

VOC July 31, 2016

“The Word Became Flesh “

Hello Dear Listeners;

For the last four weeks on this program we've explored the meaning and purpose of God's Word, the gospel of light and life. It is first and foremost the Good News concerning Jesus Christ. We may say that all the promises and all the demands of God's Word find their fulfilment, and meaning in Him.

In fact He *is* the Word! He always was and is. For though He is far-removed from this earth, our habitation, He continues to speak, and to direct the 'traffic' here below. He is in fact the Lord, the King of all creation. He has the whole world in His hands! With His death and resurrection all authority was given to Him in heaven and on earth.

Let's discover some more of the riches contained in that Name of His which is not only Jesus, the Christ, God's One and Only Son, our Lord but,... according to The Gospel of John, chapter 1:1 is also The Word! For there we read,

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.¹ He was with God in the beginning.

I realize that at first , hearing this this term “ *Word*” we may not immediately think of God's Son, who is the Saviour of the world. Not that the term John used was totally unfamiliar to the world of both Jews and Greeks in his day.

¹ Or, literally, “And God was the Word”

I think of that man named Philo, who was a Greek-speaking Jew who lived from 20 BC to 50 AD. He was an influential person who used the term *logos* to designate a kind of intermediate divine being, or *demiurge*. He was very inconsistent howsoever. He is said to have used that word *logos* in his speeches and writings some thirteen hundred times. Yet his meaning is often vague and indefinite. Now it is a characteristic of God, then again it is a bridge between God and the world.

To the Greek philosophers called Stoics, the *logos* was the active *reason* that was found throughout the universe. Aristotle, a prominent Greek philosopher was in agreement with this. He said, "*The logos enables the human being to perform as no other animal can.*" It makes it possible for him to perceive and make clear to others through reasoned discourse the difference between what is advantageous and what is harmful, between what is just and what is unjust, and between what is good and what is evil.

Yet here, in the beginning of his gospel, John, straightened out all the confused and often contradictory ideas concerning the Logos. The fact is already in the O.T the Word of God is represented as a Person a person who speaks and commands! Think especially of Psalm 33:6, "*By the Word of the Lord the heavens were made, their starry host by the breath of His mouth.*" Christian scholars point us as well to Proverbs 8: 27-30. where wisdom is portrayed as a Person who says, "*I was there when He set the heavens in place, when He marked out the horizon on the face of the deep.*"

When we read on in the first chapter of John's gospel it becomes increasingly clear that John was speaking of that Person who is equal to God. For He was "with God" most intimately. He shared in God's

divinity, In fact He is that Son of God by whom, as it says in the first verses of Hebrews 1, God has spoken us us, “ *in these last days*”, and through whom He (God) “*made the universe.*”.

Far from being an angel or some other “mere creature”² the Holy Spirit testifies

The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful word.

It is not strange that John uses this concept of the Word, or, the *logos* for God’s unique Son, of whom the bible testifies that He is, “ *Very God of Very God*” but who *became man*. For He, the Word was with the Father in the beginning. Did God create all things with the breath of His mouth? Did He call light into existence and did he create all things, “ bright and beautiful? Did he create our first parents, “ *from the dust of the ground*” and give then a prominent, exalted place over all of creation as his ambassadors and stewards?

The Son of God, was fully involved. He was co-creator. When God spoke it was He of whom the church confesses that He was and is, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who is one, “*Their glory equal, their majesty co-eternal*” .³

This Word was not silent. All throughout the Old Testament He spoke. And then, one day, the promises that were made about about Him, and for us, were fulfilled. For, as John wrote in the fourteenth verse of his gospel’s first chapter, “ *The Word becomes flesh and made His*

² a term used for non-divine beings the the Heidelberg Catechism, Lord’s Day 5.

³ The Athanasian Creed, art. # 6.,

dwelling among us. “ John shouts for joy as he says, “ *We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.* ”

This “Word” was willing to descend into this realm of misery, this broken and defiled world, to pitch his tent for a while among sinful people “ *Veiled in flesh the godhead see.*” says the hymn.⁴

“ *And the Word became flesh...*” The Word became flesh but remained the Word, even God. He assumes the human nature without laying down the divine. “*Flesh*” here means human nature, a nature subject to weariness, pain, misery, and death. That’s Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

O that the world might hear and heed Him. For He continues to speak to you and me with His revealed, his inscripturated Word. He does more for He is the Word, that we might embrace Him and, in doing so, embrace the Truth, the Way, the Light.⁵ That we might take that truth to heart. That in this confused world with its many philosophies, and heroes all clamouring for our attention and our allegiance we might confess, “ Your Word is the lamp for my feet, the Light for my path.”

No not as a matter of preference. Nor because we find it and Him more appealing than all the other words, written, spoken, shouted, and whispered in our ears, But because God the Holy Spirit witnesses in our hearts that Christ Jesus is the life-giving, life-sustaining Word.

⁴ part of “Hark the herald Angels Sing”

⁵ John 14:6

“The Word was made flesh and made His dwelling among us.” What does it mean but that He carried our sorrows. He was made man, clothing himself with our humanity. Knowing therefore, our weaknesses, our challenges, our loneliness, at times. Bereft of friends, surrounded by enemies, He suffered in our place. Yet He was not ashamed to call us His brothers. Though facing a certain, horrible death on a despised cross, he was despised. But he was, and is The Word, who even on the cross, while the Father was about to abandon Him spoke to his mother, “ *Dear woman, here is your son.*” (John 19: 26b) And to his disciple, “ *whom he loved*”, * (v. 26a) who must have been John, he said, “ *Here is your mother.*”

For His is ever the Word of communion, of fellowship and of light that dispels the darkness. His is the everlasting encouragement to sustain us on life’s journey. The very last page of the bible bears witness to the fact that the Word made flesh is not silent. There John writes that Jesus sent his angel to give him “ *this testimony for the churches.*” “ *I am the root and the Offspring of David, and the Bright Morning Star.*” (*Revelation 22: 16*)

“ *This testimony, for the churches.*” A sure testimony concerning Jesus Christ who even now is preparing to return to judge the living and the dead. What did John say at the beginning of this book Revelation?

Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near , Rev. 1: 3.

Dear listeners, let us do so. Let us not dismiss the testimony concerning Jesus Christ, the Word, made flesh. If we did we would do so at our peril. Instead, believe in Him, cast all your burdens on Him, and He will give you life.

Amen, and, till next time, thanks so much for listening.