

# The concept of “Logos” in John’s writings

## The Logos unequivocally as Jesus himself

1.1, 1.14

## Other concepts linked to Jesus in John

**Light:** 1.4,5,7,8,9; 8.12; 9.5; 12.35; 12.46; 1Jn 1.5 (of God); 1.7; 2.9.

**Life:** 1.4 (IN him = light); 11.25 (=resurrection); 14.6 (=way, truth); 1Jn 1.1 (=logos); 5.20

**Truth:** 1.9 (=light); 1.18; 8.32,33; 14.6; 14.7; 15.26; 16.13; 17.17 (=logos); 1 Jn 1.6; 1.8; 2.4; 2.20; 3.19; 4.6; 5.6; 2 Jn 1,2,4; 3 Jn 1,3,4,8,12

**Way:** 14.6 (= truth) – cf use in Acts as descriptor of the gospel

**Resurrection:** 11.25 (=life)

## Ambiguous use of logos

Jn 6.60: This is a hard logos (That they must eat Jesus’s flesh as bread)

12.38: They would not believe him. This was to fulfil the logos of Isaiah.

14.23-4: If anyone loves me he will obey my logos; he who does not love me will not obey my logoi, and the logos you hear is not my own – it belongs to the Father who sent me.

17.14: I have given them your logos

17.17: Sanctify them by your truth; your logos is truth.

1Jn 1.1: ...concerning the logos of life. The life appeared...we have seen and proclaim to you the eternal life.

1.10: If we claim we have not sinned we make [God] out to be a liar, and his logos is not in us.

2.5: But whoever keeps his logos, God’s love is made complete in him.

2.7: I am not writing you a new commandment but an old one, which you had from the beginning (cf Jn 1.1, Gen 1.1); the commandment is the logos that you heard.

2.14: Young men, because you are strong and the logos of God lives in you (=sins forgiven in his name, knowing him who is from the beginning (X2), overcoming the evil one, knowing the Father)

## Logos used of speech or thought

Jn 2.22: Then they believed the Scripture and the logos that Jesus had spoken

4.41: Because of his logos many more became believers

4.50: The man believed the logos Jesus said to him (“your son will live”)

5.24: Whoever hears my logos and believes him who sent me has eternal life

7.40: On hearing his logoi some said, “This man is the Prophet”.

8.31: If you continue in my logos, you are really my disciples. You will know the truth and the truth will set you free.

8.37: You are ready to kill me, because you have no room for my logos.

8.43: Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear my logos.

8.51: Amen, amen – if anyone keeps my logos, he will never see death.

8.55: I know God and keep his logos. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day...

10.19: At these logoi the Jews were again divided.

12.38: They would not believe in him. This was to fulfil the logos of Isaiah the prophet.

12.47: That very logos which I spoke will condemn him on the last day (= rhemata)

14.23-4: If anyone loves me, he will obey my logos. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my logoi, and the logos you hear is not my own – it belongs to the Father who sent me.

15.3: You are already clean because of the logos I have spoken to you.

15.20: Remember the logos I spoke to you. No servant is greater than his master.

15.20: If they keep my logos, they will keep yours also

17.14: I have given them your logos

17.17: Sanctify them by the truth. Your logos is truth.

17.20: I pray also for those who will believe in me through their logos.

18.9: This happened so that the logos he had spoken would be fulfilled (I have not lost one...)

18.32: That the logos Jesus had spoken indicating the death he would die would be fulfilled.

1 Jn 1.10: ...we make God out to be a liar, and his logos is not in us.

2.5: But whoever keeps his logos, God's love is made complete in him.

2.7: I am not writing you a new commandment, but an old one which you had from the beginning; the commandment is the logos that you heard.

## **Words and concepts paralleled with logos**

### **Testimony:**

3.11: Still you people do not accept our testimony.

3.32: the one who comes from heaven testifies to what he has seen and heard.

5.31ff: I testify – God's testimony – John's testimony – my works' testimony

5.39: You diligently study the Scriptures ... these are the Scriptures that testify about me.

7.7: I testify that what the world does is evil.

8.14: Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid.

8.17: The testimony of two men is valid (ie Jesus and the Father)

15.26: The Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, will testify about me. And you also must testify.

19.35: The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true.

1 John 5.9: God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God which he has given about his Son. Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart.

### **Rhema (spoken word):**

3.34: The one whom God has sent speaks the rhemata of God

5.46: If you believed Moses, you would believe me... since you do not believe his grammatoi, how are you going to believe my rhema?

6.53: The rhemata I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

6.68: You have the rhemata of eternal life

8.20: He spoke these rhemata while teaching... yet nobody seized him.

8.47: He who belongs to God hears the rhemata God speaks.

10.20: These are not the rhemata of a man possessed (cf logoi v19)

12.47: As for the person who hears my rhemata, but does not keep them... there is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my rhemata – that very logos I spoke.

