

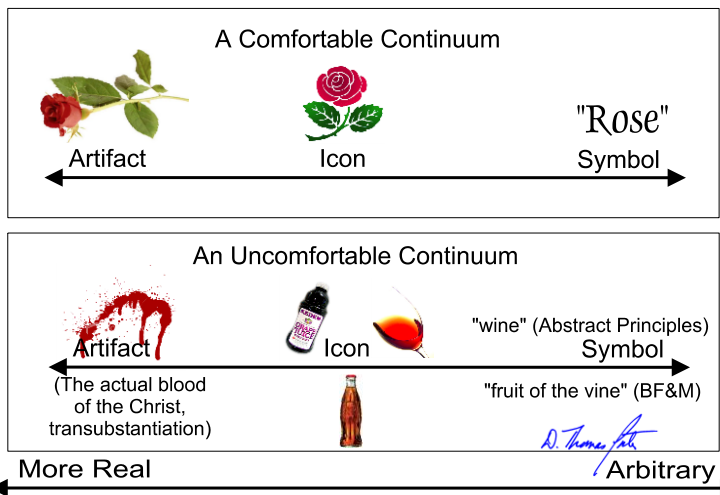
## WORDS MATTER... “In the beginning was the Λογος...”

When Holy Spirit inspired John the apostle to pen the gospel we call “John,” He inspired John to use the same title as the first book of the Hebrew Scriptures; i.e., “In the beginning.” Using a prevalent philosophy of the time—nature, reality, and meaning is best understood objectively, logically—John argued the Almighty is best understood as “the word;” i.e., the logos.

Words matter. They are our attempt to share reality with one another without said reality being in the here and now. When human hunters began to discover they could create symbols for “There are mammoths over on the other side of this hill,” the world became simultaneously simpler—and more complex. No stick to draw the mammoth? No dirt that could be scratched? No sounds, or otherwise they will hear us (no supper tonight). Let’s use gestures then; but, Oh no! How does one gesture there are more than ten mammoths over the hill? Logos was the answer.



### Representing the Ideas of Rose and Christ's Blood



Logoi matter. Even though a rose by any other name would smell just as sweet, we must all agree that the phonemes, if any, associated with the letters r, o, s, and e *symbolize* the idea of “rose.” We could photograph a rose, but the photograph is still not a rose. We could draw a rose, but the drawing is still not a rose. The drawing, sculpture, and photograph are *icons* of rose.

Some symbols have inherent meaning, like “buzz.” Others are completely arbitrary, like the word “me.” Wars, theological and otherwise, have been fought over *iconic*

versus *symbolic* representations of reality. For example, the church has argued for centuries about whether the objects used in the Eucharist/Lord’s Supper/Communion are *iconic* or *symbolic* or *artifactual*; i.e., the bread and the fruit of the vine are actually His body and blood. After all, Jesus the Christ did say, “This is my body and my blood.” Oh no, others argue—the wine and the bread are *symbols* of the Christ’s sacrifice. Of course, the wine and bread are not *symbols*, otherwise we would not be uncomfortable with using Coca-Cola as a wine substitute. The bread must be unleavened. We love our icons. We love our symbols. We love our artifacts.



Meaning is a fleeting paramour. We must continually ensure, and re-ensure not only that our meanings are being accurately shared, but also what others understand is what we intended. It's a morass of chaos, a chaotic linguistic swamp. It is all too easy to *share* symbols, but unless we also assess whether our communicative partner *also* shares our meaning, we have not communicated, we have merely stimulated. We must know what others

misunderstand; if we do not, then we are mere "babbling pagans."<sup>1</sup>

One step, but certainly not the last, is using correct symbols/words, grammar, and punctuation. Remember, using the "King's English" rarely affects meaning; i.e., we understand when a person says or writes "I can not seen Christ in that painting," we understand they do not see a representation of the Christ in that painting. But we do question their ethos, their credibility. And then, instead of focusing upon their perceptual challenge, we focus on their misuse of the word "see." (Or, they can't type or proofread very well.)

## SOME FIRST STEPS TOWARD TRULY EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION OF THE WORD

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### 1. Verb Precision

- a. Baptism effects salvation.  
Baptism affects salvation.
- b. The death of Jesus affected atonement.  
The death of Jesus effected atonement.
- c. The church is the called out by the Lord God.  
The church are the called out by the Lord God.

