

THE CENTRAL LINE OF THE BIBLE

(Friday—Second Morning Session)

Message Two

Christ as the Word of God

Scripture Reading: John 1:1-2, 4-5, 9, 12-13; 8:12; 1 John 1:1-2; Rom. 10:5-8

- John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
John 1:2 He was in the beginning with God.
John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
John 1:5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.
John 1:9 *This* was the true light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.
John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,
John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
John 8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life
1 John 1:2 (And the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and report to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us);
Rom 10:5 For Moses writes *concerning* the righteousness which is out of the law: "The man who does them shall live by them."
Rom 10:6 But the righteousness which is out of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, Who will ascend into heaven?" that is, to bring Christ down;
Rom 10:7 Or, "Who will descend into the abyss?" that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.
Rom 10:8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of the faith which we proclaim,

I. In the Godhead Christ is the Word—the mysterious and invisible God defined and expressed—John 1:1, 18:

- John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
John 1:18 No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.
- A. The Word is the definition, explanation, and expression of God; hence, the Word is God defined, explained, and expressed—v. 1.
John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- B. To say that the Word was with God means that the Word is not separate from God—v. 1.
John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- C. The Word is eternal and self-existing; this eternal Word is a living person, Christ, the Son of the living God—v. 18; Matt. 16:16; Rev. 19:13.
John 1:18 No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.
Matt 16:16 And Simon Peter answered and said, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.
Rev 19:13 And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God.
- D. The life in the Word is the life of the tree of life in Genesis 2; since life is in Him, He is life, and He came that we might have life—John 1:4; 11:25; 14:6; 10:10b:
John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 10:10b ... I have come that they may have life and may have *it* abundantly.

1. Life is in the Word, the expression of God; life can be found only in the expression of God—1:4.

John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

2. The Word, which is the expression and explanation of God, contains God as our life; when we receive the Word, we receive the life within the Word—5:24-26.

John 5:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, He who hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life, and does not come into judgment but has passed out of death into life.

John 5:25 Truly, truly, I say to you, An hour is coming, and it is now, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.

John 5:26 For just as the Father has life in Himself, so He gave to the Son to also have life in Himself;

3. Both the Word and the life are God Himself; the Word is the expression of God, and the life is the content of God—1 John 1:1-2; 5:11-12.

1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life

1 John 1:2 (And the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and report to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us);

1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.

1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

E The life in the Word is “the light of men”—John 1:4:

John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

1. When we receive Christ as the Word, the expression of God, He becomes our life, and this life is the light that shines within us—vv. 5, 9.

John 1:5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

John 1:9 *This* was the true light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.

2. When the Word is heard and the life is received, the life becomes the light shining within us to enlighten us—11:25; 12:35-36, 45-46, 49-50.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

John 12:35 Jesus then said to them, The light is still among you a little while. Walk while you have the light so that darkness may not overcome you; and he who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.

John 12:36 While you have the light, believe into the light, so that you may become sons of light. Jesus said these things, and He went away and was hidden from them.

John 12:45 And he who beholds Me beholds Him who sent Me.

John 12:46 I have come *as* a light into the world, that every one who believes into Me would not remain in darkness.

John 12:49 For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father who sent Me, He Himself has given Me commandment, what to say and what to speak.

John 12:50 And I know that His commandment is eternal life. The things therefore that I speak, even as the Father has said to Me, so I speak.

3. Christ is the light of life to bring the divine life to the world by shining forth God that man may be born of God to be His children, making man God in life and nature but not in the Godhead—1:4b-13; 8:12; 9:5; 12:46:

John 1:4b ... and the life was the light of men.
 John 1:5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.
 John 1:6 There came a man sent from God, whose name was John.
 John 1:7 He came for a testimony that he might testify concerning the light, that all might believe through him.
 John 1:8 He was not the light, but *came* that he might testify concerning the light.
 John 1:9 *This* was the true light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.
 John 1:10 He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, yet the world did not know Him.
 John 1:11 He came to His own, yet those who were His own did not receive Him.
 John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,
 John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
 John 8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
 John 9:5 While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.
 John 12:46 I have come *as* a light into the world, that every one who believes into Me would not remain in darkness.

a. When we receive Christ's shining as the light of life, this shining imparts the divine life into us—1:9; 8:12; 10:10b; 11:25.

John 1:9 *This* was the true light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.

