

The Living Word

Loving Our Magnificent, Invincible Savior

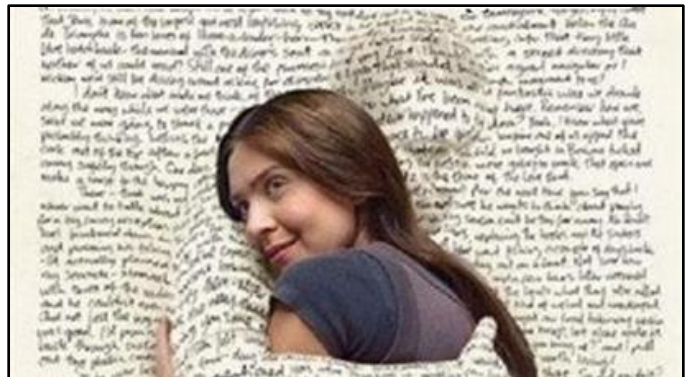
Among ourselves we trust a person's word because we trust the person—we know them and their character well enough to believe they'll do what they say. If we don't know them or have reason to doubt their integrity, we'll likely want their promises written down, signed, sealed and delivered! If they want our business, they'll give us a contract. Something like this is just how it works with God. The Father knows we don't know Him and find it hard to trust Him. He wants "our business," so He not only wrote His Word down, He sent Him to us!

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1 ESV

The Word of God

This is a mystery whose heights simply cannot be scaled by our imagination: The Living God is also the Word of God. What does that mean? We can readily understand what the scriptures mean when they tell us that God's Words are true, for that is the way it is with us. We see ourselves as speaking words that are either true or false, but we do not see ourselves as our words.

Yet, this is what the Bible would have us know about Jesus. He doesn't just speak the true Words of God. He is the one Person of the Trinity who is called "the Word." This Word is very much alive: Jesus is the Living Word of the Living God and He communicates Himself to us in two primary ways.



The Written Word

As the Living Word of God Jesus gives us two main ways of receiving His thoughts. He is (somehow) the Written Word; He is also the Spoken Word. The Bible is not Jesus of course. What we hold in our hands is a book with words on the pages—nothing mystical about that. Even the words on our pages are not the words recorded in the original manuscripts; they are translations based on copies of those words. And yet, we are told by the Bible itself that it is by no means an ordinary book.

Every Scripture is God-breathed (given by His inspiration) and profitable for instruction, for reproof and conviction of sin, for correction of error and discipline in obedience, [and] for training in righteousness. 2 Timothy 3:16 AMP

This passage shows that God (the Word) "breathed" Scripture into being, in some way infusing Himself into its words. This same Word can speak forth through the scriptures to anyone with



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ears to hear. For this reason, everyone who reads the Bible with faith notices a curious paradox. No matter how much we may read and understand with our minds a particular passage, there may come a day when that passage “speaks” to us with unexpected force or previously unrecognized meaning. Jesus, God and truth suddenly become even more alive to us in those moments! Conversely, it is possible to read the words of scripture and never once enter into a living relationship with the One who lives on or within every page as many a skeptic has demonstrated.

Accordingly, we should take care that the words themselves are not our only concern when reading the Bible. Certainly, we want to take them seriously and studiously as we build our spiritual understanding upon them. There may even be times when we will literally have to “bet our lives” on His Word being true, so we would be wise to make sure we know it accurately and well. Even so, the Bible is more than a book of words, laws, truths and promises. It is a divinely given means for entering into an intimate relationship with its Author.

The Spoken Word

Somewhere along the way a truly wonderful thing occurs: The Written Word transforms into the Living Word! The words of scripture lead us into conversation with and communion with our Risen Lord. Then, the more we grow familiar with, submitted to and dedicated to obeying the Written Word, the more frequently we may “hear” our Lord speaking fresh words to us. As Jesus becomes “more alive” to us in this way, we become attuned to living in relationship with the Spoken Word of God as well as God’s Written Word. In this way both the Bible and the Lord’s voice reveal Jesus to us, just as He said would happen:

“Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” John 14:21 ESV

What does it mean to hear God’s voice? Don’t think just about your ears. Being endlessly creative, Jesus speaks to us in ways too numerous to list involving the whole of creation and probably in some ways that are unique to each individual. He has also been reported by some people as speaking right out loud to them. Nevertheless, the most common forms are through the Bible, through conscience, through circumstances, through others, through silence and solitude, and through our inward spiritual sense, the trickiest way of all.

Naturally enough, the devil is trying to get his own words in so we have to take care that we are actually hearing from Jesus. His says His sheep hear His voice, but there are plenty of warnings in scripture and plenty of life-wrecks around to show us that Jesus’ voice is all-too-easily missed. See [Walking in the Spirit](#) for more on good listening and successful guidance.

Logos and Rhema

There is yet another way in which we can think about Jesus as the Word. In general terms we often refer to the words God recorded for us in the past (the Bible) as the *logos* and the words God speaks in the present as *rhema*. This is hardly an exact science, since God often “speaks” to us in the present through the scriptures for guidance or encouragement and the scriptures are themselves words God “spoke” in the past to those who set them into written form.



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Nevertheless, these two words, one Greek, the other Hebrew, give us a convenient handle for our words about the Word.

