

Bible as an Educator 3 of 4

#0785

Study Given by W. D. Frazee

Now, our text this evening is found in John, the first chapter, the first verse. I love the message of this scripture, and it means more to me tonight than ever before:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” John 1:1–2.

Who that Word is, is made clear in the 14th verse:

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” John 1:14.

So it's Jesus. Now, our text says:

“In the beginning was the Word...” John 1:1.

I'd like to ask you a question. What was before that? And the answer is simply this, friends, that there is no such thing as before that. You cannot get before that. You cannot imagine before that because there *is* no before that.

“...*he* is before all things...” Colossians 1:17.

So there's nothing before Him. Turn to that in Colossians, and while you're turning, let me read from the book *Evangelism*, page 615:

“Christ is the preexistent, self-existent Son of God... In speaking of his preexistence, Christ carries the mind back through dateless ages. He assures us that there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God” *Evangelism*, page 615.

That's it. There never was a time before Him. There is no before.

“...*He* is before all things...” Colossians 1:17.

And so, Colossians 1:17 and 18 not only tells us that He is before all things, it says He is the beginning. Notice that in the 18th verse:

“...who is the beginning...” Colossians 1:18.

And then, in the 18th verse, the last part, it says:

“...that in all things he might have the preeminence”
Colossians 1:18.

He’s first not only in time—that is, there is no time before Him—He is first in authority and preeminence—there is no one that can be above Him—first in every sense, first in every meaning of that word.

Let us recognize Him as first. What do you say, friends? Let us recognize Him as first.

“...that in all things *He* might have the preeminence”
Colossians 1:18.

Now, have you noticed that in the Ten Commandments, this question is the first thing to be dealt with? Repeat the First Commandment with me:

“Thou shalt have no other gods before me” Exodus 1:3.

No other gods before me. There is *nothing* before Him, and if you have something before Him, then you’re out of gear with the universe. You’re out of joint with God’s plan.

“For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell...” Colossians 1:19.

“...that in all things He might have the preeminence”
Colossians 1:18.

This, then, is the first thing to be settled—is Christ first? This was and is the subject of the great controversy. And you remember Lucifer was the first one that challenged Christ’s position and authority and preeminence. Sin began with that challenge. And the question of sin is never settled until this thing is settled—is He first? If He is (if that question is settled) everything else gets settled.

Is it settled in your mind? Is it settled in your heart? Is He first? Let’s study it a while tonight.

Now, turn to the 138th Psalm, and here is an amazing statement. You can meditate on it a long time and not exhaust it, but it means just what it says, and it says a good deal.

We’ve been talking about the name of Jesus, and we’ve been talking about Christ, as in all things having the preeminence, but I’d like to notice in God’s mind where we are to give that recognition—how we show whether in all things He has the preeminence or not.

“I will worship toward Thy holy temple, and praise Thy name for Thy lovingkindness and for Thy truth: for Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy name” Psalm 138:2.

The name is preeminent above every name, as Paul teaches so wonderfully there in Philippians, the second chapter, speaking of Jesus who:

“...humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” Philippians 2:8.

Paul says:

“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name” Philippians 2:9.

But there is something, my friends, above the name. What is it? The Word, the Word.

“...Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy name” Psalm 138:2.

I wonder what the matter is, then, with people who can talk of Jesus and sing of Jesus and preach about Jesus and exalt the name of Jesus, but they hold the Word secondary. They have the whole thing backward, don't they?

And that's why, at the last day, multitudes are going to be disappointed. Christ pictures them in Matthew 7:21–23. He says:

“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord...” Matthew 7:22.

And what is the rest?

“...have we not prophesied in Thy *name*? and in Thy *name* have cast out devils? and in Thy *name* done many wonderful works?” Matthew 7:22.

Oh, they used the name of Jesus. They exalt that wonderful name. But ah, He says:

“And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” Matthew 7:23.

That word iniquity means “lawlessness.” That's what the word means there, “lawlessness.”

It is the attitude we take toward the law of God, the Word of God, the message of God that determines whether or not in all things He has the preeminence. Is that clear from these scriptures? And that's very important, dear friends.