John 8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 10:10b ... I have come that they may have life and may have *it* abundantly.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

b. The divine life becomes our authority to be God's children, God's kind, God's species, God's family—1:12-13; 3:3, 5.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

F. As the definition of the Triune God, the Word is for God's speaking; the fact that the Word is the entire God means that the Word is for the speaking of the Triune God—Col. 2:9; Heb. 1:2; John 17:6, 14, 17:

Col 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,

Heb 1:2 Has at the last of these days spoken to us in the Son, whom He appointed Heir of all things, through whom also He made the universe;

John 17:6 I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world. They were Yours, and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.

John 17:14 I have given them Your word, and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world even as I am not of the world.

John 17:17 Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.

- 1 The Word became incarnate as a man, and that man was God's speaking; the incarnate Word is the definition and expression of God—1:14, 18.
 - John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
 - John 1:18 No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.
 2. Christ spoke God not only with clear words but also with what He was and what He did; He is altogether the Word of God and the speaking of God.
 3. As the incarnate Word, Christ is the defined God, the explained, expressed, and revealed God, the God made known to human beings—14:9-10.
 - John 14:9 Jesus said to him, Have I been so long a time with you, and you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *is it that* you say, Show us the Father?
 - John 14:10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father who abides in Me does His works.
 4. The only begotten Son was, is, and always will be in the bosom of the Father to declare, define, express, and reveal the Father; the more the Son speaks, the more the Father is declared—1:18.
 - John 1:18 No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.
- G. As the Word of God, Christ is the Word of life—1 John 1:1:
- 1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life
 1. The Word of life in 1 John 1:1 is the Word mentioned in John 1:1-4 and 14, who was with God and was God in eternity before creation, who became flesh in time, and in whom is life.
 - 1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life
 - John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 - John 1:2 He was in the beginning with God.
 - John 1:3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him not one thing came into being which has come into being.
 - John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
 - John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
 2. The Word of life conveys the eternal life and is the divine person of Christ as the definition and expression of God.
 3. *Life* in 1 John 1:2 is a synonym for *Word of life* in verse 1; both denote the divine person of Christ, who was with the Father in eternity and was manifested in time through incarnation.
 - 1 John 1:2 (And the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and report to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us);
 - 1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life
 4. Christ as the Word of life is the eternal life itself for our experience and enjoyment—v. 1; 5:11-12; John 11:25.

- 1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life
- 1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.
- 1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.
- John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;
- 5. Eternal life is not simply a matter or a thing; eternal life is a person—God Himself expressed in the Son—1 John 5:11-12.
 - 1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.
 - 1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

II. Romans 10:5-8 reveals Christ as the Word; in these verses *the word* is used interchangeably with *Christ*, indicating that this word is Christ:

- Rom 10:5 For Moses writes *concerning* the righteousness which is out of the law: "The man who does them shall live by them."
- Rom 10:6 But the righteousness which is out of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, Who will ascend into heaven?" that is, to bring Christ down;
- Rom 10:7 Or, "Who will descend into the abyss?" that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.
- Rom 10:8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of the faith which we proclaim,
- A. Christ as the Word descended from heaven to mingle Himself with humanity for the accomplishment of redemption—v. 6; 8:3; 3:24:
 - Rom 10:6 But the righteousness which is out of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, Who will ascend into heaven?" that is, to bring Christ down;
 - Rom 8:3 For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh,
 - Rom 3:24 Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;
 - 1. To "bring Christ down" refers to Christ's incarnation, for Christ came down from the heavens in His incarnation—10:6.
 - Rom 10:6 But the righteousness which is out of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, Who will ascend into heaven?" that is, to bring Christ down;
 - 2. In His incarnation Christ as the Word brought the infinite God into the finite man, thereby mingling the Triune God with the tripartite man, that is, divinity with humanity—Matt. 1:20:
 - Matt 1:20 But while he pondered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife, for that which has been begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit.
 - a. He mingled Himself with humanity in order to accomplish God's redemption—John 1:1, 14, 29.
 - John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 - John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
 - John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

