



Christology-Part 5

A Closer Look at John 1:1

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We're gonna look at one verse tonight, probably the most debated. It is of the 17 Greek words, which I think it's about the same here in English, is it not? They're probably the most debated 17 Greek words in at least any discussion about Christology. And as I was mapping this out, I thought we probably just need to spend a whole night looking at these words and trying to make sure that we understand them. There is a lot to understand here, and there are things going on here. We need to make sure that we are not led astray.

The Bible says we should be very careful to defend the truth, and when folks want to come and point things out, they sound very erudite and very learned, and they talk about Greek nouns and verbs and articles. We want to make sure that we understand all of that, and we can defend the truth.

So tonight, we're going to spend our time on this verse:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

That's the ESV. And we're going to look at that for the next hour.

Let's deal with this first of all. What in the world are you talking about? The Word. Why the Word? What's with that? Why don't you just tell us what it is, who it is? Let's deal with that.

First, let's just translate, you know, find the word from which this is translated. *Logos* is the word. *Logos*. Okay? It's not Logos. If it were Logos, it would be spelled like this. We wouldn't have Omicrons. We would have Omegas. And I know, I don't understand why even people that work for Logos Bible Software call it Logos Bible Software, but it's *logos*. Just think log, smog, fog, jog, dog. Does that help? Get that in your mind. It's *logos*.

Logos is the word that translates the word *word*. And obviously, this is the theme in the opening sentence of John's gospel, and he defines it down the way.

If you have your Bibles, please look at John chapter 1, verses 14 through 18. Now, this should be no surprise. We know this is who he's talking about, but at least let's put our eyeballs on it tonight and make sure that we recognize that there's no confusion in John's mind and there shouldn't be in anybody else's mind who he's talking about because 14 verses later, John writes this.

John 1, verse 14:

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

We looked at that phrase when we were talking about the incarnation. Whoever this preexistent one was, he put on flesh. He became a part of humanity and he lived among us.



“We’ve seen,” John says, “his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

Parentheses, now verse 15:

John bore witness about him.

Now we’re talking about John the baptizer, cried out,

“This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”

Which is interesting, by the way, we didn’t spend much time on this when we looked at this passage before, but he outranks me because he was before me. You know the Luke account, who was born first, right? Who was born first? John. So what do you mean he’s before you?

Again, another statement of John the Baptist’s reference to his pre-existence. He ranks before me because he was before me.

Verse 16:

“And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace,”

a Greek idiom for saying it’s piled high. As Psalm 23 says, a cup overflows. It’s a way to say just all the grace you can possibly get, we’ve received through him.

Verse 17:

“For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”

There was the rules, which by the way, we’ve learned in Romans is supposed to be the *telos* of that, the end of that. It’s supposed to lead us to grace. So the law of Moses was pointing to this, but the grace finally arrived. The grace and the truth came through Jesus Christ.

Verse 18:

“No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.”

That’s an interesting phrase we won’t spend much time on tonight.

But obviously, the *logos*, the word, we’re talking about Jesus here, Jesus Christ. No confusion about that, but at least we can see that in some context.

Now, if you’ve read any commentaries or heard any sermons of any import or any depth or weight, they’ll say, now, *logos* was used, and then we get into lots of different discussions. And the first discussion you’ll often get is, you know, in the Greek world, this concept of *logos* was everywhere.



So let's talk a little bit about the Greek culture, the Hellenistic culture. You do remember that we had, you know, Alexander the Great come through, sweep through, and the reason we're all speaking Greek by the time Jesus comes is because Alexander had Hellenized the entire ancient world, and people are speaking in Greek. They also spoke in Aramaic, and they spoke some classical Hebrew, but they obviously were in this culture of Greek.

Well, that was in Jesus' lifetime from 4 BC—don't ask me about that now, we'll talk about that later—to 30 or 33 AD. But now John writes this gospel, it's the latest of the four gospels in terms of time, he writes this in the 90s. So this is 60 years after the death of Christ, and it is the last gospel to be written.

It's unlike the other three that had already been written that clearly talk about how things unfolded in the life of Christ. They're called synoptic gospels. This one's not a synoptic gospel. He takes things out of order, and it's not a synopsis of Jesus' life. It is a biography of Jesus' life that is woven together to make a point. And the point that he wants to make is you need to put your trust in Christ.

It is by and large a gospel written to the Greek world, although he quotes the Old Testament all the time in the Gospel of John. So clearly he's recognizing that if you're anybody in the first century, you not only know about Greek culture, but you know about Jewish culture, because this is the Jewish Messiah that now is available for all of us to trust in.

Matter of fact, we didn't read it, but just before the passage we just quoted, "He came unto his own," his Jewish kinfolk, and they didn't receive him. So then now to anybody who would embrace him, right? Then we've all been given the authority, the *exousia*, the right to become the sons or children of God.

So Greek now is important. It's the latest gospel. There's a lot going on in Greek culture concerning the *logos*. And the first thing we need to look at and what most people bring up is the Stoic philosophers love this thing called the *logos*.

Now, when somebody, I don't know, breaks their leg and doesn't cry, you say, man, they sure are Stoic, right? That has filtered into our modern culture as a phrase that helps us understand part of what they became known for. This is a third century B.C. philosopher who built this school of philosophy that believed that any of these harsh emotions like grief or even any kind of outbursts of anger, those were all parts of our character flaws. And so they were known to try and be as even-keeled as they possibly could be no matter what happened.

And so they became known in our language today, and people talk about the stoicism of that person, or that person sure is stoic, that they reserve their feelings, they keep their feelings in.

Well, this Athenian school, this Greek school, not only saw those kinds of emotion as bad, but they saw that the highest good that you could achieve is to understand knowledge. And this knowledge, here's how they put it, came from this ultimate rational soul they called the *logos*. It was the ultimate non-personal principle.



I put it this way: an ultimate creative rational principle that if you have a good, rational, knowledgeable thought, see, you're deriving that, you're getting that from the ultimate, the *logos* of philosophy, the *logos* of the universe. This is a— we'll see in the other ways people looked at this in the first century, overlaps with some of the other ideas.

Now that is the ultimate, and you want to live in harmony with that. And when you think good thoughts and you're a very cultured, erudite, first century or first century B.C. or second century B.C. Hellenized person, you are in sync with the *logos*.

That was it, the ultimate creative, rational principle. You create a good piece of poetry. You paint a good picture. You're grabbing all of that from this rational principle called the *logos*.

So some people say, well, that was so popular in the first century that John was clearly grabbing that. That's what he was trying to make a comparison with. Notice I've got a question mark beside it because I'm not real confident in that.

