

**“Jesus: Word”**  
*John 1:1-5, 9-14*

“What’s ‘the Word’?” This question could well be directed to the author of today’s passage, the apostle John. Just what does he mean by using this ‘simple’ noun in a ‘not-so-simple’ way? But before we consider the answer to the Biblical understanding of that query, I would like to first address more ‘contemporary’ understandings of the question, “What’s the word?”

This brief inquiry, ‘what’s the word?’ has an interesting history all its own. Some of you more musically inclined... particularly in the blues genre back in the 80’s... may know that this was the name of an album (you remember those!) by a group “The Fabulous Thunderbirds.” And speaking of ‘Thunderbirds,’ there was a popular R&B song back in the 50’s that ‘immortalized’ a very cheap wine by the same name, which asked the question: ‘What’s the word? It’s Thunderbird.’ (Of course, I would not expect any of your more refined folks to be familiar with this!) It IS pretty ironic that one of the songs on that “What’s the word” album by the Thunderbirds is entitled, “Last call for alcohol.”

Of course, this brief sentence has much more meaning than for music and adult beverages. If you ask someone ‘what’s the word?’ today you might be asking for an update on a person’s condition or **important event**. Or, you may simply be wanting to know how things are going with a friend. You also might insert a modifier... ‘what’s the *good* word?’... if you are seeking some **encouragement** for yourself, some news of a **positive** nature. (NOT the norm!)

And finally, in our contemporary consideration of this phrase, there is the shortened version: **“Word.”** Usually employed by those considerably younger than myself, when this colloquial expression is used... “Word” ... it is often used as a term of **agreement**; that a particular statement or opinion was **well-said**. “Man, it sure was hard to get up this morning.” “WORD!”

And, of course, there are the more traditional definitions of the term ‘word.’ The musical reference to lyrics of a **song**. An assurance or **promise** ... as in, ‘being a man (or woman) of your *word*.’ A **command** or direction – like ‘the leader gave the *word* to move

forward.’ But in the most general sense of ‘the word *word*,’ it could simply be defined as “*the smallest meaningful unit of speech that can stand by itself.*” The core **essence** of **communication**.

While there are so many variations of meaning associated with our use of ‘word,’ in the Scripture passage today, there is little doubt as to HOW the Gospel writer intends it to be interpreted. The “Word” is JESUS. ***“In the beginning was JESUS, and JESUS was with God, and JESUS WAS God. He was in the beginning with God... And JESUS became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son...”*** I think that there can be little argument over this Biblical interpretation... ‘the Word’ is Christ our Savior – the One born this Christmas Day.

So then, why not just SAY ‘Jesus’? Why use this ‘unusual’ way to refer to our Lord, as ‘the Word’? Well, perhaps, just like there are so many layers of meaning, so many different ways to understand a term as ‘simple’ as ‘**word**’ in our *human* expression, so too are there so many ways to understand the *Divine* person and work of Jesus Christ. If we can take the 4 letters “w-o-r-d” and come up with such diversity in describing and defining them, how much MORE should we be able to say about those 5 letters J-E-S-U-S?

In the weeks of Advent that have been leading up to this Christmas morn, we have been considering ‘words’ that describe our journey of faith in Jesus Christ. **Waiting** for His return. **Witnessing** to His life. The **Wonder** of His love. Being **Willing** to seek and serve Him. But if we are going to put forth all of the effort necessary to do these things, we must BELIEVE it is worth it. We must BELIEVE in the object of our attention. We must BELIEVE that Jesus is worthy of our praise and devotion.

John’s inspired ‘words’ to us in this Gospel do, for me, powerfully express the truth that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is most certainly **worthy** of our praise, our devotion, our love, our **LIFE**. If, in the current vernacular, “Word” means that we **agree** with something **well-said, encouraging, positive...** good news that is like **music** to our ears, giving us the **promise** of hope... then as we read some of these verses again, we might well exclaim **“WORD!”**

***“He (JESUS) was in the beginning with God.”*** In a world that is changing more and more every day... not necessarily in good ways... our Heavenly Father and Son (and Spirit) do

NOT change. Jesus was present from the very foundation of the world, and will be the firm foundation of our world into eternity. The One who is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow remains a constant in our lives, can never be taken away from us... no matter what else is. WORD!

***“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.”*** NO matter what dark shadows of death we may pass through, no matter what dark trials, pain, and suffering we may endure, Jesus is the Light that will never be extinguished. No dark night of the soul can overcome the One who wants you and me to walk in the light of His love. WORD!

***“To all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God.”*** By virtue of our belief in Jesus as Savior... not by any thing we do for God or His people... by **trusting** in Him above everything else.. we are given the privilege, the **power**, to be called ‘Children of God.’ As children of a perfect God, we are embraced by His perfect love, heirs to an inheritance that nothing can spoil... the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. WORD!

My friends, unlike any other belief system in the world, as Christians we believe that God, the creator of the universe, came down from heaven in human form, bringing to our sinful, hopeless lives **LIFE**. ***“The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.”*** You and I have received the greatest Christmas gift the world has ever seen... the glory of God’s only begotten Son. The Word made flesh

It is the ability to use ‘words’... to speak... through which God brought all of creation into existence. The birth of the world... the birth of our Savior... indeed, our OWN birth... came because of the words, and will, of our Heavenly Father. ‘What’s the Word?’ **JESUS**. The only word we really need to know. Jesus. Happy Birthday, Jesus. Amen.