

# **A Cup Overflowing – A study of the Christian life**

**Lesson 11:  
A Christian Life is...  
*A Word-filled Life***

# Let's begin at...

- ...well, the beginning.
  - ✧ OT – 1 primary Hebrew word
    - It can refer to
      - ✧ spoken utterance, a saying, a command, a speech, a story—linguistic communication in general

# Let's begin at...

- ...well, the beginning.
  - ✧ OT – 1 primary Hebrew word
    - It can refer to
      - ✧ linguistic communication in general
      - ✧ a thing, event, or action
    - The frequent construction “the word of the Lord” or “the word of Yahweh” refers to communication made by God to people.
      - ✧ The means of this communication are seldom related, nor must the phrase refer to a particular set of words.

# Let's begin at...

- ...well, the beginning.
  - ✧ OT – 1 primary Hebrew word
  - ✧ 3 special aspects of this word:
    - A *prophetic* word
      - ∞ The prophets claimed to deliver the “word of God”.

# Let's begin at...

- ...well, the beginning.
  - ✧ OT – 1 primary Hebrew word
  - ✧ 3 special aspects of this word:
    - A *prophetic* word
    - A *legal* word
      - ☞ God spoke the words of the law to Moses (Ex 20:1).
      - ☞ The heart of the law is called the “ten words”.
      - ☞ The entire law represents the will of God, so can be called a single “word” (Deut 4:2).

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    - A *prophetic* word
    - A *legal* word
    - The *creative* word
      - ☞ God created the world by his word (Gen 1; Ps 33:9)
      - ☞ The word is spoken of as if it were a person who directs the events of nature:
        - “He sends his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly.” (Psalm 147:15)

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      - ☞ The word is spoken of as if it were a person who directs the events of nature:
        - “Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths, lightning and hail, snow and clouds, stormy winds that do his bidding...” (Psalm 148:7-8)

# Let's begin at...

- ...well, the beginning.
  - ✧ OT – 1 primary Hebrew word
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      - ☞ The word is spoken of as if it were a person who directs the events of nature...
      - ☞ saves: “He sent forth his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave.” (Psalm 107:20)
      - ☞ gives life: “This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life.” (Ezekiel 37)

# New Testament

- Jesus' message...
  - ✧ of the kingdom (Mark 2:2, 4:33; Luke 5:1)
  - ✧ His individual sayings (Matt 26:75; Luke 22:61; John 7:36)
  - ✧ Significantly, Jesus avoided citing rabbinic authorities.
  - ✧ Just as in the OT, Jesus' word demanded decision. (John 8:51, 12:47)

# New Testament

- Jesus' message...
- The message about Jesus...
  - ✧ "And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation." (2 Cor 5:19)
  - ✧ "...eyewitnesses and servants of the word." (Luke 1:2)

# New Testament

- Jesus' message...
- The message about Jesus...
- And, of course, Jesus himself is *the living Word*.

# John 1:1-5, 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was with God in the beginning.

<sup>3</sup>Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and that life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

<sup>14</sup>The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

# Jesus – the Living Word

- Question 1
- Binding authority of words.
  - ✧ Isaac/Jacob/Esau (Genesis 27:33)
  - ✧ Of course, it is only God's word that has this type of power. (Isaiah 55:11, Matthew 24:35)

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

...my word...will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

# A Word-filled Life?

- So, what does it mean to have a “word-filled life”?
  - ✧ By study and memorization of the word, we can allow the Lord to help us better withstand temptation. (Psalm 119:11)
  - ✧ Just as the word of God has always demanded a response, it demands a response from us!
  - ✧ Live so that others can see Christ, the *Living Word*, living in you. (2 Cor 3:3; Gal 2:20; Col 3:17)

# The bottom line...

- 1 Peter 3:15
  - ✎ “But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord.”
- If Christ is Lord of your heart, he will be Lord of your life!

# Next week

A Christian Life is *An Opportunity-filled Life*

## Notes for *A Christian Life is A Word-Filled Life*

Title slide:

Ok, the obvious question first -- What picture of Jesus was John presenting when he referred to Jesus as “the Word”? (This is **Question 1** on the handout.)