Well, where else can we go? People go here all the time, not in the best commentaries, but you may read a commentary that say, well, this came from the Gnostic religion. Have I talked enough about the Gnostics from the stage? I've kind of beat up on them a lot.

Thanks to the Da Vinci Code and other things like that, Gnosticism kind of hit, you know, the Barnes and Noble shelves and everybody's really interested in Gnosticism and they think Gnosticism was true Christianity. That's at least how the Da Vinci Code put it forth.

And we didn't get your kind of Christianity until Constantine. And after the Council of Nicaea, then you kind of got your ideas of what God is all about and he created the New Testament. You know, Constantine was into that, creating the New Testament and that Council of Nicaea and all that nonsense.

And I put that to rest. If you haven't heard some of those lectures, you just need to look at history and facts. Gnosticism came after. As a matter of fact, Gnosticism didn't reach its real peak of writing interesting writings that end up now in nice slick covers at the bookstore until the 2nd and 3rd century AD.

So the 2nd and 3rd century AD, these guys, and I like to talk about them as the VW bus driving pot smoking philosophers of the day, and they were. They were trippy. All you got to do is read. Don't read the one quotes that they want to give you, like from the Da Vinci Code. You need to go to those sources and read the whole paragraph because you start to recognize they are on drugs, right? This doesn't make any real sense.

They're out there, psychedelic. It's the weirdest kind of abstract, irrational poetry. They'll take a word and a principle and they'll go off on it, and it's nuts.

Well, one of the things they liked was the *Logos*. They liked to talk about the *Logos* that came a lot from Stoic philosophy and a Hellenized culture in general, and they began to talk about it as this is



really what we want to get in touch with. It's very mystical. It is, here's how I put it, the cosmic expression of God's secret knowledge.

And if you know what *gnosis* means, the word *gnosis* is the Greek word for knowledge. And *gnosis*, they call themselves the Gnostics because they had the secret knowledge from God. And you don't really have that until you experience this in some mystical way and so we really can't even teach it to you. You've got to kind of feel it.

And the sad thing about Gnosticism is for all the guys like me that were preaching against the modern revivals of Gnosticism, it seems like a lot of churches are embracing Gnosticism because a lot of theology today sounds a lot like Gnosticism of the third century where it's all about an existential experience with God and not about understanding the propositional truths of what God told us in his written revelation and what God propositionally and objectively did in history.

And now it's become all about feeling and experiencing things, which the Gnostics, they love that. That's what it's all about. And what you're going to get in touch with, if you're really going to get in touch with God, is you're going to have the conduit of this principle and concept of *logos* that is going to kind of give you that impression of who God is. And then you'll have some secret knowledge that you can't even put into words. You can't even share. You can't even really know exactly what you know. And if you tried to explain it, you couldn't explain it.

But it's bizarre. Just remember pot-smoking religious philosophers, right? It doesn't really cogently come together. The Stoics at least sought for a cogent, hang-together philosophical school. The Epicureans, the Stoics, not the Gnostics. The Gnostics were crazy.

Well, didn't they write a lot about Jesus? I know Dan Brown of the Da Vinci Code says, well, they wrote the true story about Christ. If they wrote in the second and third century AD, which they did, okay, and I've taught on this, and we can prove this through all the quotes and biographies and all that. You do understand it's like us rewriting the lives of Thomas Jefferson or George Washington and then trying to explain the real deal about them that no one really got in the day.

The problem is we have manuscripts that date back to the, I mean, some would say the Magellan manuscript at Oxford College goes back to the first century, certainly P52 in the Rylands papyrus. Were you with us in the bibliology? I mean, to at least the early second century, we have records of the books that claim to be written within the lifespan of the apostles, right? Soon after the life of Christ, those were the messages that the Gnostics were trying to rewrite and re-talk about and re-think in their bizarre mystical way.

And I know Dan Brown says, well, they reveal that Jesus was married and some would even teach, you know, got divorced, married Mary Magdalene, divorced, had some kids, did all kinds of neat and crazy things, when in reality, it'd be like us talking about George Washington and rewriting his whole family biography, which, in fact, they didn't even do. And if you've been in those lectures, you know, all they've got is one line that comes in a set of really bizarre statements about a lot of bizarre things where they claim Jesus was kissing Mary Magdalene, and then it says on the— and there's an ellipsis there. We didn't even know it was there, but they fill in "on the mouth."



Have you heard me teach on this? You can get the tapes if you're interested in the Gnostics. I'd prefer you spend your time studying other things because the Gnostics, they'll just frustrate you.

Well, okay, what about this guy? Philo of Alexandria. He's also known as Philo the Jew. And it's funny that he's called Philo the Jew because I like to call him Philo the Jew plus a lot of Greek.

Because he's the guy, he was a Jewish man in the first century. As a matter of fact, there's two books you always find for dirt cheap on the one dollar, you know, shelf at the Christian bookstore. You'll find Josephus, right? And you'll find Philo. Those are usually sold together for about 99 cents.

Well, it's not that they're not—they are important, right? Josephus gives us a history conscripted by the Romans to write a history of the Jews. And Philo was a philosopher who tried to take Old Testament Jewish thought and theology and merge it with Plato's philosophy.

So he took Plato's thought and he took Judaism and he wrote in the first century, he lived in the time of Christ, and he wrote about how we can look at Old Testament theology and try and merge that together with Hellenistic philosophy and Plato's theology.

He was a dualist, and he picked up the ideas of dualism with some of the terminology of the Old Testament, *debar* in particular, which is the Hebrew word for word, which translated in the Greek culture, *logos*, the Septuagint, right? The Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament used the word *logos* all the time.

So he said, we're going to create a dualistic, platonic philosophy that uses Hebrew concepts, and we're going to say that the perfect, idealized reality is the *logos*, and we are the imperfect, you know, real world that exists. The perfect world that exists is God's *logos*.

I put it this way: the *logos* is God's idealized reality, from which—you can see this sounds a lot like the Stoics—from which we are derived. Now it's starting to sound like John a little bit because we actually come from this principle that God creates out of. And if anything good is created in us or in this world, it has come from the *logos* of God. It is the idealized perfect reality that God imagines, and we are derived from that.

Stoic philosophy talked a lot about the *Logos*. The Gnostics talked a lot about the *Logos*, but that was after John wrote his gospel in the 90s, so that's anachronistic. It doesn't fit. John couldn't have gotten his information and said, I'm going to take a cue from the Gnostics because the Gnostics weren't writing their stuff on the *Logos* until after John wrote his book.

This, though—Philo writes about the *Logos*, a lot about the *Logos*, and says, really, anything good that we have created from the *Logos*, we're trying to reflect the *Logos* at our very best, because that's God's expression of idealized reality. Well, maybe that's what John was doing.

