIRST WEEK OF THE 2019 SPRING SESSION

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GETTING TO KNOW YOU

* Last Sunday Pastor Darrell spoke about John's relationship with Jesus, pointing out that the two were very close friends. In school, who was your best friend; how did you become friends; what kinds of memories do you have growing up with them?

* What caught your attention with this week's sermon?

DIGGING DEEPER – Please read John 1:1-18 together

1* Verse 1 - What three truths does John tell us about the Word (Jesus) in verse 1?

a. **In the beginning:** This refers to the timeless eternity of Genesis 1:19 (In the beginning, God created the heavens and earth). John essentially wrote, "When the beginning began, the Word was already there." The idea is that the Word existed before creation or even time.

i. John makes it clear that the Word is not just the beginning, but it is the beginning of the beginning. He was there in the beginning, before anything was. (David Guzak - www.enduringword.com)

Was the Word: "Had the Word a beginning? John says, 'No: for if we reach back to any beginning, there already was in existence the Word.' At once it is evident to John's vision 'The Word' is no other than God the self-existent." (Trench)

"This description is given in order that we may at once grasp a continuous history which runs out of an unmeasured past, and the identity of the person who is subject of that history." (Dods)

In the beginning was the Word: Word translates the ancient Greek word Logos. The idea of the logos had deep and rich roots in both Jewish and Greek thinking.

Jewish rabbis often referred to God (especially in His more personal aspects) in terms of His word. They spoke of God Himself as "the word of God." For example, ancient Hebrew editions of the Old Testament change Exodus 19:17 (Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God) to "Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet the word of God." In the mind of the ancient Jews, the phrase "the word of God" could be used to refer to God Himself.

(David Guzak - www.enduringword.com)

The Greek philosophers saw the logos as the power that puts sense into the world, making the world orderly instead of chaotic. The logos was the power that set the world in perfect order and kept it going in perfect order. They saw the logos as the "Ultimate Reason" that controlled all things. (Dods, Morris, Barclay, Bruce, and others)

Therefore in this opening John said to both Jews and Greeks: "For centuries you've been talking, thinking, and writing about the Word (the logos). Now I will tell you who He is." John met both Jews and Greeks where they were at, and explained Jesus in terms they already understood. (David Guzak - www.enduringword.com)

"John was using a term which, with various shades of meaning, was in common use everywhere. He could reckon on all men catching his essential meaning." (Morris)

"The word being thus already in use and aiding thoughtful men in their efforts to conceive God's connection with the world, John takes it and uses us to denote the Revealer of the incomprehensible and invisible God." (Dods)

And the Word was with God, and the Word was God: With this brilliant statement, John 1:1 sets forth one of the most basic foundations of our faith – the Trinity. We can follow John’s logic:

- There is a Being known as the Word.
- This Being is God, because He is eternal (In the beginning).
- This Being is God, because He is plainly called God (the Word was God).
- At the same time, this Being does not encompass all that God is. God the Father is a distinct Person from the Word (the Word was with God).

So, the Father and the Son (the Son is known here as the Word) are equally God, yet distinct in their Person. The Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father. Yet they are equally God, with God the Holy Spirit making one God in three Persons.

The Word was with God: “This preposition implies intercourse and therefore separate personality. As Chrysostom says: ‘Not in God but with God, as person with person, eternally.’” **(Dods)**

And the Word was God: “This is the true form of the sentence; not ‘God was the Word.’ This is absolutely required by the usage of the Greek language.” **(Alford)**

And the Word was God: “Everything that can be said about God the Father can be said about God the Son. In Jesus dwells all the wisdom, glory, power, love, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth of the Father. In Him, God the Father is known.” **(Boice)**

2* Many non-Christian groups translate John 1:1 as “the Word was a god”? Why would some people and some religious groups want to incorrectly translate verse 1?

The Watchtower (the Jehovah’s Witnesses) bible, called New World Translation, translates this line quite differently. The Jehovah’s Witness translation reads like this: “In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god.” Their translation is used to deny the teaching that Jesus is God, and is a wrong and misleading translation.

The claim of the Watchtower defending their translation of John 1:1-2 is that because before the second time “God” is used in the passage, no article appears (it is written “God” and not “the God”). In answer to this approach to Greek grammar and translation, we can only refer to the multitude of other times in the New Testament where “God” appears without the article. If the Watchtower were honest and consistent, they would translate “God” as “god” every place it appears without the article. But it seems that this grammatical rule only applies when it suits the purpose of backing up the doctrinal beliefs of the Watchtower. The Greek text of Matthew 5:9, 6:24, Luke 1:35 and 1:75, John 1:6, 1:12, 1:13, and 1:18, Romans 1:7 and 1:17, shows how the Watchtower translates the exact same grammar for “God” as “God” instead of “god” when it suits their purpose.

In the main resource the Watchtower uses to establish their claim (The Kingdom Interlinear), the Watchtower quotes two well-known Greek authorities to make them appear to agree with their translation. But they both have been misquoted, and one of them, Dr. Mantey has even written the Watchtower, and demanded that his name be removed from the book! Another “scholar” whom the Watchtower refers to in their book The Word – Who Is He? According to John, is Johannes Greber. Greber was actually an occult-practicing spiritist, and not a scholar of Biblical Greek.

