



Sunday, July 18, 2021

WEST VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Word – Eternal, Personal, Divine

In presenting their accounts of the life of Christ, each of the authors of the four gospel accounts was inspired to record from a different starting point: Matthew begins his account with Abraham; Mark, with John the Baptizer; Luke, with John's parents, Zacharias and Elisabeth. John however is unique among the other writers in that his account begins even before the beginning. "In the beginning," John says, "was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). No less than three truths can be taken from this short but profound verse; the Word, whom the Bible identifies as Jesus Christ after He became flesh (v. 14, 17), is eternal, personal, and divine.

The Word is eternal – "In the beginning was the Word." It's hard for us to consider past events and people without doing so from the standpoint of time. However, John moves us beyond the scope of time with one powerful word – "was." You don't have to be a scholar to know that "was" refers something that happened or existed before something else. Time as we know began at the beginning of God's creative work. By using the word "was" in connection with the beginning of time, John implies that Jesus existed as the Word before time, which makes Him eternal.

The Word is personal – "And the Word was with God." Suppose someone said to you, "Please come with me to the store." If you agree and go, how many people would be going to the store? It doesn't take a mathematician to know that the answer is two. The word "with" is a preposition that denotes a connection of two separate people or things. A person cannot be "with" himself anymore than he can be above, behind, or below himself. When John says, "The Word was with God," he implies that the Word and God the Father were two separate entities, and therefore Jesus is personal, distinct and separate from the Father.

The Word is divine – "And the Word was God." One of the great mysteries is how God can be one, as He is clearly presented in the Bible (Deuteronomy 6:4), and at the same time be three, as He is also clearly presented in the Bible (Matthew 28:19, 2 Corinthians 13:14). Perhaps to run from this seeming contradiction, some deny the distinctness that John 1:1 teaches or teach that God the Father is the one and only God and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit only "mini-gods" or some other type of inferior being. These same individuals would probably not even blink if someone said that there is one mankind, even though there is more than one member of humanity. When the Bible speaks of there being one God, it does not demand that there is only one Being that comprises that one God. John says quite clearly, "The Word was God," making Jesus divine.

When Thomas was finally able to see the resurrected Lord, there was no doubt in his mind as to Whom he was seeing. He said without hesitation, "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28). To receive such a worshipful statement without being the one true God of the Bible would have been blasphemous on Christ's part were it not the case – faithful men and angels rejected such worship throughout the Bible (Acts 10:26, 14:14-15; Revelation 19:10, 22:9). Even Jesus said, "You shall worship the Lord thy God, and Him only you shall serve" (Matthew 4:10). Jesus did not reject worship as before He was the Christ, Christ was the Word. He is, was, and ever will be eternal, personal, and divine (Hebrews 13:8).