Now, John was writing a gospel, clearly, to the whole world, Jews and Gentiles. But he quotes repeatedly this little thing called the Hebrew Bible, which if you start to think about, let's kind of



leapfrog over Philo and go to the Bible itself. Let's not look at a hybrid of Plato's philosophy and Hebrew theology. Let's just look at what the Hebrew Bible says about this concept.

So, *debar*, the Hebrew word for word, is what we have in the Hebrew text. And when the Greek version of the Hebrew text, which is called the Septuagint, abbreviated with LXX because there were 70 scholars that were commissioned by the Alexandrian library to write it, to translate it, they then always were quoting. If that was the Bible we were carrying around in the first century, my Hebrew Bible was full of the word *logos*, *logos*, *logos*, *logos*.

In what context? *Debar* if I had a, you know, Masoretic text in my hand.

Well, for instance, when God creates, turn to Psalm 33:6. Psalm 33:6. Not just in the stories themselves. We often quote it when we talk about God creating or we're joking with our kids about turning the lights on. We say, "And God said," things like this, "Let there be light." Well, if we look through Genesis 1 and 2, you find that's happening all the time. God says something and creates.

Matter of fact, 2 Peter chapter 3 talks about how God creates with his word, right? Well, in Hebrew, *debar*, or in the Bible of the first century, the Septuagint, the word *logos*, it's all over.

And when we get to songs of Israel like this, Psalm 33:6, they sing songs like this in their worship. Are you with me now?

By the *logos* of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host.

Nepesh, the *pneuma*, that's what we see, the Spirit over the earth, right? The moving about the waters. Spirit, *logos*, God, right? Yahweh. We're starting to see pictures of this. We did a lot of that when we looked through the angel of the LORD study a couple weeks ago.

So when God creates— I don't want make too much of this, but I'm going to say, why would he say, "In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, the Word was God." What's with the Word? Why the word, Word?

Well, because the Word in Hebrew theology is important. And I know it's referring to something other than, at least in the Gospels, the personified incarnate Christ, but it's a Word that when we talk about God creating, he creates with a word, okay? At least there's an etymological, linguistic tie there.

How about this? When God reveals himself— and if your fingers are tired, you don't need to turn but this is just one example of many, many, many, many, many, many, many, many, many, many, many, many examples in the prophets. And Jeremiah 1:4 says things like this:

Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying...

That's Jeremiah, saying, and then we have comma, parentheses in English, and on we have the revelation of God. God said this, because the— again, if I have a Septuagint in my hand— the *Logos* of Yahweh came to me and said.



“Now the word of the LORD came to me saying.” You start looking for *logos* or *debar* in Hebrew, you’ll see it everywhere.

You’ll see it when God creates things. He creates things with a word. You’ll see it when he reveals himself or gives a message to Isaiah or Ezekiel or Jeremiah or whoever it might be. “The word of the LORD came to me.”

How about this? When God saves— and I mean temporally or spiritually, but temporally— look at Psalm 107. If you’re still in the Psalms or if you snuck over to Jeremiah, turn back to Psalm 107.

Clearly, we have temporal salvation in view here. But Psalm 107 verse 20 says this. This is just interesting. If you slow down and read it, I know we read by these kinds of phrases all the time. We never stop and go, wow, that’s interesting.

Verse 20:

He sent out his word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction.

That’s just an interesting way to put it. I mean, these guys didn’t have TV and video games. They spent a lot of time looking at what the Bible said about the things that God did, and you start seeing the word put between God and creation, God and revelation, God and saving or salvation. You see the word there all the time.

God speaks, and of course we know he doesn’t speak. He doesn’t have vocal cords. He doesn’t have lips. He doesn’t have a tongue. He doesn’t have teeth, but the concept of God doing something that is an expression of himself between whatever he does and what he is, there is this expression that is bound up in the word, the Hebrew word *debar*, the Greek word *logos*.

How about this? Number four, when God judges. Turn to this one, Psalm 29. And I like to pick the Psalms here in part because this is their songbook. This is what they were singing. These are the things ingrained in their mind, even before a young, you know, 14-year-old or 13-year-old— and they started earlier than that— but before they were memorizing parts of the Torah, when they were toddlers, they were hearing their parents sing these songs. I mean, these are the things they heard all the time.

And when God did something, word was always involved in it.

Verse 7:

The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire,
and the voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

Here’s one, circle it. Old Testament survey graduates, he shakes the wilderness of what? Kadesh. Kadesh. Remember Kadesh? Numbers 14? Kadesh? That was a big, big bummer chapter in the history of Israel.



Remember they'd gotten right to the border of the promised land, and Moses and the gang were there, and they sent in the 12 spies, and they were supposed to go back and bring this report back in their reconnaissance mission, and 10 of them said, we can't do it. And Joshua and Caleb said, we can. And the people go, oh, why'd you bring us out here to die in the desert? And God judged them in Kadesh.

And he judges them with a word. And the picture here is his voice is the thing between God and his judgment. It's the expression of God and his judgment.

So the Hebrew Bible had a lot to say.

Then I thought the most general one of all, it wasn't from the Psalms, but you all know this verse, so I want to take you to Isaiah 55. Isaiah 55, verses 10 and 11. I mean, this is the broadest one of all, but when God accomplishes his will, this is what it looks like. This is how it is linguistically expressed to us.

And these are words you know, but look at the analogy that starts in verse 10 that puts this together for us, and keep John 1:1 in the back of your mind, because now all of a sudden, all of that is coming together to get this idea of God incarnate, coming to affect salvation, reveal—I mean, there's so many things that Christ did. We'll look at more of that. We'll look at his life in our study.

Are you with me now, Isaiah 55?

"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
and do not return there but water the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it."

Now bring John 1:1 to the front of your mind. I'm not saying that's what this text is saying, but I am saying when John enlists the word *logos*, he's got things like this in his mind as the author mastering the Old Testament. He is a Jew, you know. And he says, hey, the word comes from heaven. It accomplishes what it's sent for, and then it returns. I mean, the whole concept of the incarnation and the ascension of Christ and the redemptive work of Christ, you can see now.

I don't care if the Stoics never uttered the word *logos*. I don't care if the Gnostics ever picked the idea up and liked it between hits on their bongos. And I don't care if Philo ever mentions the word. He uses this phrase. It makes complete sense.

Now, I'm not saying he wasn't trying to be clever. I know God is writing this, and it seems almost sacrilegious to say that. But he is, perhaps maybe like our Fall Fest a little bit. He's using something in the culture. Anybody who's been to college, so to speak, in the first century, you use the word *logos* in your opening prologue of your story of the one who comes from heaven to do his work. You don't even



have to study the Torah. You don't have to know the writings of the prophets. And you're going to say, wow, yeah, that concept is everywhere. The concept of *logos* was everywhere.

