

John -- Part 2

- 1. What does John mean when he calls Jesus “the Word”?** The Greek word translated *word* is *logos* (logos). The English word *logic* has its roots from a variation of this Greek word. In the Greek, the full meaning of *logos* includes the collection of thoughts put into words. This is a key concept set forth by John. To understand this, we must first consider the nature of God. In the beginning, God created man in His image, according to His likeness. One of the characteristics of humans that sets us apart from the animals is our ability to logically communicate through the spoken and written word. From where did this come? Clearly this is something we received from our Maker. It is safe to conclude that the God who created us with both the need and the means to communicate has within Himself both the desire and the ability to communicate. God is intensely interested in making Himself known to us through the means of verbal and written language. As Francis Schaefer summed up so well in the title of one of his books, "He is there, and He is not silent." We find that God truly has spoken! We know that, prior to Christ, He spoke to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways. God spoke sometimes in dreams or visions, and He even spoke directly through words as with Moses. However, the full communication of God couldn't be made known apart from Jesus. Jesus came in the flesh, in our likeness, that He could start at our level to pull us up to Him. Jesus came not only speaking the words of His Father, but demonstrating the life of the Father in the flesh -- see John 1:14. We can learn much about God through Jesus' fleshly sojourn. However, God's revelation didn't end with Christ's death or even with His resurrection. This is apparent in the book of Acts as Jesus tells Saul (Paul) that he would be a witness not only of the things which he had seen but also "to the things in which *I will appear* to you" -- see Acts 26:16. This same point is made in Hebrews 1:1-4 and 12:25. The glorified Christ continued to speak from heaven through the words of the New Testament apostles and prophets, completing both in words and demonstration the fullness of God. Truly Jesus is the Word of life (1 John 1:1) and the Word of God (Revelation 19:11-13). He who has ears to hear, let him hear!
- 2. What do we learn from the gospel of John concerning John the Immerser's ministry?** We learn that John the Immerser came to bear witness of the Light. When questioned by the Pharisees, John responded that he was not the Christ, but that he was the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. John said that he was "a voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'make straight the way of the Lord.'" We see that John came immersing for the specific purpose that Jesus "might be manifested to Israel." It is also apparent that John built the foundation of Jesus' ministry with his work, telling his disciples to follow Jesus -- John 1:35-36. John may have said it best when he answered those concerned about everyone going to Jesus. John said in reply, "He must increase, but I must decrease."
- 3. What can we learn from the cleansing of the Temple by Jesus?** There is no doubt that Jesus made a big splash during the first Passover of His earthly ministry. He made a scourge of cords and drove out the moneychangers along with the livestock. He poured out the coins and overturned their tables, and He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a house of merchandise." Jesus certainly had a great zeal for His Father's house. We see that Jesus was willing to stand up for His Heavenly Father, no matter the personal cost to Himself. Whenever Jesus took these strong stands, it seems that the Jews always questioned His authority. Upon His cleansing the Temple, they asked Him what sign He could show to them to establish His right to do this. Jesus responded, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Following His resurrection from the dead, His disciples remembered this, and they

believed the Scripture along with Jesus' words. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead truly gives Jesus the authority to speak on every issue!

4. **What does it mean to be “born again”?** You often hear people talk about "born-again Christians" as if there is any other kind of Christian. Jesus is very clear that a person cannot even recognize the kingdom of God unless he has been born again. When Nicodemus asked for a further explanation, Jesus said that a person cannot enter the kingdom of God "unless one is born of water and the Spirit." The Scriptures are consistent; fleshly man will not be able to enter the heavenly realm. From the time that God sent a global flood to destroy the wicked of Noah's day, God has communicated that the problem with man is that he also is flesh. Somehow this sinful man must be put to death, and a new creature brought up in his place. Of course, this is exactly the nature of the spiritual operation that God performs at a person's immersion into Christ -- see Colossians 2:9-12, Romans 6:1-11. The sinner who was in the image of Adam gets put to death in the waters, and a new person created according to the image of Christ is brought forth -- see Ephesians 2:10, 4:24, and Colossians 3:10. This also gives us the idea of the literal translation of John 3:3, "Unless one is *born from above*, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Jesus makes this same distinction between Himself and those who were disobedient to Him. In John 8:23, He says, "You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world." If we truly want to belong to Christ, then we must be born again. With this new birth, we need to get the right image of ourselves -- recognizing that we are not of this world.