Then, let us settle in our heart that this Word shall have the preeminence, for God has magnified His Word above all His name. He said, in Matthew 15:9, that it's vain worship—vain *worship*, mind you—if men teach for doctrine the commandments of men. It is our attitude toward what God says that shows our relationship to Him and our recognition of what He is.

The 85th Psalm, and the 8th verse. If in all things, He has the preeminence, if His Word is magnified above all His name, then we ought to let Him speak first. Don't you think so?

"I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints: but let them not turn again to folly" Psalm 85:8.

What will keep them from turning to folly? Listening to what God says—hearing the Word of God. And nothing else will do it, my friend. Let God speak, and let Him speak, when? First. Isn't that the courteous thing to do? Isn't that due Him, friends?

"In the beginning was the Word..." John 1:1.

And we should never take from Him that right to be the beginning. He *is* the beginning.

"...that in all things he might have the preeminence"
Colossians 1:18.

How foolish then to start something until He starts it. How foolish to try to begin anything without the beginning. No wonder there are so many failures in the world. If we begin at the beginning, friends, we'll never end, for He never ends.

Oh, I'm so glad tonight that we have this blessed word which He has exalted above all His name! Let Him speak, let *it* speak—let the Word have the preeminence. What do you say, friends?

"In the beginning was the Word..." John 1:1.

Now, I'd like to make this very practical tonight. Let's begin with a child. Two weeks ago, I read you a statement from this little book, *Counsels to Teachers, Parents and Students*, page 108:

"The Bible should be the child's first textbook"
Counsels to Teachers, Parents and Students, page 108.

Why? Well, because of the very things I've been studying with you from the Bible tonight. If the Word is magnified above all His name, if in the beginning was the Word, and He is the beginning, then in all things, He might have the preeminence. If we want to begin the education of a child, where had we better begin, friend? We'd better begin at the beginning. And:

"In the beginning was the Word..." John 1:1.

Oh, let that Word speak, and why should the Word speak first?

“...that in all things he might have the preeminence”
Colossians 1:18.

Let’s meditate on that a little further. What is a Word, anyway? Why, a Word is the expression of a thought. It’s the sign of an idea. Now, what does a Word mean? May I tell you very simply? That depends on how you have heard it used. That’s the thing that affects what that word means to *you*.

I could speak a word here tonight, and it would mean something to this man over here and something quite different to this man over here. Why? Because to one man, that word has been used in a certain way, and to another man that word has been used in a different way.

If you want something interesting, just take the dictionary and look up some very simple words. I’ll pick one up that’s used in many different activities, the word “jack.” What’s a jack? Well, you look it up in the dictionary. You can find it means a good many different things.

To an automobile mechanic, a jack is something to lift up the axle so you can take the wheel off. But you’ll find what it is in other businesses and other activities. That’s a very simple little word of one syllable. But I’ll leave that phase of it. I’ll take some words that will be easier for you to see what I’m getting at with reference to the Bible.

Take the word “God.” Suppose that you had never heard that word used except in cursing. What would it mean to you? Are there people that have never heard the name of God used except in cursing? Isn’t that pitiful? Isn’t it terrible, friends? It’s true.

Or, suppose that you have been brought up in some religion like theosophy (some of these oriental cults), in which that word “God” is used to express a pantheistic idea—just an influence everywhere. What would that word mean to you, “God.”

Do you know that to millions—tens of millions, hundreds of millions of people in this world—the word “God” does not mean what “God” means by that word *at all*. Do you know why? They did not get their conception of that word, their use of that word, from the One that would like to teach them. That’s God Himself.

And the great enemy is studying in a thousand ways—yes, 10,000 ways, listen!—he is studying to give men a false conception of what words mean so that if they ever in God’s providence *should* read the Bible, they would not understand its message.

Do you see how important it is for the child to get His first concepts of what a given sound means from the Bible? For, who better than God knows what a word means? First impressions are very lasting, particularly if they are repeated. It is the

privilege of Christian parents to take their children and so acquaint them with the use of words as God uses them that they shall forever have the true idea from each sound and syllable of those words. That's very important, very important.

I hate to interrupt such sublime thoughts with even a reference to the radio or television, but oh, the tragedy that's going on all around us, as the little ones are learning their first use of words as they're used by comedians, by commentators, by all sorts of worldly men and women. The ideas that those children get as those words are used will always linger with them.