Okay, well, what we have printed on the top of our worksheet:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was it.

Whatever this expression of God is, which we know it's Christ, it's described for us in verse 14. He was in the beginning, which is the phrase from Genesis 1:1. He not only was before Abraham, he was existing before the world, and he was post-God, he was with God, toward God, intimate with God. He had a relationship with God. And he was God, and there's the debated phrase.

And no one debates it in our day, they debated it through church history, more than the Watchtower and Tract Society. So let's talk a little bit about the Jehovah Witnesses' claim.

They, of course, are reading. Well, let's just talk about the Jehovah Witnesses for a minute.

If William Miller made it to heaven, when you meet him, you need to kick him in the shins. He's a Baptist pastor back in the mid-1900s. And probably, I can think of at least in the 19th century, no one caused more damage to the cause of Christ than William Miller, who happened to get really excited about his prophecy conferences that he was putting on and started to get so into biblical prophecy that he transgressed a very important— Pastor Miller, very important— biblical line. He started to set dates. Big mistake.

Now, when you get into the bowels and the inner workings of the book of Daniel, everyone's tempted to do that. But how many times did it clearly say in the New Testament, don't do it? What did Jesus say just before he left? It's like the last thing dad said before he left. What did he say? Right? Don't throw the ball in the house. Right? What's the last thing Christ says?

It is not for you to know the times or the hour. They said, is now the time? It's not for you to know the times or the season. The *kairos* or the *chronos*. It's not for you to know the cycles or the opportunities. It's not for you to know how much time it's going to take. It's not for you conferences, to set dates.

And he set his first one in the early 1840s, and then he set one ultimately. When that one didn't work out, then you got to go back to the study and say, I must have been reading Daniel wrong. And he sets one for 1844. And he's banking everything on this. March 1844, Christ is going to come back. And guess what? You and I wouldn't be sitting here if he did. Right? He didn't return.

So this is 1844. Did I say 19? I didn't, did I say that wrong? Okay. Remind me what I'm saying here. 1844. Doesn't happen. That's the last time.

A lot of people had sold. Can you imagine if you were buying all that? Which means you'd stop, you know, buying insurance and you'd sell your house. There were a lot of people dressing in white robes on hillsides waiting for this. Right?



Well, guess what happens to his ministry? Right? There's the temporal kick in the shins. Now he needs a heavenly kick in the shins if he's saved. Because while he repents of all of his date setting and dies actually in 1849, so he had five years of torment being the loser pastor who, you know, can you imagine walking down the street? You're the guy, sold my, you know, buggy because you said Christ was coming back. I mean, this guy, bad news.

So he dies in 1849. But you can imagine what happens because you start setting dates like this and everybody starts coming around and saying, wow, this guy's got something. It makes a big splash. And a lot of people now wanted to step into that vacuum when William Miller said, I'm not going to do this.

And they started to say, well, Christ, man, he'd have come back to where you could see him. Maybe he came back invisibly.

One of the leaders of that movement that picked up the— they're called the Millerites— and the Great Disappointment of 1844 was a lady called Ellen G. White. Ever heard of her? The leader of what we call now the Seventh-day Adventists.

Well, there was a bunch of groups that flew into the vacuum of William Miller's Millerite date setting, and they were all, in one way or another, they were called Adventists. They were the Second Adventists. They were the Seventh-day Adventists. They were all these different Adventist groups, and they all started to say, well, wait a minute. Can we salvage this?

Because there were a lot of people coming to these conferences, and they stepped in, and Ellen G. White, for instance, said, well, you didn't see— but Christ came back to the spiritual holy of holies and he cleansed it. She called it the investigative judgment.

And what he did there was he had to kind of have a special halfway-to-earth comeback because all the people are in big sin and the big abomination of the church is, you're all worshipping on the wrong day. Because the way I read my Exodus 20 is you ought to be worshipping on Saturday. And so they became known as the Seventh-day Adventists, right?

And then they said, well, hey, William Miller, he was right. He just didn't know he was right. And we're glad he's dead and out of the way. Now we can pick up the mantle. We can move forward.

Well, there was another group called the Second Adventists that came out of that vacuum of the wake of the Millerite Great Disappointment of 1844. And that group started to have Bible studies in New York. And they started to set more— and Pennsylvania— and they started to set more dates. And basically did the same thing that Ellen G. White said. Basically.

Well, Miller was close, but we got it right. And again, you just need to know it's not a visible comeback. It's kind of a quasi-invisible one.

But there's a young kid, a teenager, who starts attending some of the Bible studies. And his name is Charles Taze Russell. He's the guy who's going to get into this whole movement now. And charismatic, sharp, you know, studying, he's writing, and he picks up the mantle of this thing that



grows out of this Second Adventist movement in the wake of the Millerite Great Disappointment of 1844.

And he starts this thing that basically said what Ellen G. White said in part, which was Ellen G. White said, hey, the church is a big mess, an abomination to God because they worship on Sunday, they worship on the wrong day.

Well, Taze Russell basically says the same thing. The church has got it all wrong, and God is going to speak through us to get it right. And we will be like the watchtower, the watcher on the wall, the watchtower, and we'll make sure that we let you know what God thinks. And we've got a bit of a Gnosticism in this, and we've got this thing, and we're going to make it right. Interesting.

And you know this, the Watchtower and Tract Society or Awake Magazine, sometimes you can see those laying around at the barbershop or whatever, that all comes out of this thing. It's headquartered in New York, and a lot of their printing from Pennsylvania, because that's where Taze Russell was from.

And the point here in all of this is they then say, we are—you want the truth on what God says, you've got to come to us.

As a matter of fact, did I write down any quotes from the Tract Society? I think I did, come on up.

One of the things they said is your translations are wrong. And of course, you know their kick, and I shouldn't, you know, it goes without saying. They became the Jehovah Witnesses because they were going to restore the church to what they should be, and the big mistake for the Jehovah Witnesses was you're not using God's name. And you need to use God's name.

And everybody thought God's name that was tucked behind the word LORD in your Old Testament, they thought that it was the word Jehovah. And we looked at that last week, did we not? It's really the word Yahweh.

But the point is, they said, we are going to take the Lord's name, and his real name is Jehovah, to the people. So, when we preach, when we talk, when we teach, we're going to bear the name Jehovah. And they'll quote to the Isaiah passage, we're called to bear his name.

And so, we're going to do that. We're Jehovah Witnesses, creating, by the way, a Bible called the New World Translation. It was finally published in 1961, or at least the one I have. It may have been done a little bit before that. I should double-check that. Several copyrights on it, but sorry for that lack of fact right there.