**When used as a verb:  
Effect = To Cause.  
Affect = To Associate.**

### 2. The That-Which Conundrum

- a. It is Holy Spirit that sanctifies you.  
It is Holy Spirit which sanctifies you.
- b. It is Holy Spirit by which we are sanctified.  
It is Holy Spirit by whom we are sanctified.
- c. Here is the belief which saves you...  
Here is the belief that saves you...
- d. Here are reasons that we should obey the Lord's directions...  
Here are reasons which we should obey the Lord's directions...
- e. I can do all things that the Christ wants...  
I can do all things which the Christ wants...

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<sup>1</sup>Jesus the Christ said, "And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words." (NIV, Matthew 6:7).

- f. *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

–John 14:26 KJV

What does the translator’s use of “which” say about the nature of Holy Spirit?

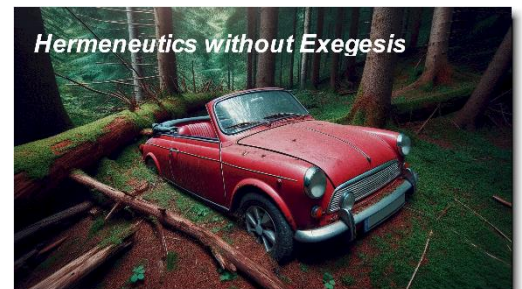
### 3. Word Choice

- a. Holy Spirit immersed Jesus as the Christ.  
Holy Spirit baptized Jesus as the Christ.
- b. John used water to baptize.  
The Christ uses Holy Spirit to baptize.
- c. John immersed people in water.  
The Christ immerses people in Holy Spirit.

### 4. Translation Veracity...

- a. In the beginning God (אֱלֹהִים, Elohim, *plural*) created the heavens and the earth...  
In the beginning God (אֱלֹהִים, Elohim, *plural*) created the heaven and the earth...
- b. I am the way, the truth, and the life.  
I am the way, and the truth, and the life.
- c. Paul said he was a “slave [δοῦλος, *doulos*] of Christ Jesus.” Romans 1:1 HCSB, NAB, NET  
or  
was he a “servant (δοῦλος, *doulos*) of Christ Jesus.” Romans 1:1 NIV, ESV, KJV  
Which is the correct translation? So what? Is “bond servant” a better translation?<sup>2</sup>  
Furthermore, just what is the first word of Romans 1:1, “Paul” (ESV, KJV, NIV) or  
“From” (GWT, GNT, NET)? Which translation is correct exegetically, correct  
hermeneutically?

- d. Know the difference between hermeneutics and exegesis. Exegesis without hermeneutics is driving a car without a steering wheel. Hermeneutics without exegesis is driving a car through a forest without a road. Learn more from a study of Hebrews 4:15 at [Challenges: Exegesis vs. Hermeneutics](#).



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<sup>2</sup>“Bond servant” is a very useful translation as it suggests ownership, but with some degree of choice. The concept of “bond servant” does not appear, however, until the 15<sup>th</sup> century ([Merriam-Webster.com/dictionary/bond servant](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bond%20servant)); in contrast, the Oxford reports earliest use was the 14<sup>th</sup> century. For an interesting discussion of the issue in Scripture, see Stephan Baker’s article, *Is the Term ‘Bondservant’ the Best Way to Describe Slavery in the Bible?* ([BibleStudyTools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/is-the-term-bondservant-the-best-way-to-describe-slavery.html](https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/is-the-term-bondservant-the-best-way-to-describe-slavery.html)), 2023.

## 5. Cultural/linguistic contamination—

- a. Why do we call the LORD Almighty by what He is (God) rather than His name (Yahweh, Jehovah, Abba, Adonai, Immanuel, Paraclyton, Yehoshua, Joshua, etc.)?
  - b. Why do we tolerate “Lordy, lordy!” but not “Jesus Christ!” as cussing?
  - c. Why is Arabic [<sup>4</sup>ﷲ] for the LORD God Almighty not tolerated, but Spanish [*Dios*] is?
6. Remember, neither punctuation, nor paragraph demarcation<sup>3</sup> nor chapter delineation is inspired. Consider John 1:1 and the differences implied:
- a. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.
  - b. In the beginning was the word; and the word was with God; and the word was God.
  - c. In the beginning was the word. And, the word was with God. And, the word was God.

