

Introduction to The Gospel of John

Michelle Nailon CSB

Project Employment Inc.
Melbourne 2024
All Rights Reserved

Set 09 of 12 slide sets

www.valuesclarification.org/ischristianmoralityunique.htm

Isbn 978-0-9805603-8-1

What does John do?



John takes the meaning of the Greek word "Logos" a step further

As pointed out in the previous video, Luke's *Acts of the Apostles* prepares theologically for **major themes** in the gospel of John.

For instance, the *Acts* talks about attributes of "the Word".

The Greek word for this is "Logos".



No. 169



▶ For the Greeks like Plato, the meaning of the "Logos" remains abstract and it is the root word for "logic".

▶ However, *Acts* presents the Logos as "the Word" who takes an active and defined role in the daily lives of people.

No. 170

No. 171

No. 172

John takes the meaning of the Greek word "**Logos**" a step further on, from the understanding in *Acts*.

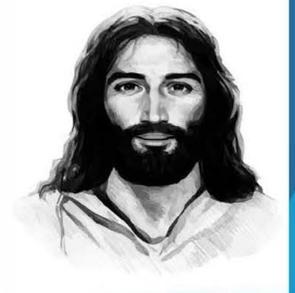
In his opening verses he states that "*The Word (Logos) was made flesh*".

In making this statement, John (and Christianity) is making the claim that the Logos has now, in a specific event, physically entered into the history of the world,



▶ John goes on to identify the Logos with the person of Jesus Christ cf. "*And the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us.*"

▶ The rest of his gospel goes on to explain the identity of Jesus Christ as.



▶ **The Logos**

living amongst us.

"And the Word (i.e. the Logos) was made flesh" (and still lives amongst us)

No. 173

The Logos
living amongst us



No. 175

- ▶ As stated in the previous video
- ▶ There are parallels here with the philosopher Georg Gadamer's teaching in

Truth and Method.

No. 174

- ▶ Gadamer says that language as such, like the portrait or the play, is in a sense, a "subject".



No. 176

- ▶ This is because the portrait and language enables us to see beyond our own human experience.



In talking about "the verbal world" Gadamer said that this verbal world can be open to every possible insight.

He said via the verbal world, each world view can be extended into every other world view" (p.463). He also talks about understanding being "passed down" via a living tradition.

A description of this would be to call it a "fusion of horizons"

No. 177

Gadamer points out that with John's gospel, Christianity introduces the idea of the **"Word unfolding"**.

In the case of the written word, if individuals read something and broaden their understanding, then this (also) is an unfolding "event".



No. 178

"The Word" as a subject, living amongst us

The gospel of John presents "the Word" as a subject living amongst us.



What else does John do?

No. 179

A "Corporate Goodwill acting as a subject amongst us

No. 180



John picks up on an understanding of a "group authority of goodwill" as set out in *Acts*



Recall that in Section E of *Acts* Luke presents a range of people who are acting with "corporate goodwill".

Even as individuals they are acting as part of a corporate "subject", in helping Paul to reach his destination of Rome.

No. 181

- ▶ As stated in the previous set of slides, insofar as these people were all doing the will of God, they were acting with “authority” and with a “communal intentionality”, even if they did so independently of each other.
- ▶ Again, one is reminded here of Paul’s teaching about the “Body of Christ”.

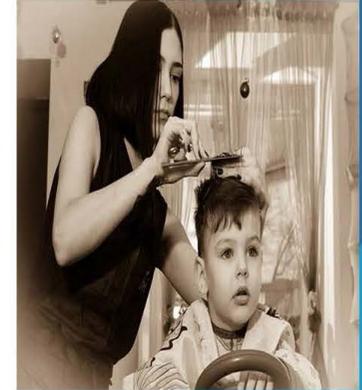


Again, consider Gadamer’s philosophy.

He refers to an “anonymous will” amongst people which (like the portrait or the play) acts as a “subject”.

The effects of actions by people who share in such an “anonymous will” can be understood over time.

No. 182



No. 183

John presents Jesus as the expression of communal goodwill.

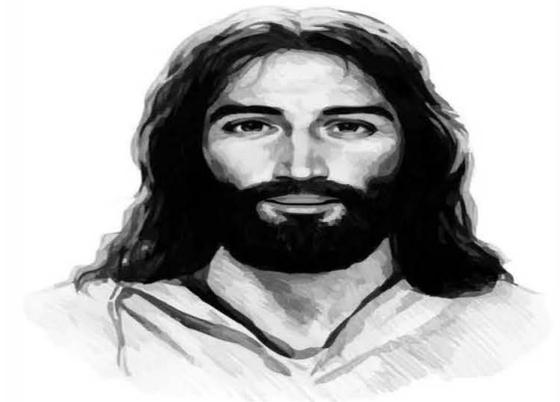
Jesus is presented as the Living Authority of God and characteristics of Jesus as the “Living Authority” are outlined.



In his gospel John goes on to outline characteristics of the “Living Word”

A challenge is then put out to the followers of Jesus to **identify** with him

No. 184



People doing the Will of God

Thus in the Gospel of John a description is given of:

The Living Authority and

The Living Word

Christianity is based on the belief that Jesus rose from the dead and he continues to live amongst us.

What is your understanding of this belief in the "incarnation"?

Could you imagine the incarnation is enacted in the on-going will of God as expressed in the evolution of creation??

Could you imagine the incarnation is expressed in the pervasive "word" which expresses the truth about what is going on in creation??

Could you imagine Jesus Christ Himself living amongst us as the "Living Authority" and the "Living Word"?

A sociological analysis of the gospel of John (cf. www.realitysearch.com.au) shows how John presents the identity of Jesus in terms of "the Living Authority" and "the Living Word"