When the Watchtower Tract Society did this, they said, we're not only going to restore the name here, but we're going to make sure we clarify some things about things like Christology, like your whole thing about Jesus being God, you're totally wrong on that. He's not God. He's like an angel of the Old Testament, the archangel Michael, and, you know, he's really not God. You're equating with God, and that's wrong.



So one of the passages that they got to deal with is a passage as clear as this in every other English translation with a couple variations, but none of them take away the divinity of Christ, and they say that third line there, “and the Word was God,” and we know it’s Christ, so how can you say that?

So they said, we’re not going to say that.

So here is the New World Translation, right? Here’s my copy of it from my library. And here it is. And I know you can’t read that, so I put it here.

John 1:1. And most of you know this:

In [the] beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god.

That’s what this New World Translation says. Right here, page 1327.

And people will come to your door and say, well, you guys all got that wrong. We got it right.

And they don’t need to say it at your door. I’ll let the Watchtower and Tract Society say it. Here’s their book, which has their publication responsible for it. They say the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society is the author of this book. I don’t know who is actually the author, but according to John, this is their official commentary on it.

It was printed in 1951 before this came out, at least in the final version, page 52.

“How are we to understand John 1:1 and 2,” they ask, “of which there are differing translations.”

And all I’ve got to say is if there were differing translations, none of the translations— and I’ll quote a couple, I didn’t write any down— but that never take away his divinity.

Well, they’re going to say, well, we’re going to get this right because we’re teaching something different about Christ, so we’re going to give you the right translation.

Here’s their rationale, at least before the 1961 edition came out:

“Since we’ve examined so much of what John wrote about Jesus, who was the Word made flesh, verse 14, we’ll admit that, we’re now in a position to determine which of those several translations is correct.”

There’s little smoke and mirrors, come on. There wasn’t like two groups of translations translating one that he was a God and one that he was the God, and we’re going to come in and adjudicate between those two. But they were about to put out their statement on it, which is he was a god, not the God. Okay? So they are going to give you the right one.

Now, hate to do this to you because it’s getting late, but we got to talk about Greek grammar. Oh, no. I’ll make this as painless as possible.



Okay, now we're on the back of the worksheet, are we not? There's a lot of space between B and C. So here we go. But you may know all this, so you don't even need to write much.

Let's talk about this, this particular part of Greek grammar, and here's the problem— or at least what they'll say at your door.

In English, we have a definite article that makes the noun specific. If I say, "Go get the book," my kid's going to think he's got a particular one in mind, a definite one in mind. In English, if we want to say, just grab any book because I'm trying to prop a door open or something, I'll say, "Get a book." Or if it starts with a noun, Nelson and apple. "Get an apple." That means I don't care which one. I prefer a good one, but I'm not being specific. Don't get the book that I have in mind. Get a book. I'm not definite about which one.

In English, we have definite articles and indefinite articles. Definite articles: "I want to go to the restaurant." If I say that to my wife, my wife's going to ask, which restaurant are you thinking about? If I say— there's my definite article. If I say, "I want to go to a restaurant," then she thinks, well, he doesn't have a particular one in mind. Definite, indefinite, right? Haven't lost anybody yet. That was simple.

Okay. Preach it. Preach it, Pastor Mike. Give us more grammar. All right. I shall.

Now I want to talk about Greek. That was English. In Greek, not to put, you know, superfluous Greek on the screen, I'll just use the— our English definite article. There is a definite article. And there's various inflections we have. Like in languages, a lot of you've studied. Maybe you've studied Greek, but you've studied other languages, and they have feminine and masculine and neuter nouns. Well, we have definite articles to match.

And then in Greek, we have so much inflection. What role does that noun play in the sentence? Is it the subject? Is it the object? Is it the direct object? Is it the indirect object? And so we then start to inflect the endings of those words and their articles in a similar fashion.

So there's a million. Matter of fact, there's charts of the definite article that you have to learn when you study Greek grammar. Okay? It's definite article.

Now, indefinite, there is none. There's not an indefinite Greek article. There's none. So then how does that work?

It works like this. "I want to go to the restaurant." Let's just pretend we're reading Greek right now. And if I want to say, "I want to go to a restaurant," and let's talk about which one, or I don't have one in mind— there's the— I would read it like this. In Greek, it would say, "I want to go to restaurant," which sounds like a two-year-old, but that's the way they do it because there's no indefinite article.

And in Greek, if the sentence reads, "I want to go to restaurant," you know, he didn't have a particular one in mind. That's the general rule for definite articles.

If you have it, it's definite. Matter of fact, let me say it's stronger than that. Here's the Greek grammar rule. I mean, this is an absolute rule. If the noun has an article, it's always definite. You're always talking about a particular one. If a noun does not have an article, it may be definite or it may be indefinite.

That sounds like fancy footwork. Nope, it's not. Standard Greek, Greek 101, Greek first semester, simple stuff. If it's got an article, it's definite. If it doesn't have an article, there may be several reasons that it is still definite but doesn't have the article.

I'll just give you a couple.

Let's talk about this sentence. Let's talk about this category, proper nouns. Classic example, proper nouns. If I'm reading in John 21:20, you don't need to turn there. And I hate to put superfluous Greek up there, but I've got to show you this.

Ho Petros blepeton methetin. That little sentence right there starts with— you see *Petros* there. *Blepe* is the verb to see. And Peter— don't say and— Peter saw the disciple. That was when he looks over, he sees it. Peter saw the disciple.

But you see that, and I didn't circle this one, but you see the little omicron there with the little breathing mark on the top at *ho*. *Petros*. That's the definite article. Now, that's because we're talking about a particular Peter, right? Not a Peter, the Peter.

And though we don't translate "the Peter," because context lets us know we're still in the conversation about Peter and Jesus and John there, we don't have to translate it, but we know we're talking about a particular one.

Well, here's the thing. All the time, all the time, you have proper nouns without the definite article.

Oh, I'm sorry. I did have a little English there for you. Let's get that back.

Peter— oh, here's my next one. I wanted to show you the other one. There it was. "The Peter saw the disciple." That's a literal translation of that phrase. We would never translate it that way, but we know we're talking about the particular one, not a Peter. One of the Peters in Jerusalem. No, we're talking about the one we're talking about. Luke 9:20. Okay?

But Peter answering said— I'm not giving the whole sentence, obviously, from the verb *apokrino*. He's answering. Peter, but Peter answered, *de* never comes at the beginning of any phrase, it comes at the second place. And I hated that rule in Greek, but *de*, which is but, comes after the first word, but you read it first. "But Peter answered saying," okay, or "Peter was answering," that's how I would translate, "but Peter answered saying," here's what he said, okay?