5. **What does Jesus teach about New Testament worship in His discussion with the woman at the well?** First of all, the woman's question concerning worship was centered on the proper location. Jesus confirmed that under the Old Covenant worship took place in Jerusalem. Remember that it was at the Temple in Jerusalem where God's people came to worship. However, Jesus taught that under the terms of the New Testament, worship would be neither at Mount Gerazim nor in Jerusalem. The place of worship would be in the spiritual realm instead of a particular physical locale. Those who would worship the Father must now worship in spirit and in truth. Brethren, God desires worship, but it can only truly be given to Him when it is done by spiritual people. We have been born from above so that we can have His Spirit living in us, and can offer Him the submission of our spirit. We don't have to make a procession to a temple; rather, the temple goes with us. Let's worship God by giving Him our complete submission in spirit and truth.

6. **Compare or contrast the man at the Bethesda pool in chapter 5 with the blind man of chapter 9.**
Compare:
 - a) They both had been sick for a long time. Jesus knew that the sick man of chapter 5 had been a long time in that condition. The blind man of chapter 9 had been that way since birth.
 - b) In both cases a pool was involved. In chapter 5, the man was lying at the pool called Bethesda. In chapter 9, Jesus told the man to go wash in the pool of Siloam.
 - c) Jesus healed both of them on the Sabbath.
 - d) In both cases, the healings created quite a stir among the Jews. The ruling Jews put pressure on both of these men as a result of them being healed by Jesus.

Contrast:

- a) At first the man at Bethesda didn't know who it was who had healed him. The blind man knew that it was the man called Jesus who had restored his sight.
- b) The man in chapter 5 seemed to be an excuse-maker, while the blind man seemed to be a truth-seeker. When Jesus asked the man at Bethesda if he wished to get well, this man immediately started giving reasons as to why he couldn't. The man of chapter of 9 seemed to respond immediately with a great attitude by going to Siloam to wash.
- c) When Jesus showed himself to the man of chapter 5 after he was healed, Jesus gave him a stern warning to quit sinning. It appears that this man then went and "told on" Jesus to the authorities. On the other hand, Jesus made it clear that there was no connection between sin and the blind man's ailment. After being healed, the blind man vehemently defended Christ even when his parents caved under pressure. When Jesus fully revealed Himself to the man who could now see, this man said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Jesus.

7. **Is there really a resurrection of everyone at the end? What does the gospel of John tell us about this?** This race of life can seem very long. The study of history can make anyone start to wonder when (and maybe even if) Jesus is coming again. The Lord knows our struggles, so He continually reminds us of His certain return and the coming day of judgment. In John 5:28-29, Jesus tells that an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice and come forth. There will be a resurrection of both the unrighteous and the righteous with distinctly different outcomes for each group. In the context of Lazarus' death and resurrection, Jesus had a very interesting conversation with Martha. She acknowledged a coming resurrection on the last day. Jesus then further explained that He is the "resurrection and the life." The resurrection of Jesus from the dead does give Him authority to speak on every issue including the future resurrection of both the good and the evil. We know it's coming -- in which group are you?
8. **What different things do we see in the gospel of John that "bear witness" of Jesus?** There are many people and things mentioned in the gospel of John that bear witness of Jesus. John the Immerser bore witness that Jesus is the Son of God after seeing the Spirit descend upon Christ following His immersion by John in the Jordan -- John 1:7-8, 31-34; John 5:33. The multitude who were eyewitnesses of Lazarus' resurrection were also bearing witness that Jesus was the King of Israel -- John 12:12-17. John the apostle bore witness of Jesus' crucifixion, particularly in reference to the blood and water coming out of His side when He was pierced through -- John 19:32-35. John the apostle also bore witness of all the events recorded in the book of John -- John 21:24. Jesus Himself bore witness that He is the light of the world -- John 8:12-26. Jesus also said that He came to bear witness to the truth -- John 18:37. Jesus showed that God bore witness with Him, that He was sent from the Father -- John 8:16-18, John 5:37. Jesus explained that the Father bore witness through the works that Jesus was able to perform -- John 5:36, John 10:25. Jesus also brought out that the Father bears witness through the Scriptures -- John 5:39. The Holy Spirit also bears witness concerning Jesus -- John 15:26. The apostles would all bear witness of Christ after Jesus' resurrection, because they had been with Him from the beginning -- John 15:27.
9. **What do we learn about the Holy Spirit in the gospel of John?** Many things we learn about the Holy Spirit in the gospel of John include:

- 1) God gives the Spirit without measure -- 3:34
- 2) Rivers of living water are in reference to the Spirit (this opens up many O.T. passages) --7:37-39
- 3) He wasn't given until Jesus was glorified -- 7:39
- 4) The Spirit is the Helper -- 14:16-17
- 5) He is the Spirit of truth -- 14:17
- 6) The Spirit would bring to the apostles remembrance of all that Jesus had said -- 14:26
- 7) The Spirit would bear witness of Jesus -- 15:26
- 8) He would convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment -- 16:8
- 9) He would guide the apostles into all the truth -- 16:13
- 10) The Spirit would disclose to the apostles what is to come -- 16:13
- 11) He would glorify Jesus -- 16:14
- 12) Jesus breathed on the apostles and told them to receive the Spirit -- 20:22

10. In what kind of freedom movement was Jesus particularly interested? Although the Jews would have been interested in Jesus staging a political revolution, this wasn't Jesus' focus. The freedom movement in which He was most interested is freedom from sin -- John 8:31-36. This freedom is predicated upon two key points. 1) You must know the truth, and the truth shall set you free. The only way to know the truth is to abide in the words of Jesus. 2) Only the Son can set you free. If He sets you free, then you are really free. Following the truth in any area of life will ultimately lead us to the Son who is the truth!