Oh friends, more and more as I study this subject, I long to see each child that *can* have that experience, have the experience of letting God speak first.

"In the beginning was the Word..." John 1:1.

And He *is* the beginning. Let Him speak first:

"...that in all things he might have the preeminence"
Colossians 1:18.

I'll take another illustration. Take the word "father." Suppose that you lived in the slums of a great city like New York, or for that matter, you might live in a palace. But suppose that the one that bears the title of father is a drunkard, that he's cruel, that he's beaten you and the other members of the family. What does the word "father" mean to you?

And suppose after years of that sort of program, you open the Bible and read:

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him" Psalm 103:13.

What do you get out of it, my friends? What does that word "father" mean? Does it mean the awful perversions that the Devil has brought about in men that ought to be worthy of the title and name father? Oh no, friends. That isn't what the word means. God pity us, so few of us who bear the title are worthy of it.

Why, it is one of the names of God Himself, and what an honor, what a trust, He reposes in us that we should be allowed to use that name and have it applied to us.

But my point is, friends—do you see what I'm getting at—that what a word means to any individual depends upon how that word has been used in his hearing. Is that clear? Do you see, then, the importance of the child, as far as possible, learning the meaning of Bible words by hearing them read from the Bible and learning to read them for Himself from the Bible?

Because I repeat, how can anybody other than God know what God means by a word? How can anyone know it as well as He knows it? If we let Him speak first, we'll get His meaning.

In other words, let us become accustomed to the way *He* uses a word. Day after day, we let Him speak, and thus forever after, that word will mean to us just what God intended it to mean. That is education of the highest order.

“In the beginning was the Word...” John 1:1.

Now, if that’s true of the native language of the child, what about any other language that he may learn along the way? Most of us have learned the English language when we were little folks, but suppose we come along and we’re going to learn the Spanish language or the German language or the French language.

I wonder if it would make any difference in what setting we heard the words of that language for the first time. I wonder if it wouldn’t be a wonderful thing to begin with the beginning, whether it’s in English or French or German or Spanish. What do you say?

If the Bible is to be the *child’s* first textbook as he begins to learn the English language, I wonder if it wouldn’t be a wonderful thing for the Bible to be the first text in *every* language for all students. Is that a concept worth meditating on? I’ll leave it with you to think about.

Oh, what a world of literature so-called it would spare us from!

“In the beginning was the Word...” John 1:1.

He is the beginning. Let us begin with Him, with the Word, and let us learn. If we’re going to learn Spanish, oh, let us learn what those Spanish sounds mean as God intended them. If we’re going to learn German, then we can begin:

“Im Anfang war das Wort...” John 1:1.

“Im Anfang” means beginning, but forever after, as we learn that, “Im Anfang” points us to the real beginning. And “das Wort”—the Word, means more than just a collection of letters in a book. It means the real Word—Jesus, God’s thought made audible.

Suppose we’re going to learn ancient languages: Hebrews or Greek. Can you think of anything more wonderful, if one is going to learn those languages than to learn them as used by inspiration? Again, what a world of literature we would be spared from. I leave that with you to meditate on.

But I don’t want us to confine this merely to the study of language, whether it be English or Spanish or French or Greek or Hebrew. In *all* things, He is to have the preeminence. Do we wish to study science? Let God speak first. Do we want to study various activities? Let’s hear what God has to say about them.

Let me take up the subject of agriculture. Many of us are interested in agriculture. I hope all are. We’re told it’s to be the A, B and C of education, but what’s the ABC of agriculture? In the beginning was the Word, my friends.

Notice, in this book *Education*, page 219:

“Let the teacher call attention to what the Bible says about agriculture...” *Education*, page 219.

The teacher is to call attention to what the Bible says about agriculture. Well, does the Bible say anything about agriculture? Yes. From Genesis to Revelation, there are references to agriculture, and the teacher is to call attention to what the Bible says about agriculture. I wonder when would be a good time to do that, friends. If God is to speak, when shall we invite Him to speak? In the beginning.

“In the beginning was the Word...” John 1:1.

Let that Word from the eternal throne testify first, and thus, we will get God’s thought and have a clearer understanding. Apply it to all the sciences, and notice that by following that method, we not only learn to know the true meaning of words as God uses them, but we learn to discern error and thereby avoid it and to recognize truth and thus accept it.