Peter, we're not now just talking about any Peter in Palestine, right? We're talking about the Peter, that Peter, and yet proper nouns all the time come without it.



Now, that's one of the exceptions to why you'd say if it's got an article, it's definite. If it doesn't have an article, it must be indefinite. We're talking about any Peter here. No, no, no, no. Proper nouns all the time go without the definite article, and they're still definite, right? That's just one example.

How about this? Prepositional phrases. There are certain prepositional phrases. You know what the prepositions are, right? To, toward, under, over, from, toward. The prepositions, when they take a noun, right, they point to a noun after that. A lot of times, depending on what they're trying to express, they don't take an article, and yet they're definite.

Example, John 1:1. You've got it printed for you down there, right?

En arche en ho logos. Okay? That is, "In beginning was the word." You don't see—there's the preposition *en*, right? In beginning. You don't see a *the* there. But we know when a prepositional phrase is trying to convey some idea of quality, right, then we know that that prepositional phrase isn't going to add the definite article.

But when we translate it, we're going to say, even as the New World Translation said, they put it in brackets to show you that it wasn't there. Like the NAS used—New American Standard used to do that all the time too, show you that it's really not there, or they put it in italics.

Well, it's not there, but any translator knows it's got to be there. We're not going to translate it "in beginning was the word," because we're talking about the beginning, the beginning of the quality of before God created the world, the realm, the sphere, and that goes without a definite article, but we know it's the beginning, not in any beginning, pick a beginning. Indefinite. No, it's not indefinite. It's definite.

But here's one example within our context where you have a noun that does not take a definite article, but it is definite.

Is everybody still with me on this? Anybody deciding to check out on this yet? Some people left, so I don't know. All right.

Now, this one you're going to want to leave. No. Just because these words, I hate these words, but some of us learned them in school, or like me, you didn't. You had to learn when you're taking another language. Predicate nominative, right? Predicate nominative.

When you have a predicate—subject predicate. Hate to go back to this, right? Teaching our kids that—subject, right? You have a verb, and then you have the predicate. A predicate nominative.

When you have a verb that's a copulative verb—excuse that language—it serves as an equating verb. The classic one is the verb to be: is, was, right? That verb is going to often, most often, going to take a noun that is not going to take an article, but is going to be definite.

Examples in English. Here's an English example. "It is me." That's wrong. We all say it, but it's wrong. It's like good and well and those words we always say wrong. "It is me." If you're really erudite, you'll say, "It is I." Right? Because that's grammatically correct.

Because is, right, is a form of the verb to be, which is a copulative verb, which means on both sides of that, you've got nouns and they both should be in the nominative or the subject case. Okay?

"It is me." If I were to give you a Greek example, which I didn't write down: the mic is the preacher. Okay? Because is the preacher. When you've got two words in a Greek sentence that are going to have to take the predicate nominative, the predicate's going to take the nominative case, what we do is we drop the definite article. That's what we have to do.

Because we don't know in a predicate nominative what the subject is and what the predicate is because the predicate nominative is supposed to be taken on the other side of the verb to be because it's a copulative verb. It's an equal sign.

Because I won't know how to read it. The preacher is the mic or the mic is the preacher. And in a lot of sentences, which I didn't take time to create some, it makes a big difference. I'm not, you know, you got to say it the right direction.

Just like this one, because there's a lot of theology that rides on this. So I need to know which— before I get to the actual text, which I printed there for you— I want to tell you how important that is in Greek especially. Here's the reason.

Because in Greek the— the word order is fluid. Have I told you this before? I have I mentioned it a lot. In Greek, the word order is— we know what's the subject, because the subject's supposed to come before the verb. Unless you're Yoda, that's the way it's supposed to work, right? And that's how we want it, because it helps us understand what the subject is and what the predicate is.

In Greek, that's not the way it works, and it drives first-year Greek students crazy, because it's hard, because you learn to read differently. We learn to start at the beginning of the sentence and read to the end. In Greek, particularly when you're learning Greek, you first have to identify the main verb. Now I identify the main verb. Now I got to start to look at nouns that surround that. They may not come in the right order, but I know what's the subject and I know what's the predicate based on the inflection.

And if I have a copulative verb like the verb to be, now I got to look carefully at the definite article, which I should always check anyway, but I really got to check that to figure out what even the subject in the sentence is. Do you follow that? Half of you.

Examples. Greek inflections avoid confusion, right?

For instance— and I should put a different sentence here— and that is this. Word order in Greek gives us emphasis. It provides us emphasis. Whatever is near the front doesn't clue me in that I'm talking about the subject. It clues me in that that's the important part of this sentence that needs an underline, a highlight, a bracket, a star. Okay?

“Great was the sermon.” That may sound antiquated, but that’s how you’d say it in Greek if the sermon was really great. Probably not what you’ll be saying on the way home tonight. But that’s what you’d say if you were really impressed with the sermon. Oh, the great was the sermon, honey. You wouldn’t say the sermon was great. We’d have to say the sermon was great. But they don’t have to say that in Greek. You don’t have to sound like Tony the Tiger because you can say it in Greek the way they intended it, which was, if you inflect it properly, we know what the subject is.

All I need to know is what’s at the beginning of the sentence. That’s the important. “Great was the sermon.” Which again, it sounds like Yoda, but we don’t talk that way. But that’s how they talk in Greek.

“Smashed John the bike” is what I would say to my wife if it was a bad accident, right? Oh, smashed John the bike. That’s how Greek sentences read. And I know if I’m translating a Greek sentence that has smashed at the beginning, I know, hey, that’s the important part. That’s a big deal.

I this way, a couple comparative sentences. “Eat, we should the sandwiches.” That might be what I would say if we were having sandwiches, but if we were having tacos, I’d say, “Tacos eat, we should.” Do you see the difference there?

So glad we had a moment of levity in the midst of our grammar discussion. That’s how Greek works.

Now, if I’m dealing with a copulative verb like the verb to be that is an equal sign, then both are going to take the subject case. I don’t know what the subject is. I really need now a rule about definite articles. And that is when you have *en*, which is the perfect indicative version of *eimi*, the verb to be, I got to know what comes first in terms of English based on a definite article. Okay?

So now, if you followed any of that— and by the way, there are at least seven other grammatical rules as to why a noun would not take an article, but would still be definite. So there’s more, and I could bore you with more, but it gets worse than what we just went through. So you don’t want any more right now. You just want enough to deal with the guy at the door on Saturday morning.

So here we are. Keep this handy. Laminate it, because we’re going to mark it up now.

Here’s what you have then, right?

En arche en ho logos, kai ho logos en pros ton theion, kai theos en ho logos.

There’s our sentence.