- b. After passing through His human living, Christ went to die on the cross as the God-man to redeem us back to God—1 Pet. 3:18.
 1 Pet **3:18** For Christ also has suffered once for sins, the Righteous on behalf of the unrighteous, that He might bring you to God, on the one hand being put to death in the flesh, but on the other, made alive in the Spirit;
- B. Christ as the Word ascended from the dead for justification unto life to those who receive Him by believing—Rom. 10:7; 4:25; 5:18:
 Rom **10:7** Or, "Who will descend into the abyss?" that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.
 Rom **4:25** Who was delivered for our offenses and was raised for our justification.
 Rom **5:18** So then as *it was* through one offense unto condemnation to all men, so also *it was* through one righteous act unto justification of life to all men.
1. After His death Christ as the Word descended into the abyss, Hades, and He ascended from that place in His resurrection so that those who receive Him by believing in Him may be justified—3:24; 4:25; 5:1.
 Rom **3:24** Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;
 Rom **4:25** Who was delivered for our offenses and was raised for our justification.
 Rom **5:1** Therefore having been justified out of faith, we have peace toward God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
2. When Christ died, He descended into the abyss, and in resurrection He was brought up from the dead, that is, out of the abyss—10:7; Eph. 4:9-10.
 Rom **10:7** Or, "Who will descend into the abyss?" that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.
 Eph **4:9** (Now this, "He ascended," what is it except that He also descended into the lower parts of the earth?
 Eph **4:10** He who descended, He is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens that He might fill all things.)
3. Christ is the One who has passed through incarnation and resurrection; therefore, we may say that He as the Word is the "processed" Christ:
- a. Christ as the Word has passed through a long process from incarnation through resurrection—Rom. 8:3; 1:3-4.
 Rom **8:3** For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh,
 Rom **1:3** Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh,
 Rom **1:4** Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;
- b. In this process He accomplished everything that is required by God's righteousness, holiness, and glory and all that is needed to enable us to partake of Him—3:23; 10:8.
 Rom **3:23** For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
 Rom **10:8** But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of the faith which we proclaim,
- c. He was God incarnated to be a man, and as a man, He was transfigured through resurrection into the life-giving Spirit for us to receive—v. 12.
 Rom **10:12** For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is *Lord* of all *and* rich to all who call upon Him;
- d. According to Paul, this processed Christ is "the word of the faith which we proclaim"—v. 8.

Rom 10:8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of the faith which we proclaim,

- C. The resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit is the living Word that is in our mouth and in our heart—1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 10:8:

1 Cor 15:45b ...the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

Rom 10:8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of the faith which we proclaim,

1. Christ in resurrection is both the Spirit and the Word—the Spirit for us to touch and the Word for us to understand—Eph. 6:17.

Eph 6:17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which *Spirit* is the word of God,

2. We may receive the resurrected Christ as both the life-giving Spirit and as the living Word—1 Cor. 15:45b; John 6:63, 68.

1 Cor 15:45b ...the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

John 6:68 Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life,

3. The word in Romans 10:5-8 is actually the gospel; when we hear the word, we hear the gospel, and when we receive the word, we receive the gospel and Christ Himself—Eph. 1:13; Col. 1:5; Rom. 1:1, 9, 15-16

Rom 10:5 For Moses writes *concerning* the righteousness which is out of the law: "The man who does them shall live by them."

Rom 10:6 But the righteousness which is out of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, Who will ascend into heaven?" that is, to bring Christ down;

Rom 10:7 Or, "Who will descend into the abyss?" that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.

Rom 10:8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of the faith which we proclaim,

Eph 1:13 In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise,

Col 1:5 Because of the hope laid up for you in the heavens, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel,

Rom 1:1 Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

Rom 1:9 For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers,

Rom 1:15 So, for my part, I am ready to announce the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes, both to Jew first and to Greek.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

THE WORD

The Word is the definition, explanation, and expression of God; hence, the Word is God defined, explained, and expressed.

In the Beginning

“In the beginning was the Word” (John 1:1a). As the Word (vv. 1-5, 14-18) Christ was in the beginning. The phrase *in the beginning* in verse 1a means in eternity past.

With God and Being God

The remainder of verse 1 says, “The Word was with God, and the Word was God.” To say that the Word was with God means that the Word is not separate from God. It is not that the Word is the Word and that God is God, and that they are thus separate from each other. Rather, the Word and God are one. For this reason, the next clause in verse 1 says that the Word was God.