Take a classic example. For decades now, men have been going out here and studying the rocks. The geologists have been digging up the surface of the earth and finding all sorts of bones and shells down there—the fossils. By what they call the scientific method, they have attempted to ascertain the past history of our planet. How successful have they been?

Now friends, they think they’re very wise. A man will pick up a bone and solemnly tell you that that bone is so many thousands, tens of thousands or longer, years old. And you and I know that that is not the truth, it’s error, it’s folly, just plain folly. But how do you know it? We know it because we’ve listened to this Word. That’s the only reason we know it. If it weren’t for this Word and the attitude we have toward it, we’d swallow that along with everybody else. Wouldn’t we?

Now, my point is this. Do you see what a world of trouble and a lot of time those men would have saved if they’d let God speak first on the subject? And then, when they went out and looked at the rocks, they would have found something very interesting. They would have found exactly what our children find as they go up here on this mountainside. Our children go up there, and they find those shells or those other fossils, and what do they say? Why, that was laid down here when Noah’s flood was here. Yes.

How do they know that? They know it by the Word of God, and the geologists could know it in the same way, and the scientific evidence corroborates the Bible record. The Bible record of the flood is not only a good explanation of those things, it’s the only scientific explanation of those fossils. It’s the only scientific explanation because science has to do with knowledge, and you cannot know a falsehood. You can know only the truth, as I brought out two weeks ago.

And the truth is that every one of those buried fish and buried dinosaurs is evidence standing up in court and testifying that the Word of God is true, but this they willingly are ignorant of. They’ve turned aside from the Word of God and gone about

to try to erect a temple of knowledge, a structure of science, without the light from the light of the world.

Therefore, while we should encourage scientific research, in all things, *He* is to have the preeminence. *This Word* is to have the first place, and all scientific research is to be in harmony with that Word. Thus we avoid error; thus, we discern truth. Oh, the time we save and the pitfalls we avoid, and the lies we discern in Satan's false philosophy and false science.

And so, my dear friends, in every problem of life. I bring it now right to the individual. Do you have any problems? What are you going to do about them? Are you going to sit down and write to some columnist that tells lonely hearts and people that have home troubles what to do? Is that the way you're going to solve your problems? Are you going to run to any human counselor first? Oh no! Listen. What did we read two weeks ago tonight?

"Man's words, if of any value..."

Counsels to Teachers, Parents and Students, page 423.

What?

"...echo the words of God" *Ibid.*

Say it with me:

"Man's words, if of any value, echo the words of God" *Ibid.*

You know, if I have a personal problem, the kind of counsel I want? I want the counsel of a man or a woman who has spent much time with this Bible and the testimonies of the Spirit of God in order, not that they may give me their opinion of what I ought to do, but that they may help me find in the Word of God the answer to my question. There's a fundamental difference between those two approaches.

"Man's words, if of any value, echo the words of God" *Ibid.*

And if you have some personal problem, I care not what it is friends: a problem of health, a problem in the home, a problem of victory over sin, a problem of your life work, a problem of where you ought to be or what you ought to do—oh, do not try to begin to unravel that without finding the beginning, and He is the beginning.

And oh, if you'll only get the beginning, how the problem will unravel. Let Him speak first. Let the Word of God have access to your heart. Do not be afraid of it. He says:

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil..." Jeremiah 29:11.

"I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly" Psalm 85:8.

Now friends, in closing, a most precious thought to me. You know, every day, God lets you and me begin all over again. With God there is no night, but with us day by day we begin over again, and God intends that in every new day, in every beginning, that the first words shall be the Word of God.

“...that in all things he might have the preeminence”
Colossians 1:18.

If He is the beginning of this universe, oh, how wonderful it is to let Him be the beginning of the day, and if the thing that started this world to whirling was the Word of God, how wonderful it is if the thing that starts our day to moving is the Word of God.

Can you have that experience? Oh yes, friends. Let me tell you of a terrible substitute for it. There are thousands of people who are going to bed tonight, and they’re going to wake up tomorrow morning—do you know what with? A radio. That’s going to wake them up—a word from Atlanta or New York or Chattanooga is going to arouse them from slumber and set their minds on the whirl of the day.

