

# The Living Logos

written by Pastor Jon

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*“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:1, 14).*

“Word” in John 1:1 and 1:14 is translated from the Greek *logos*. It means “a spoken word” or an “expression” of a thought or ideal. It is from this word that we get our English word “logic” today. Therefore, Jesus Messiah came to this planet as the living *Logos*, presenting, not only God’s plan for the ages, but presenting the very nature, character, and essence of God in human flesh; as the apostle Paul tells us: “*For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*” (Colossians 2:9).

That’s an interesting idea, especially when we consider that God tells us through the prophet Isaiah, “*Come now, and let us reason together*” (Isaiah 1:18). God invites us to bring our intellects before Him to compare notes, so to speak. Yet, we’ll find that when we do this, the playing field isn’t equal. We want to come to God on our terms but we’ll find that His invitation is engraved with the blood of Jesus Messiah upon the Cross at Golgotha; as the LORD continues through Isaiah saying, “*...though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*” It doesn’t make sense to my natural thinking.

When we examine the Bible, and the gospels in particular, we come face to face with the living *Logos*, who became the crucified and resurrected *Logos*, and has ascended to be the interceding *Logos*. The Bible also tells us that every eye will see Him as the returning *Logos* and He will establish His kingdom as the reigning *Logos*. The life of Jesus Messiah assaults my sin nature. When my earthly, common sense logic meets the revelation of His heavenly logic one of four things will happen:<sup>1</sup>

- I will be **repulsed** by His logic and **depart** from Him.
- I will **reject** His logic and **defy** Him.
- I will **regret** knowing His logic and be **dismayed**.
- I will **receive** His logic and **do** what He says.

Jesus Messiah, the living *Logos*, presents to us a logic that upsets the apple

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<sup>1</sup> Compare with the *parable of the soils* in Matthew 13:2-9, 18-23

carts of our typical theological views. Why? Jesus encourages us to go deeper, to go beyond ourselves and into a realm where the only safety net is God Himself.

At the close of John's gospel account, we see the Master, the resurrected Logos, speaking with Simon Peter. He asks this very humbled fisherman, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?"<sup>2</sup>

When Jesus says the word "love" in His question to Simon Peter, it is the Greek word *αγαπω* (*agapao*). Most concordances and Greek dictionaries may give you a definition that presents this word as the kind of love that is seen in a moral or social sense. But as far as the Bible goes, and with the New Testament in particular, we get an idea that this word has a meaning that runs even deeper than that. This is the same Greek word that's used for "love" in one of the most well-known Christian verses in the Bible, John 3:16, "*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" Aha! Now we're on to something. Yet, this brings us further difficulty because we find the same Greek word used for "love" in this sentence a few verses later: "*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil*" (John 3:19).

Simon Peter's concept of love was deeper than just a moral or social obligation to someone or something. He knew that Jesus was speaking of the Hebrew *אהב* (*ahav*). This word is used for the first time in the Bible in Genesis 22:2 when the LORD says to Abraham, "*Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you*" (NKJV). Peter knew that the kind of love the Master spoke of was the love that produced the faith that prompted men to obey God no matter how contrary it was to our rational thinking.

Simon Peter had denied the Master three times on the very same night that he said he would die for Him. Now, as Peter comes face to face with the resurrected Logos, he realized that he didn't have the strength of will or the capacity of reason to tell the Lord that he was given over to Him so utterly and so completely. Simon Peter was tongue-tied. Logic escaped him. He answered the Lord with an emphatic, "True, Lord, You know that I am *fond* of You."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> John 21:15

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

Contrary to Jesus' use of the word *agapao*, Simon used the Greek word  $\phi\iota\lambda\epsilon\omega$  (*fileo*). This is the kind of love that reflects a fondness or affection for someone or something, a sentimental friendliness. Americans are familiar with this word from a major city in Pennsylvania: Philadelphia. It's the city of "Brotherly (*adelfos*) Love (*fileo*)."

Despite Simon's answer, Jesus encourages Simon Peter to go deeper, to go beyond himself. The living Logos tells him, "Feed My lambs." Jesus Messiah tells him to give nourishment to the little ones of His flock.

