

The Incarnate Word

In this lesson, we will look at these three distinct manifestations of Christ

**The
Pre-incarnate
Word**

(before Bethlehem)

**The
Word in the
Flesh**

(the Gospel era)

**The
Glorified
Word**

(after the Ascension)

**The
Pre-incarnate
Word**

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(the Gospel era)

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The Pre-incarnate Word

Two books in the Bible start with
“In the beginning.”

The Gospel of John links them together.

Genesis 1:1

¹ **In the beginning** God created the
heaven and the earth.

John 1:1-2

¹ **In the beginning** was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
² The same was **in the beginning**
with God.



The Pre-incarnate Word

“The Word” is **λόγος** (logos).

It is “the divine wisdom manifest in the creation, government, and redemption of the world.” MERRIAM WEBSTER DICTIONARY

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Think of “the Word” as God’s plan for man’s salvation, conceived and put into motion before he created the world.

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¹ In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

John 1:1-2

- ¹ In the beginning was **the Word**, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- ² The same was in the beginning with God.



God's plan for man's redemption
– *who* he would save and *how* he would save them –
was determined before the foundation of the world.

Ephesians 1:4-5

- 4 According as he hath chosen us in him **before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:
- 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will...

Revelation 13:7-8

- 7 And it was given unto him [the antichrist] to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.
- 8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life **of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.**



The *logos* is personified by Christ.

Revelation 19:11-13

- ¹¹ And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.
- ¹² His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.
- ¹³ And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: **and his name is called The Word of God.**



These verses testify of the Pre-Incarnate Christ

Micah 5:2

² But thou,
Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though thou be little
among the thousands of
Judah, yet out of thee
shall he come forth unto
me *that is* to be ruler in
Israel;
whose goings forth *have*
been from of old, from
everlasting.

John 8:54-58

⁵⁶ Your father Abraham
rejoiced to see my day:
and he saw *it*, and was
glad.
⁵⁷ Then said the Jews unto
him, Thou art not yet
fifty years old, and hast
thou seen Abraham?
⁵⁸ Jesus said unto them,
Verily, verily,
I say unto you,
Before Abraham was,
I am.

John 17:4-5

⁴ I have glorified thee on
the earth:
I have finished the work
which thou gavest me
to do.
⁵ And now, O Father,
glorify thou me with
thine own self
with the glory which I
had with thee before
the world was.

The Pre-incarnate Word

Moving forward, John does not speak of THE WORD as an IT, but rather as a HIM.

John also reveals that THE WORD was instrumental in the creation of the world.

John 1:3

- ³ All things were made **by him;** and **without him** was not any thing made that was made.



The Pre-incarnate Word

There are several biblical witnesses to Christ's participation in the creation.

The book of Hebrews quotes Psalm 102:25 to prove this point.

Hebrews 1:8 and 10

- ⁸ *But unto the Son he saith,*
Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.
- ¹⁰ And,
Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:



These verses testify of Christ's Participation in the Creation

Ephesians 3:8-9

- ⁸ Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;
- ⁹ And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

Colossians 1:16

- ¹⁶ For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Revelation 4:10-11

- ¹⁰ The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,
- ¹¹ Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Before there was a sun
to give light and a
moon to reflect it,
God gave light to the
creation.

That light was Christ.

Genesis 1:3

³ And God said,
Let there be light: and there was light.

John 1:4-5

⁴ In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
⁵ And the light shineth in darkness;
and the darkness comprehended it not.

John 8:12

¹² Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying,
I am the light of the world:
he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness,
but shall have the light of life.

The Pre-incarnate Word

What was Christ's form his pre-incarnate existence? Paul says he was "in the form of God."

Philippians 2:5-8

- 5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:
- 6 Who, **being in the form of God**, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:
- 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:
- 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.



The Pre-incarnate Word

What was Christ's form his pre-incarnate existence? Paul says he was "in the form of God."

And what is the form of God?

John 4:24

²⁴ **God is a Spirit:** and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.

Philippians 2:5-8

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- ⁶ Who, **being in the form of God**, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:
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- ⁸ And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.



Did Jesus ever manifest himself to the world in his pre-incarnate form? This record in Daniel is one place that suggests he did.

Daniel 3:24-25

²⁴ Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, *and* spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

²⁵ He answered and said,
Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt;
and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.

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The Word in the Flesh

From the beginning, God had ONE plan for man's salvation, a plan that never needed adjustment. He would come unto his own in the person of Christ.

