

10. Christ, the Word of God

Christ as the Word of God is, perhaps, the most difficult concept for humans, bound to this earth, to comprehend. Yet it is the concept that helps us transcend the earthly and physical world in which we live. John 1:1 begins John's gospel stating omnipresence of the Word with God: "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." Not only was this Word present with God and was himself God, but also all things were made through him. John 1:3-4 reads, "Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men." This very same Word sanctifies and saves us. Jesus said in John 17:17, "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth."

Christ, the Word Who Became Flesh and Lived on the Earth

Christ was the Word who became flesh and lived on the earth, before dying for the sins of mankind. John 1:14 affirms, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." When we look at Christ we see in him the glory of the Father – grace and truth. It is the Word that is called the One and Only. How can it be that an abstract and spiritual notion can be real upon the earth? Paul explained the Lord's journey from the beginning, where God made all things through him, to the worldly path to the cross of Calvary:

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross! 9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name. Phil 2:5-11.

John and the rest of the apostles offered empirical proof of the Word of life as flesh and the Word as eternal life in 1 John 1:1-2:

1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched – this we proclaim concerning the Word of life . 2 The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.

That life is the living example left for all men to see and know.

Christ, the Word of God in the New Testament

Christ is the Word of God in the New Testament. In the entire Bible, the phrase, *word of God*, appears only 38 times in the NIV. The phrase, *word of the Lord*, appears 233 times, but only 10 of these uses appear in the New Testament. Why is this? The New Testament is the Word of the Lord and the final revelation of God. The Word that said, "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth." also said, through Paul in Eph 1:13, "And you also were included in Christ when you heard the *word of truth* [emphasis added], the gospel of your salvation." Through Paul in Rom 1:16 this same Word said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes." Paul explained fully how he

got the revelation of the Word of God in Eph 3:2-5:

Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, 3 that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation , as I have already written briefly. 4 In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.

In 2 Peter 3:15-16, Peter described the teaching of Paul as “the wisdom that God gave him,” and included Paul’s writings as *scriptures*. Thus, Paul’s revelation and that of the apostles and prophets were the God- breathed word of God. That is Christ in the New Testament. Therefore, the Word of God in the New Testament describes its own indomitable power. It is the sword of the Spirit, in Eph 6:17: “Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the **word of God** [emphasis added].” This sword, the word of God, enables us to conquer “the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” Eph 6:12-13. This word of God, the sword of the Spirit, cuts to the very heart, spirit, and soul of man:

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword , it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. 13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. Heb 4:12-13

In Rev 1:16 and in Rev 2:12, the sharp and double-edged sword comes out of the mouth of the Lord. It is an instrument of vengeance against the adversary, and support and reward to the righteous: “In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword,” and “These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword.” This is the sword with which the KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS wages his war. He is so described in Rev 19:11-16:

I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. 12 His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. 13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the **Word of God** [Emphasis added]. 14 The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Christ, the Word of God Living in Us

In addition to Christ, the Word of God, living a life on this earth by which we know God; and in addition to his being the living and active word recorded in the New Testament, he is the very Word of God living in the children of God. In Phil 2:14-16, Paul described Christians as “blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe 16 as you hold out the word of life.” It is the word of life, living in us that makes us shine like stars. This word of God, living in us and overcoming the evil one, goes hand in hand with our using the written word of God against the adversary. John poetically wrote in 1 John 2:14:

I write to you, young men,

because you are strong,
and the word of God lives in you,
and you have overcome the evil one.

Through the Word of God living in their lives, Christians perfect their lives and teach others by word and deed. The living word is in our thoughts, our actions, our prayers, our songs, and our lives. Paul said: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God." Col 3:16-17.

Conclusion

Look to the life of Christ to see God in Jesus Christ, the Word. Look to the New Testament to seize the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Learn the living word and teach the living word; teach and learn: "Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ . 18 But I ask: Did they not hear? Of course they did." Rom 10:17-18

Study Questions from the Scriptures

1. John 1:1: Where was the Word? Who was in the Word?
2. John 1:3-4: Through whom were all things made? What is the light of men?
3. John 17:17: By what are we sanctified?
4. John 1:14: What became flesh and dwelt among us?
5. Phil 2:5-11: Whose attitude should we imitate? What did Christ become? How obedient was Christ? How did God reward Christ?
6. 1 John 1:1-2: What empirical evidence did John find to prove Jesus was the Word of Life? What living example was left for all men?
7. Eph 3:2-5: What was given to Paul? How was the mystery made known to him? How do we understand the mystery of Christ? Through whom has God revealed the mystery of Christ?
8. 2 Peter 3:15-16: What did Peter call Paul's writings?
9. Eph 6:17: What is the sword of the Spirit?
10. Heb 4:12-13: How sharp is the Sword? What can it do?
11. Rev 19:11-16: What comes out of the mouth of the Lord? What does he do with it?
12. Phil 2:14-16: When do Christians shine like stars of the universe?
13. 1 John 2:14: How is it that young men are strong?
14. Col 3:16-17: How should the word of life dwell in us?
15. Rom 10:17-18: How does faith come? How does hearing come?