11. What are some differences between the Good Shepherd and the hireling?

- a) The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep -- 10:11
- b) The hireling flees when the wolf comes -- 10:12
- c) The hireling is not concerned about the sheep -- 10:13
- d) The Good Shepherd knows His sheep and they know Him -- 10:3-4, 14
- e) The Good Shepherd unites the sheep who hear His voice into one flock -- 10:16

12. What does the word "glorified" mean in the book of John? In the book of John, the word "glory" has a definite connection with the character of God. Notice that when Jesus performed His first sign at the wedding in Cana, the Scripture says that He "manifested His glory." Some of the nature of God was shown forth through Christ's miracles. In a general sense, the word "glorified" can mean to bring proper praise or recognition to. We see this usage in the gospel of John in 15:8, where Jesus says that the Father is glorified when we bear much fruit. We also see this meaning when Christ answers our prayers, the Father is glorified -- John 14:13. However, there is a specific sense in which the term "glorified" is used in the book of John. In its specific use, it means Jesus' ascension, wherein He fully displays God's nature. Remember John 7:39 where it is spoken that "the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." From the rest of the New Testament, we know that the Spirit wasn't given until after Christ's ascension to the throne -- see Acts 2:33, 3:26. Notice the tie in from John 12:16 in reference to Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, "These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but *when Jesus was glorified*, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to them." The passage that really drives the meaning home is John 17:4-5. Verse 5 states, "And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." It is amazing upon a search of the rest of the New Testament to see how this meaning fits -- glory is the resurrected, ascended state.

13. What do we learn from Jesus' teachings about the vine and the branches? We learn much from the parable of the vine and the branches including:

- a) Jesus is the vine and we are the branches – 15:5
- b) Just as the branches are dependent upon the vine for nourishment, so we are dependent upon Christ for life so that we can bear fruit – 15:4-5
- c) Every branch that doesn't bear fruit, the Father takes away – 15:2
- d) Every branch that bears fruit, the Father prunes it, so that we bear more fruit – 15:2
- e) The branches that are thrown away dry up, with the result that they get burned – 15:6

14. How are we going to be unified according to John 17? According to Jesus in John 17, there are a couple of key components for us to be unified. The first is that we must be sanctified in truth – 17:17-20. We are set apart by our commitment to the truth. Apart from an absolute love for the truth, we will never be unified. The other key aspect of our unity is Christ's glory – see 17:22-24. The glory that the Father had given to Christ, He has now given to us. In other words, the same relationship that Jesus had with His Father while Jesus was on earth is available to every true Christian. God has taken the veil away, so that we can behold Him in His glory – this glory then transforms us into His image, and we are united – see 2 Corinthians chapters 3 and 4. Apart from beholding the glory of the Father, we will still be motivated by fleshly desires, and there will be conflict. Let's put the will of the Father first in our life, and enjoy the blessed peace of unity!

15. What do we learn about Jesus' kingdom from the book of John? We learn that Jesus' kingdom is not of this world, but is a spiritual kingdom. When Pontius Pilate interrogates Jesus in chapter 18, Jesus confirms that He is King and that He has a kingdom. However, Jesus is very clear that His kingdom is not of this realm. We also learn that no one can enter this kingdom unless he is born again – John 3:3-5. In other words, only spiritual people can be a part of a spiritual kingdom. What kind of person are you?

16. Where is Jesus' focus throughout the book of John? (Hint – see John 20:17 and then check out the rest of the book) In John 20:17, Jesus tells Mary, "Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren, and say to them, 'I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.'" The goal of Jesus was to ascend back to His Father. We see this throughout the entire book. Numerous times Jesus mentions the fact that He had been sent by the Father from heaven to this world. Jesus wanted to finish His mission and get back home. We can see this focus at the Last Supper in John 13:3 -- Jesus knew "that He had come forth from God and was going back to God." The same point is made in John 16:28, "I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; I am leaving the world again and going to the Father." The entire prayer of Jesus recorded in chapter 17 makes the same point -- Jesus earnestly desired to be once again glorified with the Father. What do you think our focus should be?