John 1:11-13

- ¹¹ He came unto his own, and his own received him not.
- ¹² But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:
- ¹³ Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.



The Word in the Flesh

In speaking of the birth of Christ, John does not tell us of Mary or Joseph or Gabriel. He speaks of the Word that was *with* God and *was* God since the beginning of time. John testifies that this Word was made flesh.

John 1:14

¹⁴ **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.



The Word in the Flesh

God's plan for our salvation came to the world wrapped in the flesh of his only-begotten Son, Jesus.

Matthew 1:20-21

- ²⁰ But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.
- ²¹ And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.



The Word in the Flesh

God was with us through his Son.

Matthew 1:22-23

- ²² Now all this was done,
that it might be fulfilled which was
spoken of the Lord by the prophet,
saying,
- ²³ Behold, a virgin shall be with child,
and shall bring forth a son, and
they shall call his name Emmanuel,
which being interpreted is,
God with us.



The Word in the Flesh

Jesus came to make known his Father.
He is “**the image of the invisible God**”
(Col. 1:15).

John 1:18

¹⁸ No man hath seen God at any time;
the only begotten Son,
which is in the bosom of the Father,
he hath declared *him*.



The Word in the Flesh

Jesus was “**the express image**” – a perfect representation of God *but in bodily form*.

χαρακτήρ *character*:

The exact expression (the image) of any person or thing, marked likeness, precise reproduction in every respect.

Hebrews 1:3

- ³ Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and **the express image of his person**, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;



The Word in the Flesh

The Son is not the Father. He is the *express image* of the Father; God *manifest in the flesh* (1 Tim.3:16).

To see the Son was to see the Father.

John 14:8-9

- ⁸ Philip saith unto him,
Lord, shew us the Father, and it
sufficeth us.
- ⁹ Jesus saith unto him,
Have I been so long time with you,
and yet hast thou not known me,
Philip?
**he that hath seen me
hath seen the Father;**
and how sayest thou *then*,
Shew us the Father?



The Word in the Flesh

God visited the world in the person of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:19

¹⁹ To wit, that **God was in Christ**, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.



The Word in the Flesh

Now, in order to teach us about himself, God must liken himself to something we are already familiar with. But how do you describe something that cannot be seen?

Isaiah 40:18

¹⁸ To whom then will ye liken God?
or what likeness will ye compare
unto him?



The Word in the Flesh

Sometimes God is described in terms of an inanimate object – a rock, a fortress, a high tower. We see these metaphors in David's song of victory:

2 Samuel 22:1-3

- ¹ And David spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day *that* the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul:
- ² And he said, The LORD *is* my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer;
- ³ The God of my rock; in him will I trust: *he is* my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.

Is God a rock? Well, yes and no.
His steadfastness is rock-solid, but God is
so much more than a rock!

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The Word in the Flesh

In other passages of scripture, God is likened to a human being, and we read of his eyes, and ears, and his face.

1 Peter 3:12

¹² For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous,
and his ears *are open* unto their prayers:
but the face of the Lord *is* against them that do evil.



The Word in the Flesh

In other passages of scripture, God is likened to a human being, and we read of his eyes, and ears, and his face.

But God is *so much more* than a man.
The Creator is far greater than his creation.

1 Peter 3:12

¹² For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous,
and his ears *are open* unto their prayers:
but the face of the Lord *is against* them that do evil.



The Word in the Flesh

While he was in the flesh, Jesus could not represent the *entirety* of God. His was a *limited* representation. The Man of Galilee was not omnipresent; he could only be at one place at a time. He was not omniscient; some mysteries were kept hidden from him.

Mark 13:31-21

³⁰ Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.

³¹ Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

³² But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, **neither the Son,** but the Father.



The Word in the Flesh

The Word in the flesh did the one thing
God the Father *could not do* when he died
for our sins.

Hebrews 2:9

⁹ But we see Jesus, who was made
a little lower than the angels for
the suffering of death,
crowned with glory and honour;
that he by the grace of God
should taste death for every man.



The Word in the Flesh

“In the days of his flesh” Jesus was required to live as a human being, learning, suffering, and trusting his future to God just like you and I must today.

Hebrews 5:7-9

- 7 **Who in the days of his flesh,** when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;
- 8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;
- 9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

But *how long* were “the days of his flesh”?

The days of the Son of Man on earth were as nothing when compared to his eternal existence!

He finished his work and returned to his place beside his Father.

And the Word was made flesh...