“In the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God. The Word was God.” That’s our English translation.

Here’s the problem. It’s not a problem if you know Greek well, but it’s a problem in the New World Translation. Why did they get it wrong?

Oh, by the way, if you want to, because it's maybe something you look back on later, if you want to transliterate it:

en-ar-ke-en-ho-logos. Okay?

kai ho logos en pros ton theion, kai theos en ho logos. Okay?

Now, if we're going to literally translate— that wasn't long enough for you? Sorry.

So, let's tell a story. Funny thing happened to me on the way to church. Great was the sermon. Yes.

En arche en ho logos, kai ho logos en pros ton theion, kai theos en ho logos.

Hey, if you really want to press the JW at the door, just memorize that. Just say, what about *en arche en ho logos? kai ho logos en pros ton theion? kai theos en ho logos?* Then I know what they'll do. They'll T.O. you. They'll tap out and they'll say, we got to bring back our Greek expert, which they've done at my house on a couple of occasions, different groups. We got to bring our Greek expert back.

And that's great, because when you get him, then they literally— did I say this last week? They'll put an X on the map and you won't ever get bothered anymore. Because once if you can wrestle their quote-unquote Greek expert to the mat, then they just don't waste their time at your house. Which for some of you, that's the goal. So you can get there.

All right. But I know some of you have a heart for them. You love them and you want to win them to Christ, and that's great. Some I haven't, I haven't had any success at the door with those. Obviously we have former JWs in our church.

But anyway, literal translation:

“In beginning was the Word,” okay? “And the Word was with or toward the God,” okay? “And God was the Word.”

Now, if you're reading in English, that's how you'd translate it. Nobody translates it that way because they know that's not how you're supposed to translate it because everyone knows right out of the gate, if you've got this going on right there.

If you have a verb to be, not even the New World Translation is going to translate it in “God was the Word.” Why? Because you can't.

Because as soon as you have the verb to be, you got to look for a definite article. And I got to know which of these nouns— both of them have a nominative case— which means they both end in Omicron Sigma. And if they have Omicron, final Sigma, both of those words, then I don't know which one's the subject. I only know which one's the subject by which one has a definite article.



So, which one has the definite article? Not that one. That one. That one's got a definite article.

So I know that, in our way we translate, that's got to go at the beginning. "And the Word," right? Now I've got to figure out what to do with *theos* because it doesn't have an article.

And what they'll do at your door is they'll say, they may even bring this one. This is their interlinear translation. This is their English version. Here is their Kingdom—the Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures. They'll bring this out and they'll show you. And maybe if you have an interlinear, you know what those look like.

They're going to show you there's no definite article there. And if there's no definite article, I don't know the thing you know Greek. You probably don't know Greek. But I'll tell you a little bit about Greek. And the thing is, if it doesn't have a definite article, then it's indefinite. So that means it's not the God or God God. It's just a god. And that's what we teach and that's what we say about Christ.

Really? Well, among the at least nine basic rules for why you wouldn't put a definite article on a noun and yet it'd be definite, well, one of them is when you have a predicate nominative and you've got to figure out which one is the subject.

Okay, so how do we translate it? We translate it: "and the Word was God."

How do I know? Because this is the only way I can really write this sentence. If I wanted to write the sentence, "the Word was a god," here's how I'd write it. I would write it, *ho logos en theos*. That's how I'd write it. Because that reads, "and the Word was a god."

It's not how it's put. It's put God for emphasis as the predicate nominative that reads this way: "and the Word was God." That's what it's reading, see? Because it's at the front of the sentence.

Why didn't he put a definite article? Couldn't you just break the rule this once and just make it an equal sign? If you did, you'd be a modalistic monarchian. Well, I don't want to be that. A Sabellian. We'll get into this.

Modalistic theology means that the Father is the Son, and the Son is the Father, and the Son is the Spirit, and the Father is the Spirit, and the Spirit is the Father, and the Spirit is the Son. That's modalism. God puts on a different hat, and he does his thing.

We'll talk about that and Sabellian and how it all came to be and what the church did about it. But they knew that was wrong.

If you had *ho logos* and *ho theos*, or you turned it either way around, what you'd have is all that God is is all that the Son is. And if we've already said in the phrase before it that the Son or the Word was with God, that he's trying to distinguish personalities here, then if you do that, you've lost that whole picture.



That's why some translations— and though it's daring and a lot of people don't like it because they think we're taking away from it— you could rightly say, because this is an issue of quality now, not that I'm trying to say the Father is the Son or the Son is the Father because *theos* has now been equated in the context with the Father.

You want to be able to say that the Word had the quality of God. He was God in that he had divinity.

Here's the translation that is bold and some have, and that is:

the Word was divine,

which is right, because that's what we're saying, because we don't have "God was the Word" and "the Word was God." We're not trying to make those so equal in this to blur personality, because they've already said that the Word was with God.

More on that another time, because we will talk about modalism.

All right, so I don't have a question. With the definite article, I have an absolute answer here.

Now, all of that, you may say, I don't know if I can explain any of that. I know you can explain this.

D. And we can do this really fast.

Examples of the God without an article. And by the God, I mean the God of gods, capital G God, the real God. And I'm going to do that. I had my assistant scan in their interlinear diglot. It's got English in a column, and it's got the interlinear. So I'm going to use what they have and what their Greek expert will bring to your door and the debate over this.

Here it goes. You ready? Here.

And by the way, just to show you the one we just had. You can read that, can you not? All right.

Here's the interlinear, and then here's their deal. And you see all we got: "In the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God." And then it says, "and God was the Word." And if you turn that around the right way, then it's the subject. "The Word was a god," small g. You see the small g there, right? Okay.

Well, then their translation over here, "and the Word was a god." Okay? Now, that's in verse 1 of John 1.

All you got to do is from that verse, look down a little ways on the page, and you know what you'll start to see everywhere? Things like this. "And came to be a man," right?

Having been sent forth from, *para*, from, or beside. That's not the greatest.

God, *theu*, genitive form, possessive form. But that doesn't have a definite article now, does it? Where's the definite article in verse 6? Doesn't have it. Why? Because you don't need it. You rarely really need it because most of the time in the Bible we're talking about God, the God.

Theos is God, the one and only God, the only God that is. And in this, we've got a preposition. It's one of the rules why you wouldn't have a definite article. So we have the preposition *para* and the verb *theu*, which is just the genitive form of *theos*, and no definite article.

So how do they translate it in the margin?

Well, they must say, "There arose a man that was sent forth as a representative of a god." Is that what they say? No, because that wouldn't make any sense, right?

That's, by the way, number one or number two. How many do I have? One, two, three, four. Well, first one was supposed to be the bad one.