Real Greek scholars do not recognize the Jehovah's Witness translation of John 1:1-2. (David Guzak - www.enduringword.com)

· "A GROSSLY MISLEADING TRANSLATION. It is neither scholarly nor reasonable to translate John 1:1 'the Word was a god.' But of all the scholars in the world, so far as we know, none have translated this verse as Jehovah's Witnesses have done." (Dr. Julius R. Mantey)

· "Much is made by Arian amateur grammarians of the omission of the definite article with 'God' in the phrase 'And the Word was God.' Such an omission is common with nouns in a predicate construction. 'A god' would be totally indefensible." (Dr. F.F. Bruce)

· "I can assure you that the rendering which the Jehovah's Witnesses give John 1:1 is not held by any reputable Greek scholar." (Dr. Charles L. Feinberg)

· "The Jehovah's Witness people evidence an abysmal ignorance of the basic tenets of Greek grammar in their mistranslation of John 1:1." (Dr. Paul L. Kaufman)

· "The deliberate distortion of truth by this sect is seen in their New Testament translations. John 1:1 is translated: '...the Word was a god,' a translation which is grammatically impossible. It is abundantly clear that a sect which can translate the New Testament like that is intellectually dishonest." (Dr. William Barclay)

3* Verse 4 - What does John mean when he writes "in Him was life"? Read the following verses. What kind of life does Jesus want for you?

John 3:16 – eternal life

John 6:35 – bread of life

John 10:10 – life abundantly

John 11:35 – resurrection and life

John 14:6 – the way, the truth and the life

John 14:19 – believe and have life

4* Verse 5 – Have you experienced complete darkness such as being in a cave? If so describe what it was like? How does physical darkness relate to spiritual darkness?

The Greek word translated "comprehend" can mean either "extinguish" or "understand." Both meanings are applicable in this verse, for the darkness could neither understand nor extinguish Jesus. For three hours, the earth was darkened when it seemed the Light of the World was extinguished (Matthew 27:45). But three days later, He was back—to shine in our hearts as the Bright and Morning Star (Revelation 22:16), the Dayspring From on High (Luke 1:78).

Courson, J. (2003). Jon Courson's Application Commentary (p. 436). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

Without Jesus, we are dead and in darkness. We are lost. Significantly, man has an inborn fear towards both death and darkness. (David Guzak - www.enduringword.com)

5* Verses 6-8 – John states that John the Baptist was sent as a witness (not an attorney or debater) to testify about Jesus. What does it mean to be a witness in a court? What does it take to be a witness for Christ in everyday life?

We are not called to be attorneys. We are not called to debate, argue, convince. We are called to be witnesses—to share the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth concerning what the Lord is doing in our lives.

“I see you got a new car,” someone says to you. “Wow. You sure are lucky.”

If you’re a faithful witness, you’ll tell the truth and say, “I’m not lucky. I’m blessed. The Lord provided this car for me.”

Or —

“I see your new car was towed away,” someone says to you. “You must be angry.”

If you are a faithful witness, you’ll tell the truth and say, “I know God will work this out for good. He always does.”

Too often people think witnessing is confrontational and argumentative. It doesn’t need to be that at all. I have found great freedom in simply sharing with people what the Lord is showing me. I feel no pressure to convert or convince anyone. Rather, I find great pleasure in simply sharing what the Lord has done, is doing, and will continue to do in my life. **(Jon Courson’s Application Commentary)**

6* Verses 10-13 John brings attention to 3 groups – one group that didn’t recognize Christ; one group that rejected Him; and one group that received Him. What does it mean to “receive” Jesus? What “benefits” are there of receiving Jesus? (Also read John 16:33, 1 John 5:4-5 for further benefits of receiving Jesus)

The idea of “receiving Jesus” is Biblically valid. We need to embrace and receive Him unto ourselves. As many as received Him is just another to say those who believe in His name. “Faith is described as ‘receiving’ Jesus. It is the empty cup placed under the flowing stream; the penniless hand held out for heavenly alms.” **(Spurgeon)**

The right to become children of God: “The word children (tekna) is parallel to the Scottish bairns – ‘born ones.’ It emphasizes vital origin and is used as a term of endearment (cf. Luke 15:31. Believers are God’s ‘little ones,’ related to him by birth.” **(Tenney)**

Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God: John reminds us of the nature of the birth. Those who received Him are born of God, but not of human effort or achievement. **(David Guzak - www.enduringword.com)**

This new birth is something that brings change to the life. “The man is like a watch which has a new mainspring, not a mere face and hands repaired, but new inward machinery, with freshly adjusted works, which act to a different time and tune; and whereas he went wrong before, now he goes right, because he is right within.” **(Spurgeon)**

“Thou shalt call his name Jesus,” the angel said to Mary (Luke 1:31). The name “Jesus” means “Jehovah is salvation.” You will receive power to become a son of God when you believe that Jesus is not merely a Savior, or even the Savior, but that He is your Savior.

Courson, J. (2003). Jon Courson's Application Commentary (p. 437). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

TAKING IT HOME

The word “believe,” in various forms, is used 98 times in the Gospel of John.
How does your belief about Jesus affect the way you live your life?

PRAYER REQUESTS (be sure to save 15-30 minutes for prayer)

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REMEMBER: Typical G3 meetings are set up to last for 90 minutes. Of course there is time to talk afterwards, but please be aware of the clock ESPECIALLY if you are meeting in someone's home or you have children in the nursery or in Kid's Church.

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