

Logos – John 1v1
[Deeper Sheet 01.04.09]

“In the beginning was the word.” To the Greek-speaking world, “word”, or “*logos*”, was a philosophical concept of illumination, a universal principle that animated and ruled the world. Similarly, Hebrew thought considered *logos* to be a power and law identified with Torah, which were God’s words. When John says, “In the beginning was the word,” he says much more. John is saying that God is everywhere: God always has and will continue to animate, create, and sustain the whole world.

John’s gospel is careful to remind us that this isn’t the first time God has entered our world and called forth light. God has a habit of entering into darkness and bringing light. It’s a habit God began at creation and continues to do again and again. It’s something we desperately need because whether it’s an asteroid or a volcano threatening the destruction of the planet or a job loss or depression threatening the destruction of a human life, we live in a risky world. Good people suffer. Things get dark, and it can all fall apart fast.

Epiphany is the celebration of God’s light breaking forth into the world once again, in the form of Jesus. And yet the world has always contested whether or not Jesus was the one who was to come. In John’s time, the question was whether it was Jesus or Caesar Augustus who was “the one who was to come?” Our cultural situation is somewhat different, but the question itself remains: Who is the one who brings light to the world? Who is the one who holds it all together? In our day, maybe the question has become “Is it God or me?” Who is at the center of the universe?

Creation is so overwhelmingly stunning and huge that we struggle to comprehend it. In the grand scheme of things, we’re a small component—an important component to be sure, but small nonetheless. The biblical story reveals in scene after scene that it is God who holds it all together. God is the light that breaks into the darkness and animates, creates, and sustains all things. Isaiah must have seen even in his day the human tendency to “walk in the light of our own torches” [Isaiah 50v11]. But for Isaiah, for John, and for us, God—not Babylon, not Caesar, and not the human self—is the *logos* that holds it all together. The Story is so much bigger.

How would you define risk?

In what ways are you currently experiencing risk? What exactly are you risking?

In what ways do you see a relationship between risk and value?

What do you think it means to embrace risk? What might it look like to embrace risk where you are currently experiencing it in your life?

To suggest that God is everywhere is a huge statement. Where have you felt that God was absent? How do you think God is present even in very dark moments?

Read Isaiah 50v10-11. What has it looked like for you to “walk in the light of your own fire”?