ETERNITY

“the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

ETERNITY

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The Glorified Word

At a time appointed by God, the Word came into the world as the man known as Jesus of Nazareth. But Jesus is no longer a man of flesh and blood. We are not to think of Jesus as someone in our mortal form and likeness.

2 Corinthians 5:16b

¹⁶ ... yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we *him* no more.



The Glorified Word

This is not to say that Jesus is nothing like the Man of Galilee.

He is still *in the flesh* –
but all flesh is not the same flesh.

1 Corinthians 15:39-41

- ³⁹ **All flesh is not the same flesh:**
but *there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.*
- ⁴⁰ *There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial:*
but the glory of the celestial *is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.*
- ⁴¹ *There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.*

The Glorified Word

Jesus was buried in one kind of flesh
and raised in another kind.

1 Corinthians 15:42-44

⁴² So also *is* the resurrection
of the dead.

It is sown in corruption;

it is raised in incorruption:

⁴³ It is sown in dishonour;

it is raised in glory:

it is sown in weakness;

it is raised in power:

⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body;

it is raised a spiritual body.

There is a natural body,

and there is a spiritual body.



This comparison of Adam and the glorified Christ tells us of our own future.

1 Corinthians 15:45-49

45 And so it is written,

The first man Adam was made a living soul;

the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural;

and afterward that which is spiritual.

47 The first man *is* of the earth, earthy:

the second man is the Lord from heaven.

48 As *is* the earthy, such *are* they also that are earthy:

and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy,

we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

The Glorified Word

Christ's new body is spiritual, not spirit.
It is has a physical aspect as well.

Luke 24:39-43

- ³⁹ Behold my hands and my feet,
that it is I myself: handle me, and
see; for a spirit hath not flesh and
bones, as ye see me have.
- ⁴⁰ And when he had thus spoken, he
shewed them *his* hands and *his* feet.
- ⁴¹ And while they yet believed not for
joy, and wondered, he said unto
them, Have ye here any meat?
- ⁴² And they gave him a piece of a
broiled fish, and of an honeycomb.
- ⁴³ And he took *it*, and did eat before
them.

The Glorified Word

But there are some major differences between the old and the new.

In his new body, Jesus could appear “out of nowhere.”

John 20:19-20

¹⁹ Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, **when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews**, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, *Peace be* unto you.

²⁰ And when he had so said, he shewed unto them *his* hands and his side.

Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.



The Glorified Word

In his spiritual body, Jesus could alter his appearance.

Mark 16:9 and 12

- ⁹ Now when *Jesus* was risen early the first *day* of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.
- ¹² After that **he appeared in another form** unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.



The Glorified Word

Just as he could suddenly appear,
he could also suddenly disappear.

Luke 24:30-31

- ³⁰ And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.
- ³¹ And their eyes were opened, and they knew him;
and he vanished out of their sight.

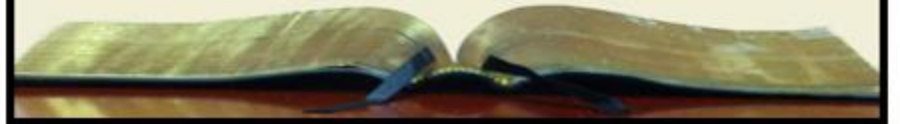


The Glorified Word

Paul tells us something that is not recorded in the Gospels:

1 Corinthians 15:6

⁶ After that, **he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once;** of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.



The Glorified Word

Paul tells us something that is not recorded in the Gospels:

The words “at once” suggest something far more extraordinary than simply appearing before a gathering of 500 men. With this new body, Jesus is able to be in many different places at the same time.

1 Corinthians 15:6

- ⁶ After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren **at once**; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.



The Glorified Word

As for now, the Glorified Word is seated at the right hand of God.

Hebrews 12:2

² Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.



