

## John 1:1-3

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."

### Problem:

This passage is usually the chief reference on which the pre-existence and deity of Christ are argued.

### Solution:

1. Christ was not literally the Word. He was the word "made flesh". (vs. 14). The Greek word "logos" translated "Word" expresses the divine intention, mind, or purpose.<sup>1</sup> Young defines "logos" as "a word, speech, matter, reason."<sup>2</sup> In the A.V. "logos" is translated by more than 20 different English words and is used for utterances of men (e.g., John 17:20) as well as those of God (John 5:38).

2. "In the beginning was the Word . . . all things were made by him."<sup>3</sup> "Logos" does not in itself denote personality. It is personified by the masculine gender in the A.V., *The Diaglott* avoids confusion by translating the pronouns in the neuter - "through it every thing was done."<sup>4</sup> An Old Testament parallel to the personification of logos is the personification of wisdom: "The LORD possessed *me* in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." (Prov. 8:22, 23). In this passage, wisdom is personified as a woman. (vs. 1, 2).

3. "All things were made by him" - John is apparently alluding to the creation recorded in Genesis. God spoke, and it was done (e.g. "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." Gen. 1:3. Notice another allusion - John 1:7, 8). But this creation was not accompanied by Christ, but by the "logos" of God. This is indicated by several passages:

a. "By the *word* of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the *breath* of his mouth." "For he *spake*, and it was done; he *commanded*, and it stood fast." (Psa. 33:6, 9). See also Psa. 107:20; 147:15, 18, 19; Isa. 55:11.

b. ". . . by the *word* of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water . . . But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same *word* are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." (2 Peter 3:5, 7).

c. See also Hebrews 11:3 cf. Jeremiah 10:12, 13.<sup>5</sup>

4. Angels, prophets and Christ have been vehicles by which God has expressed his logos. Christ is the complete manifestation of the logos - "in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2:9). It was the "logos" which was in the beginning with God, not Christ. When the "word was made flesh" (John 1:14) then, and then only, Christ became the "Word". Christ is called the Word (Rev. 19:13 cf. 1 John 1:1; Luke 1:2) since his doctrine and words came from his Father (John 7:16; 17:14). He was the logos lived out in speech and action, not merely written on scrolls.

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### Footnotes:

1. This can be supported by evaluating all references to "logos" in the New Testament and the Septuagint. [Return](#)
2. Robert Young, *Analytical Concordance to the Holy Bible*, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1965). [Return](#)
3. It is sometimes argued that the "beginning" referred to in John 1:1 is the beginning of Christ's ministry. 1 John 1:1 is offered in support of this interpretation. It should be noted, however, that John's allusions in John 1 are drawn from Genesis 1 as point 3 outlines, thereby implying that the beginning refers to the same narrative and not to the ministry of Christ. [Return](#)
4. Benjamin Wilson, *The Emphatic Diaglott*, (Brooklyn: International Bible Students Ass., Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1942). [Return](#)
5. It is also noteworthy that although the writer to the Hebrews speaks in exalted terms of Christ (e.g. "express image of his {God's} person" - Hebrews 1:3), "logos" is used of God's message, and not of Christ himself. See Hebrews 2:2; 4:2, 12; 7:28; 12:19 and 13:7, 22. [Return](#)

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