In Him Being Life, and the Life Being the Light of Men

“In Him [the Word] was life, and the life was the light of men” (v. 4). *Life* here refers to the life signified by the tree of life in Genesis 2. This is confirmed by the fact that in Revelation 22 John mentions the tree of life. Since life is in Him, He is life (John 11:25; 14:6), and He came that man might have life (10:10b).

Life is in the Word, the expression of God. Life can be found only in the expression of God. The Word, which is the expression and explanation of God, contains God as our life. When we receive the Word, we receive the life within it. Both the Word and the life are God Himself. The Word is the expression of God, and the life is the content of God. When we hear the Word, we realize that God is expressed and explained. When we receive the Word, we receive God’s very content as life.

The life in the Word is “the light of men.” Whereas the light for the old creation was the physical light (Gen. 1:3-5, 14-18), the light for the new creation is the light of life, mentioned in John 1:4. Christ is the Word, the expression of God by which we may know God. When we receive Him as the expression of God, He becomes our life, and this life becomes the light that shines within us. When the Word is heard and the life is received, the life becomes the light shining within us to enlighten us. Many of us can testify that when we called on the name of the Lord Jesus, receiving Him into us, the divine life came into our being, and immediately we had the sense of something shining within. That shining was the shining of life.

Christ is the light of life (1:4b-13; 8:12; 9:5; 12:46) to bring the divine life to the world by shining forth God that man may be born of God to be His children, making man God in life and nature but not in His Godhead. When we receive His shining of the light of life, this shining imparts the divine life into us. That divine life becomes our authority to be God’s children (1:12-13), God’s kind, God’s species, God’s family. (*The Conclusion of the New Testament*, pp. 2843-2845)

THE WORD OF LIFE

In 1 John 1:1-7 we see Christ as the Word of life. First John 1:1 says, “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life.” The Word of life in this verse is the Word mentioned in John 1:1-4 and 14, who was with God and was God in eternity before creation, who became flesh in time, and in whom is life. This Word conveys the eternal life and is the divine person of Christ as an account, a definition, and an expression of all that God is. In Him is life, and He is life (11:25; 14:6). The phrase *the Word of life* in Greek indicates that the Word is life. The person is the divine life, the eternal life, which we can touch.

The Eternal Life Itself

First John 1:2 continues, “And the life was manifested.” This indicates that *life* is a synonym for *Word of life* in the preceding verse. Both denote the divine person of Christ, who was with the Father in eternity and was

manifested in time through incarnation, and whom the apostles saw and testified and reported to the believers. Christ as the Word of life is the eternal life itself for our experience and enjoyment.

The Greek words rendered “the eternal life” literally mean “the life the eternal.” This life denotes the divine spiritual life, not the human soulish life or the physical life (Rom. 5:17). *Eternal* denotes not only duration of time, which is everlasting, without end, but also quality, which is absolutely perfect and complete, without any shortage or defect. Such an expression emphasizes the eternal nature of the divine life, the life of the eternal God.

Eternal life is the life of God (Eph. 4:18; 2 Pet. 1:3). We may say that this life is actually God Himself with the contents of divine love and divine light. And this life is of the Spirit of God (Rom. 8:2), especially when it becomes our life for our enjoyment.

Eternal life is also the Son of God. This life is not simply a matter or a thing; this life is a person. The divine life is God Himself expressed in His Son. First John 5:12 says, “He who has the Son has the life.” In our experience we know that eternal life is the Son of God Himself.

This manifestation of the eternal life was through Christ’s incarnation, which John stressed strongly in his Gospel (1:14) as an antidote to inoculate the believers against the heresy which said that Christ did not come in the flesh. Such a manifestation, corresponding with being touchable, indicates again the substantial nature of the Lord’s humanity, which is the manifestation of the divine life in the New Testament economy. The manifestation of the eternal life includes the revelation and impartation of life to man, with a view to bringing man into the eternal life, into its union and communion with the Father.

