

Word of God

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it...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...And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

John 1:1-5, 14, 16-17; ESV

God has always desired a word with us—a communication so dear and important that he delivers his message personally. The message is life itself. By this word, all that is both visible and invisible were created and are maintained and held together (2 Peter 3:5; Colossians 1:15-17). Centuries have passed as God has used various forms, methods and messengers to communicate with us (Hebrews 1:1-4). If we desire life and God's illumination, then we must know this word personally and intimately. This word began life and will bring all that is, visible and invisible, to an ending of his choosing. While we may think we know what grace and truth are, the Word that became flesh gives the only grace and truth that matters because only he has conquered death and offers eternal life and only this word has seen the face of God and knows him as God's one-of-a-kind, darling son. So vital is this communiqué from God that after the Christ returns to heaven he sends the Holy Spirit to insure that the words remembered and passed on are not of human origin but come directly from God's mouth (John 16:12-13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21).

Heaven's invasion into the mundane is unimaginable. Who would have thought of God tapping us on the shoulder and saying, "I want a word with you"? The notion blows the mind. God crafted the world to his design specifications in exacting detail—giving definition to each and limiting each to his purpose (Psalm 33:4-7). Everything that is whether seen or unseen is but a product of God's imagination—he thought us into existence. He manipulates time and space as sculptor forms a lump of clay into a beautiful work of art. He created us in his image to communicate with and be the objects of his love. We are created by him and for him; and in Christ we receive the fullness of God as his Word takes up residence in our lives (Colossians 1:19-20; 2:8-12; 3:16-17). When the heavens and the earth wear out, God's word will still stand. He decides goodness because it is his nature—for him evil is unnatural and at odds with his nature.

Just as his word created the universe, so his word continues to give life to all who accept it and live by it (John 6:63). When confronted with this singular truth, many of disciples stopped following him because he asked too much (John 6:66-71). His way did not conform to normal convention even in the deeply spiritual climate of the Jewish world. He refused to compromise with the cultural currents of his day and demanded to be the only voice to which all gave ear. Of all the voices vying for our attention, the one that we should give careful attention to is the one that rose from the dead, ascended into heaven and promises to return for us if we heed him.

Modern convention wishes for us to evolve with the times. To this John calls us back to that which is from the beginning (1 John 1:1-4). Many offer false hopes, promises and paths to life and happiness, but we have the gift of God's word to help us wade through all these false, "wannabe" christos (1 John 2:18-21). What can guide us through this menagerie of truths seeking to enhance the gospel? John puts it this way, "*Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life*" (1 John 2:24-25). As John writes almost sixty years after the resurrection, he points back to the original gospel—the same word that created and maintains this world, without modern improvements. John writes to Christians in danger of losing fellowship with God as they try to make Christianity more palatable to their generation. It must be Christ's words that define our lives—his words must teem with life inside us so they will work their goodness in us. Christ must live in us and we must die to the attraction of our thinking and living. "*Oh that you had paid attention to my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea*" (Isaiah 48:18).

Steve Davis