

The Word – the WHO

Text: John 1:1-2

Who is Jesus Christ?

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. (1 John 1:1-2)

NOT told Jesus Christ *has* life or *gives* life, but He IS life.

Christianity born in Judaism. How was Christianity to be presented in a Greek world so that they could understand?

John wrote his Gospel to a community in Ephesus known as the Johannine community (J-community).

Ephesus was a Greek city - his Gospel needed to reach both Jews and Greeks. How then should he open his Gospel in a way that would appeal to both? What would the 'Word' have meant, first to the Jew and second, to a Greek or Gentile?

1. Jewish Understanding

Genesis 27 - Jacob and Esau – spoken blessing of Isaac on Esau could not be reversed. "God said... let there be ..." and it was so. (*Gen* 1:3, 6, 11) - the word of God was the creating power.

Ps 33:6; Ps 107:20; Ps 147:15; Isaiah 55:11

OT written in Hebrew; Jews no longer knew the language but spoke a hybrid of Hebrew, called Aramaic - Scriptures of OT had to be translated into Aramaic - *Targums*.

2. Greek Understanding

Heraclitus - everything is in a state of flux, changing from day to day, from moment to moment – if so, why was life not complete chaos?

How can there be any sense in a world where there was constant flux and change?

Answer: all this change and flux was not haphazard; it was controlled and ordered, following a continuous pattern all the time; and that principle or force that controlled the pattern was the *Logos*, the *word*, the *reason* of God.

What enables us to know right from wrong? What makes us able to think and to reason? What enables us to choose right and to recognize the truth? Answer: The *Logos*.

Logos - the reason or mind of God controlling the world - the power which puts sense into the world, the power which makes the world an order instead of a chaos, the power which set the world going and keeps it going in its perfect order.

Proverbs 8:22-30 - *wisdom* and *the word* one and the same - *wisdom* and *the word* that were God's instruments in creation.

So, WHO was the Word? In the beginning...

I. was the Word

NOT *from* the beginning – Jesus Christ was already there, even *before* the beginning. He did not *become*; He was not created; He is without beginning and without ending.

II. the word was with God.

In Greek the word "with" expresses a living, active union in the closest, most intimate sense. When John said, "The Word was with God," he meant that the divine Word—Jesus Christ—was not only present alongside God from all eternity but was in a living, dynamic, co-equal relationship of close communion with Him. See Heb 1:1-2

"We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life." 1 John 5:20

III. the word was God

"And [we believe] in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds (The Nicene Creed)

Arius asked whether Jesus Christ was really God, or was He a creature? He believed Jesus, the Son of God, is a creature.

Jesus was the only begotten son of God. Now what does begotten mean? It literally means the "only generated one". Difference between "make," "create," and "beget."

You can only beget a child that has the same nature as you have – a son or a daughter.