

THE WORD ... Who came, and will come again from Outer Space
THE WORD ... Who came, and will come again from Outer Space
(JOHN 1: 1-14; 1 JOHN 5:7; REVELATION 19:11-16)

The previous chapter suggested that John loved to call Christ "The Word." The apostle believed that Jesus fully expressed the mind of God, and preferred this title above all others. Altogether he wrote five New Testament books, but this theme links them together. On three occasions the apostle wrote of The Word, and the purpose of this study is to bring these Scriptures into bold relief.

In the Gospel . . . The Word Who took man's place-

John I : 1, 18

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." God is no longer the inscrutable One; no longer is He to be distant and remote, for He has expressed Himself in the Person of the Son. Christ declared that: (i) God loves. Against the awe-inspiring background of Sinai, where divine law thundered against sin; after the numerous occasions when righteousness destroyed the guilty, the fact that God loved was a thrilling revelation. (ii) God gave. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son. . . ." The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. It was almost incomprehensible that the King of angels should become man and be identified with sinners; it was almost unbelievable that He Who was so rich should become so poor; but He did. "He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (iii) God offers. ". . . that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This message superseded anything ever taught by the rabbis. It was in the mind of God that man should share His life and be made partakers of the divine nature, but this would have remained an eternal secret had not God expressed Himself through the Word.

In the Epistles . . . The Word of heavenly grace-1 John 5:7

As the Church developed and spread through the world, error began to destroy its unity; and before John went to join his Lord, he felt constrained to issue stern warnings against those who menaced the Christian faith. Aware of the presence of men who denied that the Word had come in the flesh, he denounced their teaching and reaffirmed what he knew to be true. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." The entire passage speaks of the truth; the witness; the record. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (vv. 11, 12). The Gospel was the truth of God expressed through the Son, and rejection of its message was blasphemy, for it made God to be a liar. Although men denied its teaching, a Triune Witness in heaven eternally vindicated the message. As the Word, in heaven Jesus expressed a three-fold fact. (i) He had indeed been offered, for His hands were scarred. (ii) His sacrifice had been accepted, for God had exalted Him to power. (iii) His ministry at God's right hand was effective, for sinners were being accepted. His being where He was, proclaimed that He had not died in vain. God acknowledged this; Christ expressed it; and the Holy Spirit came down to earth to proclaim it.

THE WORD ... Who came, and will come again from Outer Space
In the Revelation . . . the Word from outer space-

Revelation 19:11-16

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns. . . . And he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses . . . and out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations We live in an age when the exploration of outer space seems to be the chief concern of many scientists. Mighty rockets propel sputniks of ever-increasing size into the sky, and plans are being made for space stations from which it is hoped man will be able to explore distant planets. There is reason to believe that before this happens, Christ will return to earth. It is noteworthy that in expounding this truth, John retained the same title. (i) This endorsed the message of the Gospel, for " he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood." (ii) It endorsed His greatness in heaven, for ". . . the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses (iii) It endorsed the righteousness of God, for " . . . out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations. . . ." The Lord Jesus Christ is to return to earth; but for some people this event will be disastrous. Radio and television announcers may work overtime; newspapers may be printed in many editions; statesmen may panic and resign, but Christ will be here. This could take place very soon; and if this should be the case, days of opportunity to get right with God may be very few. Be in time. While the voice of mercy calls you-be in time.

Reflecting Mirrors

During June, 1957, my wife and I took my mother on her first trip overseas. We went to Italy, and for a few delightful weeks travelled through that entrancing country. Milan, Florence, Rome, Naples, Venice: these and many other cities were included in our itinerary, and in every place well-informed guides introduced to us the gems of Italian art. I can never express the superlative magnificence of the churches; Michaelangelo's paintings and carvings beggared description, and the catacombs carried us back to times when persecution drove the Christians underground. We saw so many works of art painted on lofty ceilings that finally we developed a pain in the neck! We shuddered when the guide explained how the famous painter had lain on his back for four years in order to paint one ceiling. Yet in the Rospigliosi palace in Rome, we appreciated the thoughtfulness of the authorities who recognized the strain of looking upward. "The Aurora" is truly a masterpiece, and in order that visitors may view the great painting in comfort, a reflecting mirror has been placed near the door. In this the work of art can be clearly seen, and tired viewers can sit at ease to study every detail of the painter's craft. It is doubtful whether the finer points of the picture would ever be noticed without the help of the mirror.

.....
The Cheddar Caves in England are famous, and to visit them is to enjoy an unforgettable experience. I have seen caves elsewhere in the world, but none excelled those in Britain. A small but beautiful cave is at the lower end of the gorge. This is well worth a visit; but higher up the valley are the larger caves in which is The Swiss Village. The guide leads

THE WORD ... Who came, and will come again from Outer Space along the darkened passages, and at intervals stops to indicate an ornate piece of Nature's handiwork. Finally he pauses at a small font-like rock, and invites his listeners to look into the pool placidly resting in the shallow depression. There, mirrored perfectly in the water is the reflection of innumerable stalactites. At first it is almost impossible to escape the conclusion that this has been arranged by a clever technician, for in the water is a picturesque village. The church with its steeple is clearly defined; the small winding streets with houses on both sides are seen in bold relief: the sight is truly entrancing. Without the aid of the reflecting waters, that particular piece of rock would be just another piece of rock upon which the sediment of the ages had left a deposit. The placid pool reflects the wonder of the unknown, and is certainly one of Cheddar's greatest treasures.

Both the mirror in Rome and the pool in Cheddar remind us of Christ. It would hardly be possible for sinners to gaze into the face of the Almighty. Eyes would be strained, the vision blurred, the feet unsteady. Travellers in this world would probably proceed on their journey completely ignorant of eternal beauties, had not God decided to reveal Himself. Christ is the mirror; in Him is reflected all the fullness of the Godhead. At His feet we may sit and watch; into the depth of His character we may gaze to see the beauties of the Infinite. And this is precisely the reason why John called Jesus the Word. The Saviour was the means-the mirror-the pool-the message by which God chose to reveal Himself.

The Dentist's Wife

She was very small, very efficient, very pretty, but very puzzled. Her husband had been won for Christ three nights earlier, and his overflowing happiness had attracted his intellectual wife. Yes, she would like to be a Christian, but certain things baffled her. Jesus of Nazareth was certainly a very fine man, but how in the wide world could I conscientiously say He was God? Had he not been born of human parents? Had he not lived as a man, worked as a man, and finally died as a man? His example was superb, but to say He was divine-well! I indicated the opening verses of John's Gospel, and when she read, "And the Word was God," I asked if she would tell me of what earthly use was a word. She seemed a little surprised that I should ask such an elementary question, but when I persisted in my enquiry, she explained that without words man would be unable to express himself. Then I asked how God could reveal Himself, or how could any other reveal God? Who, in any case, could reveal God without first having access to the mind of God? It is hardly possible to impart something one does not possess. Suddenly her eyes shone; she was beginning to understand how Jesus came to be a reflecting mirror; that He Who shared the counsels of the Highest was able to express them. Within moments we were kneeling at His feet.

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.