Don’t get into a discussion of this here. Just ask the question, get a response or two from the audience, then say we’ll discuss it later in the lesson. If no one responds, that’s ok – we’ll still discuss it later in the lesson.

Slide 2:

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- Old Testament writers primarily used one Hebrew expression for “word”. (It’s the Hebrew word *dabar*, but it’s not important to mention this in the lesson.)

Slide 4:

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- This word of God **addressed human beings** and **demanding a response**. Hence, God’s word may be visualized as a great salvation (Isaiah 2:2-5) or a great judgement (Jeremiah 26:4-6), depending on the response of the people.

Slide 5:

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- Most of us are familiar with the word “Decalogue”, which we use to refer to the Ten Commandments. Literally, though, this word means “ten words”. Interestingly, in Exodus 34:28, “ten commandments” in English is translated from “δέκα λόγους” (deka logous) in the Septuagint. In Deuteronomy 4:13 though, “ten commandments” is translated from “δέκα ῥήματα” (deka rhemata) in the Septuagint.

Here we see both Greek words for “word” being used to refer to the same communication from God – the Ten Commandments. They *can* be used interchangeably, but it is not always possible to do so.

Slide 9:

- *Jesus' message* of the coming kingdom can be called a “word” (Mark 2:2; 4:33; Luke 5:1)...
- as can His individual sayings (Matt. 26:75; Luke 22:61; John 7:36).
- Significantly, Jesus avoided citing rabbinic authorities or using the traditional language of a prophet who would claim “that the word of the Lord came to me” or declare “thus says the Lord.” Perhaps these phrases did not significantly honor His special relationship with the Father and His own authority (Matt. 11:27; compare 5:21-26; Mark 3:28-29).
- As in the Old Testament, so also Jesus’ word demanded decision on the part of the hearers (John 8:51; 12:47).

Slide 10:

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- Not only the message Jesus spoke was called “the word”, but also the message spoken *about Jesus*.

Slide 12:

- **Question 2:** In John 1:1-3 what facts does John declare to be true of the Word? Why are these facts significant for understanding who Jesus is?

The assertion in John 1:1 that “the Word was God” is challenged by some modern cults. Jehovah’s Witnesses contend, for example, that because no definite article appears before the word *God* in the Greek text, this phrase should be translated “the Word was *a* god.” No evangelical (or nonevangelical) Greek scholar agrees with that translation. The absence of the definite article stresses that Jesus was distinct from the Father but was fully God just the same. In addition, some scholars explain the absence of the article (i.e., “the”) by the rule that predicate nouns preceding the verb are generally without the article.

Slide 13:

- Back to **Question 1** that I promised to get back to later. (I didn't say it would be in the same order they're printed on the sheet!)

**What is the significance of Jesus being the Word?** The significance is that Jesus is God's ultimate and perfect expression of his being, his love, his will – his very being in bodily form.

- It is often **assumed** that in Hebrew **thought** words had a mysterious binding authority.
  - ↪ For example, when Isaac discovered he had been deceived and wrongly gave his blessing to Jacob, he declared that his blessing had been given and Jacob “shall be blessed” (Gen. 27:33). Isaac's word seems magical—like an arrow once shot, it could not be recalled.

**Question 3 before the next bullet.** See if anyone can remember at least the gist of the next two passages – Isaiah 55:11 or Matthew 24:35.

- ↪ Actually, only God's word has this type of irresistible potency (Isa. 55:11) and absolute creative power (Gen. 1:3-31; Luke 1:32-35; compare Isa. 9:8; 31:2; 45:23). Most occurrences like Isaac's may be explained in terms of their social custom. Following a prescribed social custom, a person may form a bond, or a will, by speaking a word. Even today a couple can make or create a marriage by saying “I do.” We must also note that Scripture teaches that a person's word is often powerless (1 Cor. 2:4; 4:19-20) and frequently fails (Matt. 21:28-32).