

A CHALLENGING WORD

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THE WORD OF LIFE

By Dwight Knight

The apostle John explains that Jesus Christ is the pre-eminent expression of God whose earthly ministry took on the task of supplying mankind with the only remedy for his desperate and singular need. That singular need is for man to know God. In His high priestly intercession, (John 17:3) He makes clear that knowing God the Father and God the Son is the purest definition and experience of eternal life. So, it is no surprise that the apostle John, the disciple assigned to express the heart of God, would choose by agency, instruction and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the descriptive phrase, THE WORD OF LIFE. There is no clearer means to express the wishes of the Father than these four words.

For in his gospel he establishes for the reader that the essence of God's heart was presented in the person of His incarnate son, Jesus. That is, all that God wanted to say could not be expressed by the agency of humanity, whether by prophets, priests or patriarchs (Isaiah 59:16); it required the powerful touch and approach of the incarnate Son of God. Likewise, all the love and compassion that God wanted to show a lost world could not be expressed through the agency of deity (Rom 5:8); it required the personal touch and approach of the Son of Man. In other words, the Ancient of Days had to become particularized in time and space, limited in humanity, so that He could accurately, and might I say, for the first time since the fall, adequately communicate the heart of God to the object of His love, man.

What amazes the mind is not God's plan to incarnate Himself, for that alone is not even fathomable to finite reasoning, but greater, that He would design to identify Himself as the WORD OF LIFE. For in that singular phrase all the many riddles of significance, melt into fulfillment, worth and purpose. All of humankind that has been denied because of the wicked intents of Satan (Heb. 2:14,15), all of the pangs of it's enslaved existence, and each of the vain and frustrating pursuits ending in empty, unfulfilled rejoice relationship, may now rejoice because Jesus is the WORD OF LIFE. The apostle Paul even expands of the truth of this while presenting to the Roman church the plan of salvation, "but what says it, the word is near you, even in your mouth and in your heart, the WORD OF FAITH which we preach. That word of faith (to discuss in detail later) rests solely on and speaks clearly to this same Word of Life.

Amazing is it not, that the Godhead deemed that one of the important descriptions for the earth ministry of Messiah would be something that is the principle mode of communication. The sum of all human reasoning and logic is based on words.

Thankfully, John wastes no time in gathering all the essential components for us to consider. He moves past the temptation to fulfill the human craving for fluff and filler and gets right to the undisputable evidences for his assertion. He does this by using two very crucial tools. First, he *defines* His deity, and then he *declares* His deity.

He defines the eternal WORD OF LIFE, by giving Him span and scope in time and space, “That which was from the beginning (denoted beyond time), which we have heard (declaration by communication), which we have seen with our eyes (described by sight), which we have looked upon, (discerned by scrutiny) and our hands have handled, (defined by touch) of THE WORD OF LIFE. The term “THE WORD OF”, using the definite article, sets Him apart from being merely a good teacher or wise sage; it posits Christ to be the only controlling agent for whatever is to follow. Anything that would be placed after that simple three-word phrase is His to command. No one who has ever appeared on the stage of eternal or temporal events will ever wield such power.

He is the WORD OF LIFE.

Denoted Beyond Time
“THAT WHICH WAS IN THE BEGINNING”

John uses the exact same phrase as the scribe Moses to introduce his gospel. Whereas Moses scripted the events of God acting from glory to create man, John states how God acting from glory redeems man. Moses shows God acting from eternity into time to bring about His will, John shows God acting from time in eternity to bring about His will. Just as Moses reveals the Holy Spirit hovering over the void and chaos of earth as God works to perfect His creation, John reveals the Holy Spirit of God hovering over the void and chaos of the unregenerate heart of man as God works to make Him a new and perfect creation. Moses declares that God takes nothing and makes something. John declares that God takes the nothing of human existence and makes something wonderful and glorifying from it. He does not just speak the *words of life* as any person with the power of speech may do, but rather, He is the only one who allows life to exist. To validate this, John goes on to declare His deity, by saying, “For the LIFE was manifest”. Wonder of wonders, the author and source of all being has step into the confines of His creation with the intent of restoring order and purpose. From beyond time into time, from eternity past into the present, from the scope and span of sovereignty into the cosmos of free will.

(The conclusion of Word of Life will be found in the next issue.)

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UP COMING CONFERENCES

BELIEVER'S NOV. 27-29, 2009 NORCROSS GA
WOMEN'S RENEW MARCH 5-7, 2010
MEN'S SUMMITT JOURNEY APRIL 9-11, 2010
MACUNGIE, PA