The Glorified Word

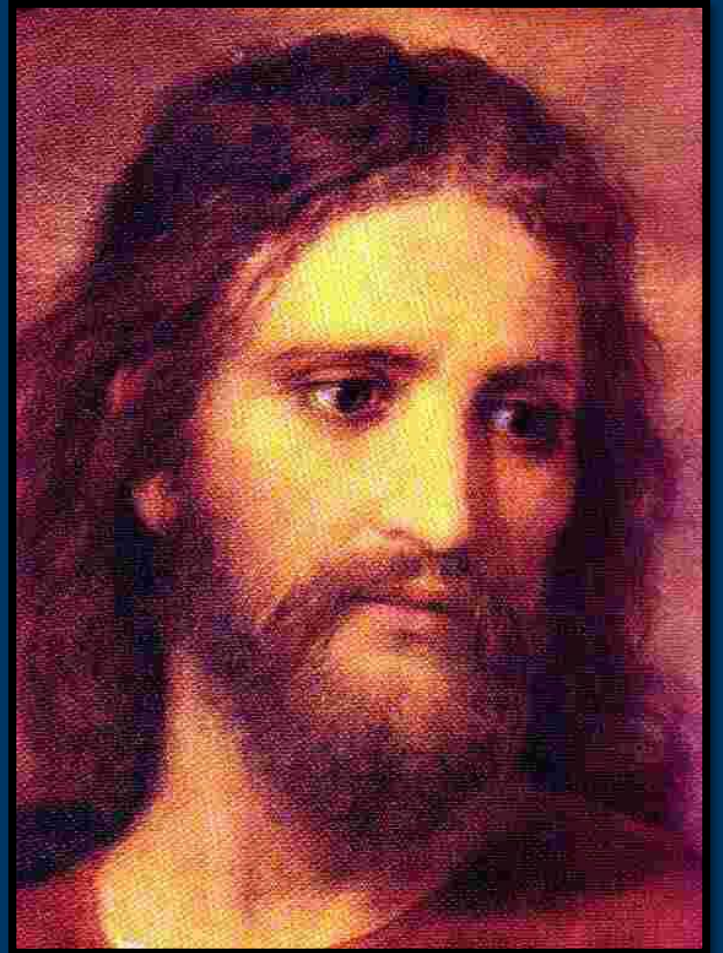
From there he continues his glorious ministry to his people.

Hebrews 7:25

²⁵ Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.



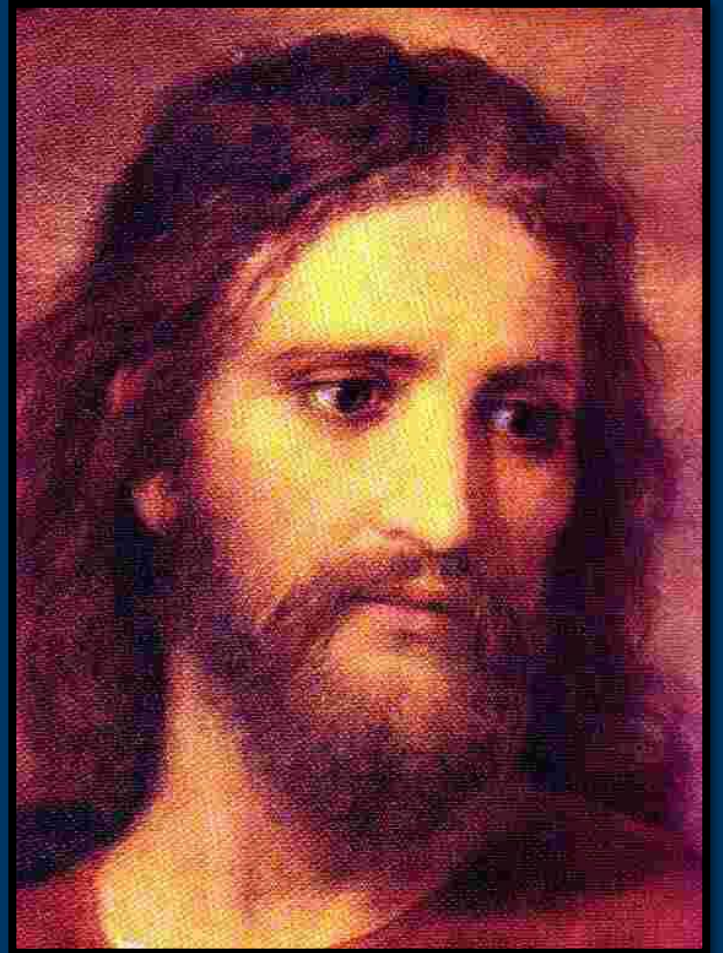
When you and I think about Jesus, we tend to picture him as the Man from Galilee. But it was only for a very short time, and for a very grand purpose, that the Word was presented in human flesh.



Since that time, God has “highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name” (Phil. 2:9).

Jesus is THE WORD, and God has magnified his word above all his name (Ps. 138:2).

Let us do no less.



Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (Heb. 13:8).

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