

Message Six

Christ as the Word of God

Scripture Reading: John 1:1, 3-5, 14, 16-18, 29, 32, 42, 51

I. John 1 is the introduction to the whole Gospel of John, and the main stress of this introduction is that Christ is the Word of God—the definition, explanation, and expression of the mysterious and invisible God—v. 1:

- A. Christ as the Word of God is the great I Am, self-existing and ever-existing; He is the One who is eternal, without beginning or ending—Exo. 3:14-15; John 8:24, 28, 58; Heb. 7:3.
- B. John 1 refers to Christ, with the two sections of eternity and the bridge of time, in the five greatest events in the history of the universe—creation, incarnation, redemption, anointing, and building—cf. Psa. 90:1-2; Micah 5:2:
 - 1. John 1, as a prologue to the entire book of John, is an abstract of the history of the “journeying” Triune God as the Word in eternity past, ultimately becoming the New Jerusalem in eternity future—vv. 1, 4-5, 51.
 - 2. John 1 shows us in a crystallized way the eternal Word in His creating work and in His journeying across the bridge of time to become flesh for the accomplishing of His judicial redemption; to become the anointing, life-giving, and transforming Spirit for carrying out His organic salvation; and ultimately to become fully united, mingled, and incorporated with His regenerated, transformed, and glorified bride to be the New Jerusalem, the ultimate Bethel, the mutual abode of God and man.
- C. In these five universal, historical events, Christ, the Word of God—as: (1) the Creator in creation, (2) the man who tabernacled among us in incarnation, (3) the Lamb in redemption, (4) the anointing Spirit in transformation, and (5) the ladder in joining earth to heaven for God’s building—defines, explains, and expresses the invisible God—cf. v. 1; 10:35; Eph. 6:17; John 6:63.

II. Christ as the Word of God speaks for God through His creation—1:3:

- A. “The heavens declare the glory of God, / And the expanse proclaims the work of His hands. / Day to day pours forth speech, / And night to night tells out knowledge. / There is no speech and there are no words; / Their voice is not heard”—Psa. 19:1-3.
- B. “The invisible things of Him, both His eternal power and divine characteristics, have been clearly seen since the creation of the world, being perceived by the things made, so that they would be without excuse”—Rom. 1:20.
- C. What is referred to in Acts 14:15-17 and 17:24-29 serves the same purpose of revealing Christ’s creation speaking for God—cf. Heb. 11:3; 1:2; Col. 1:15-17; Hag. 2:7.

III. Christ as the Word of God speaks for God through His incarnation as the tabernacle of God—John 1:14:

- A. The Word, by being incarnated, not only brought God into humanity but also became a tabernacle to God as God’s habitation on earth among men, being full of grace and reality:
 - 1. The law makes demands on man according to what God is; grace supplies man with what God is to meet what God demands—v. 17.
 - 2. “Of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace”—v. 16.

- B. In His becoming flesh, He became the embodiment of the Triune God, bringing God to man and making God contactable, touchable, receivable, experienceable, enterable, and enjoyable.
- C. He became a God-man, bringing divinity into humanity and mingling divinity with humanity.
- D. The incarnation of God's only begotten Son is also for declaring (explaining) God to man in the Word, in life, in light, in grace, and in reality—v. 18:
 1. The Word is God expressed, explained, and defined so that man may understand God.
 2. Life is God imparted so that man may receive God.
 3. Light is God shining so that man may be enlightened to partake of God.
 4. Grace is God enjoyed by man so that man may share His riches.
 5. Reality is God realized by man so that man may apprehend and know God.

IV. Christ as the Word of God speaks for God through His becoming the Lamb of God for redemption—vv. 29, 36:

- A. In His becoming the Lamb for the redemption of the lost world, Christ speaks to us how God accomplished His redemption judicially through His death as the procedure according to His righteousness.
- B. The Lamb of God signifies the Word in the flesh as the fulfillment of all the Old Testament offerings to accomplish God's full redemption—Heb. 10:5-10:
 1. Christ is the reality of the sin offering, the trespass offering, the burnt offering, the meal offering, the peace offering, the wave offering, the heave offering, and the drink offering.
 2. With Christ as all the offerings, we have God's full redemption, and we may experience and enjoy this redemption.

V. Christ as the Word of God speaks for God through His becoming the anointing Spirit for the transformation of God's redeemed people into stones (John 1:32-42) for the building of God's house (Bethel—v. 51) organically for the New Testament:

- A. In His becoming the anointing, life-giving, and transforming Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45), Christ speaks to us further how God carries out His economy organically by His divine life for His divine purpose according to His heart's desire.
- B. We need to be watchful to not allow anything in our daily living to replace Christ as the anointing Spirit in our spirit—1 John 2:20, 27:
 1. Christ is the anointed One becoming the anointing One and also the anointing; to live in the principle of antichrist is to be anti the anointing (*anti* means "against" and "in place of, instead of")—vv. 18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 7.
 2. To be anti Christ is both to be against Christ and to replace Christ with something else.
 3. If we replace Christ with something of our own behavior and character, we are practicing the principle of antichrist in the sense of allowing certain things to replace Christ Himself—cf. Phil. 1:21; 4:4-9.
 4. We need to repent for having a daily living in the principle of antichrist, allowing culture, religion, ethics, and natural concepts to replace Christ as the inner anointing; this is to be against the anointing, anti the moving, working, and saturating of the Triune God within us.
 5. We should pray, "Lord, we want to live and walk in, with, through, and by the anointing—the moving, working, and saturating of the Triune God within us."

- C. The dove, the anointing Spirit, regenerates the created man, anoints and transforms the natural man into living stones, and unites the transformed man.
- D. At Peter's conversion the Lord gave him a new name, Peter—a stone (John 1:42), and when Peter received the revelation concerning Christ, the Lord revealed further that He was the rock—a stone (Matt. 16:16-18); by these two incidents Peter received the impression that both Christ and His believers are stones for God's building (1 Pet. 2:4-8).

VI. Christ as the Word of God speaks for God through His becoming the ladder that brings heaven (God) to earth (man) and joins earth (man) to heaven (God) as one for God's building—John 1:51; Gen. 28:11-22:

- A. Christ, in His being the heavenly ladder at Bethel, also speaks to us how God desires to have a house on the earth, constituted with His redeemed and transformed elect, so that He may bring heaven to earth and join earth to heaven, to make the two as one for eternity.
- B. Jacob's dream is a revelation of Christ, for Christ is the reality of the ladder that Jacob saw at Bethel, the house of God—v. 12; John 1:51:
 1. Our regenerated spirit, which is God's dwelling place today (Eph. 2:22), is the base on earth where Christ as the heavenly ladder has been set up (2 Tim. 4:22).
 2. At Bethel, the house of God, the habitation of God, which is the gate of heaven, Christ is the ladder that joins earth to heaven and brings heaven to earth; hence, whenever we turn to our spirit, we experience Christ as the ladder bringing God to us and us to God.
 3. The issue of Christ as the heavenly ladder is God's building—Bethel, the church, the Body of Christ—and the consummation of this ladder is the New Jerusalem.
- C. "The Lord's coming back needs a solid building of His seekers. This building will be a steppingstone, a beachhead, for Him to take the earth, and it will be a mutual abode for both God and man. It will be the mingling of divinity with humanity and of humanity with divinity forever...This building will be the ultimate fulfillment not only of Jacob's dream but also of God's eternal plan. It will terminate the bridge of time and usher in the blessed eternity in the future. We must be for that building, and we must be that building!" (*Life-study of John*, 2nd ed., p. 65).