But there’s something better than that. You’ll find it in Isaiah, the 50th chapter, and the fourth verse:

“The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned,
that I should know how to speak a word in season to him
that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he
wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned” Isaiah 50:4.

Do you get the picture? Here is the Christian lying in slumber—blessed slumber, safe in the arms of Jesus. There he is lying peacefully. But Jesus sees that it’s time for him to wake up and begin the day. Who shall waken him? “Ah,” He says, “I will waken him.” It is the voice of the Son of God. That voice that spoke this world into existence and set it whirling on its axis—that creative Word is to speak to your heart in the morning and set you moving in a God-planned mission.

Oh friends, wouldn’t it be wonderful when He condescends to wake us in the morning hour to just quietly to let Him speak first; to let the Word of God begin to flow through your mind and run from cell to cell and center to center? That’s your privilege.

Ah friends, if when you go to bed tonight and tomorrow night and the next night—if in your closing moments of consciousness you will commit yourself to God and say, “Oh, dear Lord, I want You to wake me in the morning, and I want You to tell me something, give me some word!” Believe me, friends, He’ll do it.

It may be that some text of scripture that you learned long ago will come floating into your consciousness as you wake up tomorrow morning and with it the sweet sense of the presence of God. It may be that in some other way, that Word of God will come to you, but this is God’s promise of what he wants to do to you and for you that you may minister to others.

“In the beginning was the Word...” John 1:1.

And God wants every day to be a new beginning in which the Word is primary, the Word is first: first in time, first in authority, first in importance, and thus, being first, He also becomes the last—not only the Alpha but the Omega, not only the beginning but the end. Thank God, friends, thus our days as our lives may be successful.

Shall we bow our heads? Oh, precious Lord, we thank Thee with all our hearts tonight that we have caught a clearer view of Thee as the beginning of all things. That before Thee, there is nothing for Thou art before all things. We choose to give Thee that preeminence. We choose to recognize Thee as the first: the first in our lives, the first in our day, the first in our heart's affections.

And thus, may we know Thee, whom to know is life eternal, and thus may our lives be one glad demonstration of a success of a life that begins with the beginning and carries on through eternity. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.

I know that many of you would like to say a word of response. Let His Spirit inspire our words.

[Testimony meeting not recorded]

[Comments made during testimony meeting]

Take astronomy without the Bible, and you know what it makes you look like? Like you don't amount to anything. Wouldn't it? You get to looking through those telescopes or even just reading about how you just go on and on, and everything's big—so much bigger, and then something beyond that's so much bigger than that, and what are you?

But oh, when you let the Word speak first on the question of astronomy, you find out that the One Who made the worlds is the One who died on the cross to save you. The bigger you find this universe is, the more valuable you become because you see more and more how much He was willing to leave in order to get you. Do you see the difference?

Astronomy without the Bible makes you very insignificant. Astronomy with the Bible keeps enlarging your idea of how much God values you.

What the word means by the way God uses it is so important. What a world of confusion over the meaning of the Spirit of Prophecy would be saved if men would just—well, I was thinking of an expression that Elder Warren wrote me shortly before he died. He said, "Boil your folks in the third angel's message." "Boil your folks in the third angel's message." If we're just boiled in these things that God has said in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, don't you know the thing will penetrate, and we'll get to thinking the same thing from a word that God meant us to think.

The lightning or thunder that woke you up, would it still be God using that? Yes. Suppose it's somebody upstairs or downstairs that's moving around, making a lot of noise, and that's what wakes you up. Is it still the providence of God? You don't have to think of it as necessarily some mysterious miracle without any human agency.

There are some people that are going to go to bed tonight, and my friends, there's no lightning and no alarm clock or anything else that's ever going to wake them up. Some people are going to go to bed tonight, and they'll never wake up till the resurrection.

But if Jesus has His life in our hands, whether He chooses to wake us in the morning or when He comes, and whether He chooses to use a direct miracle or a passing train or a barking dog to wake us up, it doesn't make any difference. Our first thought can be, "Lord, I want to hear that Word. I want to hear that Word. I want to hear what "you have to say to me."

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W. D. Frazee Sermons
435 Lifestyle Lane, Wildwood, GA 30757
1-800-WDF-1840 / 706-820-9755
www.WDFsermons.org
support@WDFsermons.org