Logos entered the Bible through the New Testament authors who wrote in Greek, the common language of the Mediterranean basin. John used it to describe Jesus in the passage quoted above. In Greek philosophy and theology, *logos* described the divine reason which is evidenced in creation, giving it form and meaning. These connotations naturally fused with Biblical ideas of Jesus as the eternal counsel of God and the underlying order to all creation. As the Word (*Logos*) Jesus spoke everything into being. He sustains everything by His Word. Hence, intelligence structured all of reality. These thoughts are perfectly correct and can carry us a long way towards knowing God, so long as we don't stop there or go all mystical with it.

The Gnostic heretics of the Early Church, unfortunately, carried on so much about "the *Logos*" that they got carried away into false ideas about God. His Mind became anything their minds could conjure up. Then they got into trouble with matter: Since God (to them) was pure thought, how could the eternal Mind have anything to do with matter, or the material realm? They seem to have forgotten the second huge statement John made about the Word in his Prologue: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." You can't enter the material realm any better than being "en-fleshed" in it! But why would pure mind want to do that?

What's the Matter with Mind?

The most important thing to keep in mind about God — whether you are thinking of Father, Son or Holy Spirit, or of all Three-in-One—is that God is first and foremost a Person, not a mind. To think of God as some mysterious, super-spiritual force or ethereal mind is to think much less of God than God is. God has incredible power and intellect at His command, but God is a Person, actually Three Persons living in perfect harmony. That's why God not only can *do* love, He can *be* love.

A single Being, no matter how exalted, cannot be the source of love. Love requires a lover and a beloved who exchange love. The essential harmony sustaining all created things flows out of the dynamic fusion of perfect love forever being exchanged between the uncreated Persons of the Trinity. God's Word is truth, the Word Himself is truth, but God also is love. Many times the surest and shortest path to really knowing God is through the heart, not the mind.

In translating *logos* as "word" the New Testament plays into a bias in our cultural understanding that it will help us to recognize. We tend to think of words as intellectual concepts, the building blocks of sentences which they undoubtedly are at that level. In the West especially (and for excellent reasons) we place a high value on the mind and intellectual achievement. The Hebrew Scriptures, however, are weighted more towards the heart. In fact, ancient Hebrew had no word for "idea" or "mind." Our word "images" would translate the original text better, but our translations usually reflect our cultural bias. Interestingly, modern science is now suggesting that even our minds think by means of images.

Keep a Right Image of the Idea

Think for a moment of Jesus as the eternal Word. Now, "picture" Him as "the image of the invisible God." Can you see a difference? That image will help keep our thoughts of Jesus as *Logos* in balance by reminding us that He is a Person, not an idea. Even so, the Hebrew word,



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rhema, which we frequently use for God's Spoken Word invites us to listen, rather than look. Rhema describes a spoken word made by "the living voice" of the Lord. It is a dynamic, powerful utterance, capable both of creation and of re-creation, of bringing even benighted, unbelieving humanity into the new birth through igniting faith in its hearers.

Where *logos* leads us to think of the mind of the Maker, *rhema* beckons us to hear His voice. With *logos* we understand that God's Word is written for all eternity, outside of time and unchangeable. Through *rhema* we realize that God's Word is also alive in the present, soft as a whisper, crashing like thunder, fleeting as the wind, for it comes to us as a holy breath from the One who speaks it forth into our space and time with a heart of immense love.

Going Forward with the Word

No matter how we might think of Jesus as the Living Word, the essence of the walk is learning to let His words establish our faith, guide our steps and inflame our hearts. The simple truth is that Jesus is a Word living inside of us, surrounding us, and leading us home. What He has written cannot be denied; what He speaks must be tried. Let His Word enlighten, liberate, guide, convict, convince, cleanse, clarify, strengthen and comfort you!

Explore More about Jesus

[His Miraculous Birth](#) If Jesus truly is our Model and Example in everything pertaining to the spiritual life, then His birth has volumes to speak to us about our own new life in Him. Indeed it does! What it reveals will make you marvel even more at the "risk" He took and the miracle, not only of His birth, but of His unwavering pursuit of His divine assignment.

[His Incomparable Life](#) It is our happy task to be "imitators of Christ." Jesus said that disciples fully formed (that's you and me in the making) will be like their teacher. When it comes to showing us how to live, Jesus really is the Master. Trying to copy His ways from the outside in, however, is a guaranteed formula for frustration and failure. We need to see how He did it from the inside out.

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[pdf Jesus: His Early Years \(eBook\)](#)

Scriptures on the 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. John 1:1-5 ESV



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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 1:14, 16-18 ESV

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. Colossians 1:15-16 ESV

He is the sole expression of the glory of God [the Light-being, the out-raying or radiance of the divine], and He is the perfect imprint and very image of [God's] nature, upholding and maintaining and guiding and propelling the universe by His mighty word of power. When He had by offering Himself accomplished our cleansing of sins and riddance of guilt, He sat down at the right hand of the divine Majesty on high. Hebrews 1:3 AMP

About the Author: [Steve Evans](#)



For over a decade Steve Evans and [Healing Streams](#) have been helping people recover inner peace and freedom through the free eCourse for healing, [Matters of the Heart](#). Through Forerunners4Him he has been showing how we can be saved for heaven and teaching the way to live a Spirit-filled life on earth. Go now to receive a completely free primer, [Getting to Heaven](#) and/or an introduction to [Living in the Spirit](#) at our website.



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