Then Jesus asks Simon Peter a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love me?" [*Are you committed to Me, Simon? Are you totally given over to Me?*]

"True, Lord," Simon said emphatically. "You know that I'm fond of you." [*I can only tell you the truth, Lord. I don't have it in me to go beyond my fondness for You. I don't want to let You down again. I remember that look You gave me the night I denied You the three times.*]<sup>4</sup>

"Tend My sheep." [*Be a shepherd to My flock, guide them.*]

Finally, Jesus Messiah asks Simon Peter a third question. "Simon, son of Jonah, are you fond of Me?" [*Simon, is this as far as you can go in your commitment to Me?*]

Simon Peter, the first disciple to confess of Jesus, "*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*"<sup>5</sup> and the first disciple to boldly tell the Lord that he would die for Him;<sup>6</sup> he was grieved when He heard the Lord's question, "Are you fond of Me?" He wasn't aggravated or frustrated. He wasn't angry. He mourned, not for the question, but for himself. Everything that he thought that mattered was turned upside down, and now, and utterly ludicrous in the light of the resurrected Logos.

Simon said, "Lord, You know all things...." Aha! Simon Peter finally got it. The living Logos, Jesus Messiah, is the only logic. Jesus, the Logos, is the only One that knows and He is the only One worth knowing. Simon Peter had finally come together with the Logos of God and reasoned with Him. Peter had finally come to the end of himself.

When we come to the end of ourselves, we meet with *real* reason, Jesus, the

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<sup>4</sup> Luke 22:61-62

<sup>5</sup> Matthew 16:16

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 26:35

resurrected Logos, and He tells us things that don't make sense... like telling a fisherman to do the work of a shepherd. The common sense world would say, "Hey, wait a minute! Why not use His talents as a fisherman. Don't make him a shepherd." To the world, Jesus isn't logical. The world is contrary to the living Logos, Jesus Messiah.

When we examine the life of Christ in the Bible, we may first look at it with certain prejudices and preconceived notions. Yet as we walk with the living Logos, He encourages us to go deeper, to see things from His perspective.

In the basic study of the gospels, theologians and seminary professors tell us that there are four distinct views of Jesus Messiah. They tell us that Matthew writes to a Jewish audience and presents Jesus as the King of Israel, the Lion of Judah and the Jewish Messiah, explaining what Jesus said. We are told that Mark writes to a Roman audience of the ultimate Servant, explaining what Jesus did. They say that Luke writes of the perfect Man, the second Adam, who was born without sin. He writes to a Greek audience and explains what Jesus felt. And we are told that John writes of the deity of Jesus, God getting dressed up in human skin. His gospel is written to the church at large and explains whom Jesus is.

This is true, and in the first few readings or studies of the gospel this basic outline helps us get a handle upon the harmony of events and a familiarity with God's grand design. Nevertheless, a closer examination reveals that the logic of God is not what we'd normally expect.

In Matthew's gospel, we actually witness a submissive and compassionate King, quite contrary to the world's concept of a monarch. He is a King who cares about His subjects and ensures that their physical and spiritual needs are met. He taught them and fed them and healed them of their infirmities. He took time with them and gave Himself over to them. He had disdain for public attention, telling those He helped not to tell anyone.

Though Mark writes of the Lord's being the ready Servant, "immediately" meeting the needs of man's fallen condition, we see a gospel that nearly shows Jesus more authoritative than any other. We see more of His deity here than anywhere else. He has authority to forgive sin and He leaves the wise religious leaders confounded with His words and actions.

Luke's gospel account presents Jesus, not as a natural man but supernatural. Though He walks upon the earth, He is distinct from the earth, yet not foreign or extra-terrestrial. In Luke's gospel, He is exceptional, yet He doesn't divorce Himself from the planet. Jesus is extraordinary in an ordinary way, amidst ordinary surroundings, among ordinary people. He

was the perfect Man, yet common and able to disappear in a crowd. He is filled with the Holy Spirit without drawing attention to Himself. His mind is on heaven, yet His feet are planted firmly on the ground. And through Luke's narrative of the perfect Man, we receive the most significant insights into the spiritual dimension.

Although John presents Jesus as the pre-existent God from the very first sentence of his gospel account, we are introduced to the One who demonstrates the depth of feeling and emotion like no other gospel. John also gives us insight into Jesus' intimacy in servitude as He washes the disciples' feet, as He prays for the disciples, and as He comforts them with the promise of the Holy Spirit.

When we abandon ourselves to God, He presents His prophetic plan with a fresh perspective and we find that He reveals His nature and character in an unexpected yet intimate way, the nature and character of our Creator and Redeemer.