## 7. Articles, Articles, Articles: They Matter

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. And the word was God.<br/>And the word was a god.<sup>4</sup></li><li>b. Jesus called them to Him...<br/>The Jesus called them to Him...</li><li>c. Holy Spirit called them to Him...<br/>The Holy Spirit called them to Him...</li><li>d. Father called them to Him...<br/>The Father called them to Him...</li><li>e. Trinity is difficult to explain.<br/>The Trinity is difficult to explain.</li><li>f. The Trinity is to be glorified.<br/>Trinity is to be glorified.</li><li>g. Jesus the Christ (The Way)<br/>Jesus a Christ (Pharisees)</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>h. “I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me: <i>The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.</i>” (NIV)<br/>“I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me: <i>The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize in Holy Spirit.</i>” (Greek)</li><li>i. Cyrus was a Messiah<br/>Cyrus was the Messiah<sup>5</sup></li><li>j. The God is to be glorified.<br/>God is to be glorified.</li></ol> |
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<sup>3</sup>Consider the typical paragraph demarcation between Philippians 4:3 and 4:4. If one ignores the publisher’s paragraph demarcation, then what follows in Philippians 4:4 is how to resolve the problem identified in Philippians 4:1-3. Consider this analysis of conflict resolution when said demarcation is ignored: D. Thomas Porter, [DiggingDeeper.Life/content/APaulineApproachtoChristianConflictResolution.pdf](https://DiggingDeeper.Life/content/APaulineApproachtoChristianConflictResolution.pdf), 2008; downloaded 7/5/24.

<sup>4</sup>Note the Jehovah Witness translation and explanation at <https://www.jw.org/en/bible-teachings/bible-verses/john-1-1/> as reviewed 8/1/2024.

<sup>5</sup>Isaiah 45:1 uses the word “anointed” referring to Cyrus the Great, Achaemenid Empire. “Messiah” comes from the Hebrew for this word. Cyrus, a foreign emperor, is called “his anointed” just as he is called “my shepherd” (44:28), because the LORD God Almighty appointed Cyrus to carry out a divine commission in his role as king. Nebuchadnezzar is similarly called “my servant” (Jeremiah 25:9; 27:6; 43:10). The servant—the Christ—is called “the Anointed One” in Daniel 9:25-26 (c.f., Matthew 1:17; and Psalm 2:2 “The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against His Anointed One.”). Adapted and corrected from Compton’s Interactive NIV Bible Commentary © 1996.

8. And then there is Yeshua the Christ...

- ❖ We do not say "Edward King;" we say "King Edward," or "Edward the King." therefore...
- ❖ We should not say "Jesus Christ;" we should say "Christ Jesus," or "Jesus the Christ." "Christ" was not His surname; "Christ" is His title.

Surname. But it gets even more contaminated. His "surname" in Nazareth was "Βαρῑωσήφ, BarYowseif; i.e., son of Joseph." Furthermore, His first name was not Jesus, but Yehoshua (i.e., aka "Joshua"). Nor was it "Ἰησοῦς, ee-ai-sous." Ἰησοῦς was an attempt in Koine Greek to transliterate His Hebrew name Yehoshua. So, why "Joe-sef" and "Jee-sus?" There is no hard "j" in Greek; we just substituted the English hard "j" for the "ee-ai" sound.

How do you pronounce the first name of Jesús Ferreira, soccer/football star or Jesús Aguilar and Jesús Guzmán, baseball stars? Regarding "Jesus," learn more about His actual first name at

<https://biblehub.com/greek/2424.htm>

From the Interlinear of BibleHub we learn: Iēsoús – Jesus, the transliteration of the Hebrew term,

[[BibleHub.com/hebrew/3091.htm](https://biblehub.com/hebrew/3091.htm)] /Lôt ("Yeshua"/Jehoshua, contracted to "Joshua") which means "Yahweh saves," or "Yahweh is salvation."



For even more intrigue, see the footnote to Matthew 27:16 at [NetBible.org/Bible/Matthew+27](https://netbible.org/Bible/Matthew+27). See also [en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barabbas](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barabbas)