So John 1:1, okay? They say that one's a god.

On the same page, John 1:6, another one without an article, and it's, of course, the God of the universe.

Here's one. This may get a little harder to read. This is verse 12. It says:

"And as many but took *lambano* to receive him, he gave them the *exousia*, the authority to be children, the *tekna* of God."

That one doesn't even have the preposition. But guess what we don't have here? A definite article.

How do they translate it? They must say, "Whoever has been, he did receive him, to them he gave the authority to become a god's child." Is that what they said? No, of course not.

Because there are several reasons we don't add a definite article to a definite noun. There's another example. It's on the same page.

How about this one? Verse 13:

"Who do not out of the bloods, nor out of the will of flesh, nor out of the will of a male person, but out of *theu*, right, God, were generated or born."

Well, guess what we don't have there? *Ek* is not a definite article. *Ek* is another preposition, another rule, another reason that we don't add a definite article.

And guess how they translate it? "And they were born not from blood or from fleshly will or from man's will, but from a god." No, no, no, from God, clearly.

Do you see that they're not being consistent with their own simplistic explanation at your door?



Now I got to the bottom of the page. I'm already on the fifth one. Verse 18:

"And God"— how does the rest of that verse go? Yeah. "No man has seen God at any time."

Okay? God, no one has seen at any time. And since it turned the page, I don't have the other page.

Guess what they don't translate? Here's the translation. I just typed it in for you:

"No man has seen"— here's their translation— "God." Is it a god? Because it doesn't have a definite article here. No, because there's no need for it here. But still, they don't follow their own rule.

Are you tracking with that? That's powerful in my mind, especially when they bring this to your door and say, if it doesn't have an article, we're talking about a god, not the God.

You can show them on the same page four other examples where they break their own rule because they don't know. There are several reasons in grammar you wouldn't add the definite article. One of them is a predicate nominative.

Watchtower, when they came out with the New World Translation, refused to give the names of the committee who translated it. And they said, because we don't want to give glory to God, we don't want to make men proud. It's about humility.

Don't trust anybody who has that take on anything when it relates to research or academia. Matter of fact, when we went to the ESV here, did I not provide in our bibliography like 18 pages of people that either endorsed it or worked on it? And I had the committee first that talked about who worked on it. Where did they go to school? Where did they get the degrees? What degrees did they have? Where did they study their languages?

Well, they wouldn't do it until, of course, somebody that was high up in the JW's defected and said, I'm done with this JW thing. And he revealed the names. Here were the names that were given, right? Here are the guys.

There were five guys that worked on this. Nathan Knorr, Freddie Franz, right? Albert Schroeder, George Gangas, Mitchell— I'm sorry— Milton Henschel. There's the five guys.

I've starred one of them. You know why? He's the only guy that went to college. University of Cincinnati, and he dropped out. Those other four guys, they didn't even go to college. They never studied languages. They didn't know Greek or Hebrew. If they did, they learned it, picked it up somewhere. But they never had a Hebrew quiz or a Greek quiz. They never were trained in the languages.

And Franz, when he was at the University of Cincinnati, didn't study anything theological. And for whatever his language training was, it wasn't very long. And he knew, obviously, just enough to be dangerous. No formal training, no language studies, no theological training, nothing.



Here's what you say to the guy at the door when they talk about their New World Translation. Say, oh, by the way, I got the same linguistic training of four out of the five of your translators, right? And that's if you have no training, and tonight you probably got more training than four of the five guys on the committee.

Are you following with what I'm saying here? These guys weren't equipped to do the job that they did.

I'm quite sure they spent most time looking at English translations and deciding how they were going to write their version of the Bible and put the word Jehovah in the text where it should have been in the Old Testament or where they think it should have been. Because they didn't know Hebrew, they didn't even know that the word is not Jehovah, right?

By the way, Frederick Franz once was made to testify at a trial in Scotland relating to his translation. He was given under oath on the stand a simple Hebrew quiz and he couldn't pass it. A rudimentary, like, you know, do you know what these words mean? The guy didn't know what he was doing.

You're throwing them under the bus. I'm just giving you the facts that there's a lot of talk that goes on at the door and you need not be intimidated. Just the guys they're relying on didn't even study the languages.

All right, book of the week. Just because the topic at hand, I'm giving you a book every week, am I not?

This one is helpful. Just because we're in our mindset now with the JW's, Ron Rhodes' book, *Reasoning from the Scriptures*. This is his new version of it, updated. And if you don't have it, it's good to have if you deal with these folks.

If you just say, I don't need to read through a big book, get this one, because I have books of the week this week. Get this one, which is very, very short and very easy to navigate. This is the one you could almost read between the time the doorbell rings and the time you answer the door. *Ten Most Important Things You Can Say to the Jehovah Witnesses*. Great little book, tiny little book, doesn't give you a lot of depth, but it gets right to it.

If I sparked some interest in this New World Translation, which I can't imagine that I did, I got more books of the week. This one is hard to find. It's called *The Jehovah's Witnesses New Testament, a Critical Analysis of the New World Translation, Christian Greek Scriptures*. This guy went through it and showed why this is just a terrible and pathetic piece of scholarship, because there's none in it.

And then if you say, I'm really not interested in any of that. Can we get back to Christology? Yes, here's the book of the week. Don McLeod wrote this book called *The Person of Christ*, and I'm just trying to build your library every week with a good book on Christology. This is a good book on Christology, which, by the way, will deal a bit with John 1:1 and the divinity of Christ.

All right, I'm out of time. Let's pray.



God, thanks so much for our night tonight. I do pray that the spirit with which this is given, and by that I mean my mindset in presenting this, would be the mindset with which it's received.

Not here just to bash people. Actually, I feel bad for folks that are bound up in things that really they don't quite understand. I'm not here to puff up the pride of our people. Don't want that.

But what I do want is I want our people to be equipped and prepared. I don't want them to be driven and tossed by every wind of doctrine. I don't want them intimidated by people that use Greek words at their door. I want them to know what the Bible says.

Because, man, if they're right, we should sign up to be JWs. I mean, that's what I want to do. If it's true, if you secretly came back in the end of the 19th century, and if every other denomination and every other group is an abomination, then I want to join their team.

But God, the evidence does not stack up to convince us to do so. And all it takes is a little bit of spade work.

But God, this is helpful for us in the weeks to come, not only because of the JWs, that's the modern version of this attack on Christology. Really, this is something that we've discussed tonight that will have benefits as we think through church history all the way back to the beginning.

So God, help us in this. Let this verse be a verse that we know, that we feel comfortable in, that we can get involved and get our hands in and deal with.

Thanks for this crowd and their desire to learn. Appreciate it so much. In Jesus' name, amen.