14.10: The rhemata I say to you are not just my own. Rather it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.

15.7: If you remain in me and my rhemata remain in you, ask whatever you wish... (cf logos v3)

17.8: I gave them the rhemata you gave me (v14: I have given them your logos)

### **Commandment:**

12.49: For I did not speak on my own account, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it.

12.50: I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I speak is just what the Father has told me to say.

14.15: If you love me, you will obey my commandments.

14.21: Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me (cf vv23-24 of obeying Christ's logos.)

15.10: If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.

15.12: This is my command, that you love each other as I have loved you.

15.14: You are my friends if you do what I command you.

1 Jn 2.3: We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commandments (cf keeping logos in v5).

2.7: I am not writing you a new commandment, but an old one (which is logos that you heard).

### **Truth:**

3.21: Whoever lives by the truth comes into the light.

8.17: The testimony of two men is true (Father and Jesus)

8.26: He who sent me is true, and what I have learned from him I tell the world.

8.31: If you continue in my logos...you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

8.40: You are ready to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things.

15.26: The Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will testify about me.

16.13: The Spirit will guide you into all truth, he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you about what is to come.

NB 17.12: "I have more to speak to you, more than you can now bear" – the Spirit will complete Jesus's teaching as if Jesus himself is speaking.

17.17: Sanctify them by your truth. Your logos is truth.

18.31: I came into the world to testify to the truth.

1 Jn 2.21: [I write to you] because you know the truth.

### **Message (angelia):**

1 Jn 1.5: This is the message which we have heard from him and proclaim to you: God is light, in him there is no darkness at all.

3.11-12: This is the message you heard from the beginning – we should love one another. Do not be like Cain... (link to Christ's command, but also to "the beginning" and Cain, suggesting this "old commandment" linked to the logos of God in the Torah.)

**Written/Scripture etc:**

- 2.22: Then they believed the Scripture and the logos that Jesus had spoken.
- 5.39: You diligently study the Scriptures... these are the Scriptures that testify about me.
- 5.46: If you believed Moses, you would believe me... since you do not believe his letters (grammatoi) how are you going to believe my rhema?
- 6.45: It is written in the prophets, "They will all be taught by God." Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me. [How does one listen to the Father?]
- 7.14: (Jesus' teaching from God, for his honour – such a man is not false) – Moses gave you the law, but none of you keeps it.
- 8.40: You are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things.
- 8.53: I know (God) and keep his logos. Your father Abraham rejoiced at seeing my day.
- 10.34: Is it not written in your law – and Scripture cannot be broken?
- 12.16: Only after Jesus was glorified did they realise that these things had been written about him.
- 12.38: They would not believe in him. This was to fulfil the logos of Isaiah the prophet.
- 12.39: ...because again said Isaiah...
- 12.41: Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him.
- 15.25: This is to fulfil what is written in their law, "They hated me without reason."
- 19.28: Knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled...
- 19.36: Now these things happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled...and as another Scripture says (not one of his bones will be broken, they will look on him they have pierced)
- 20.9: They still did not understand from the Scriptures that Jesus had to rise from the dead.
- 1 Jn 3.12: Do not be like Cain (note link back to "the beginning" in 3.11 – here is Cain who heard the logos in the beginning).
- 3.4: Everyone who sins breaks the law: in fact sin is lawlessness [just as God is love]

**Amen, Amen ("so be it" = spoken truth):**

1.51; 3.3,5; 5.19,24,25; 6.26,47,53; 8.51; 13.16,20,21,38; 14.12; 16.7.

**Miscellaneous speaking, hearing linked to logos theme:**

- 1.33: God told John how to recognise the logos when he came.
- 4.25: "When [Christ] comes he will explain everything to us." "I who speak to you am he."
- 5.25: The dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.
- 5.28: All who are in their graves will hear his voice.
- 7.15: How did this man get such grammatoi (letters)? (cf Moses, 5.46)
- 8.26: He who sent me is reliable, and what I have learned from him I tell the world.
- 8.28: I speak just what the Father has taught me.
- 8.40: You are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. (Relates to logos in 8.37)

12.49: I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it.

12.50: I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I speak is just what the Father has told me to say.

14.25: All this I have spoken while still with you... but the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, will teach you all things, and will remind you of all things I have spoken to you.

15.15: All things I heard from the Father I have made known to you.

16.1: These things I have spoken to you that you may not go astray. I have told you this so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you them at first because I was with you. [ie Jesus's logoi are an adequate substitute for the physical presence of Jesus the logos.]

17.13: I say these things... so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. (cf Proverbs 8.30-31)

1 Jn 2.24: See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does you will remain in the Son and in the Father. (logos in the beginning).

**Conclusion of John:**

20.25: "Jesus did many other things... if every one were written down, the whole world would not contain the books that would be written." Maybe just a hyperbolic ending, or more likely an allusion back to the prologue, and the active and powerful logos of God who transcends the world.