This Word is the Word of life. God is life, the Word, which is God, is life to us, and this life was manifested. This life is the Lord Jesus Christ. When He was manifested in the flesh, He was manifested as life. If we prayerfully consider the record in the four Gospels with all the stories recorded concerning Jesus, we can see that in His human living, life was always manifested. The Lord Jesus was a person who manifested life. The disciples, including John, saw that life. Therefore, John could testify and report to us the eternal life which was with the Father. Today if we read the Word prayerfully, we will receive the benefit of the manifestation of eternal life. (*The Conclusion of the New Testament*, pp. 3951-3953)

THE WORD

Romans 10:5-8 reveals Christ as the word: “For Moses writes concerning the righteousness which is out of the law: ‘The man who does them shall live by them.’ But the righteousness which is out of faith speaks in this way, ‘Do not say in your heart, Who will ascend into heaven?’ that is, to bring Christ down; or, ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ that is, to bring Christ up from the dead. But what does it say? ‘The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart,’ that is, the word of the faith which we proclaim.” In these verses, *the word* is used interchangeably with *Christ*, indicating that this word is Christ. Christ was incarnated by coming down from heaven and was resurrected by coming up from Hades. Thus, He has become the living Word, the Spirit (Eph. 6:17), to be in our mouth and in our heart, just like the air, the breath, that can be taken into our being. He is near and He is available.

Having Descended from Heaven to Mingle Himself with Humanity for the Accomplishment of Redemption

Christ as the Word descended from heaven to mingle Himself with humanity for the accomplishment of redemption. Surely, the Word here is Christ personified. If the Word were not a living person, He could not have descended from heaven to mingle Himself with humanity for the accomplishment of redemption. Paul quotes Deuteronomy 30:12, saying, “Do not say in your hearts, Who will ascend into heaven?” He then points out that this means “to bring Christ down” and that this refers to Christ’s incarnation, for Christ came down from the heavens in His incarnation.

In His incarnation, Christ as the Word brought the infinite God into the finite man, thereby mingling the Triune God with the tripartite man, that is, divinity with humanity (Matt. 1:20). He mingled Himself with humanity in order to accomplish God’s redemption (John 1:1, 14, 29). After passing through His human living, Christ went to die on the cross as a God-man to redeem us back to God (1 Pet. 3:18).

**Having Ascended from the Dead
for Justification unto Life
to Those Who Receive Him by Believing**

Christ as the Word ascended from the dead for justification unto life to those who receive Him by believing. After His death Christ as the Word descended into the abyss, Hades, and He ascended from that place in His resurrection so that those who receive Him by believing in Him may be justified by God and have His life. We need to see that the Word descended from the heavens and ascended into heaven. Paul says that we should not ask, "Who will descend into the abyss?" To "descend into the abyss" means to bring Christ up from the dead and refers to Christ's resurrection. To descend into the abyss means to die and to enter into Hades. When Christ died, He descended into the abyss, and in resurrection He was brought up from the dead, that is, out of the abyss. Christ is the One who has passed through incarnation and resurrection. Therefore, we may say that He as the Word is the "processed" Christ, Christ incarnated and resurrected.

Christ as the Word has passed through a long process from incarnation through resurrection. In this process He accomplished everything that is required by God's righteousness, holiness, and glory and all that is needed to enable us to partake of Him. He was God incarnated to be a man, and as a man, He was transfigured through resurrection into the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45). Now in resurrection as the life-giving Spirit, He is so available that we may receive Him and take Him in at any time and in any place. As the life-giving Spirit, He is now moving on earth, ready for and available to anyone who will receive Him. Whoever receives Him by believing into Him will be justified by God and receive His life. According to Paul, this processed Christ, Christ incarnated and resurrected, is "the word of the faith which we proclaim" (Rom. 10:8).

Being the Living Word in Our Mouth and in Our Heart

Christ as the living Word is not only in our mouth but also in our heart. This indicates that the word must be in the Spirit. Otherwise, the word may be in our mouth, but it cannot be in our heart. Christ in resurrection as the life-giving Spirit is the living Word. This corresponds with the New Testament revelation that the Word is the Spirit (Eph. 6:17). Christ in resurrection is both the Spirit and the Word. He is the Spirit for us to touch, and He is the Word for us to understand. We may receive Him as both the Spirit and the Word. The resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit is the living Word that is so near to us. He is in our mouth and in our heart. Our mouth is for calling, and our heart is for believing. Thus, we can call upon Him with our mouth and believe in Him with our heart. When we call on Him, we are saved; when we believe in Him, we are justified.

The word, which is personified, is not only in our mouth but also in our heart. The word is not merely the written word but also the living Word, that is, the person of Christ Himself. This word is actually the gospel (1:13; Col. 1:5). When we hear the word, we hear the gospel; when we receive the word, we receive the gospel and Christ Himself. (*The Conclusion of the New Testament*, pp. 3094-3097)