375 Word (*Verbum*)

The word[[1]](#endnote-1) is what is conceived in the heart. The word is what is produced by the mouth. The word is what is written by the pen.

Again,[[2]](#endnote-2) the human word once produced is transitory. About which the Poet says,[[3]](#endnote-3) the word once let slip flies beyond recall. The divine word is born eternally. About which[[4]](#endnote-4) it is said in Isai. [9:8]: “The Lord sent a word into Jacob.”

Concerning the third,[[5]](#endnote-5) Luke 3[:2]: “The word of the Lord was made unto John, the son of Zachary, in the desert.”

There is also the heavenly word[[6]](#endnote-6) which is God and flesh, John 1[:1, 14]: “In the beginning was the Word,” and it follows, “And the Word was made flesh.” And the word in eternity[[7]](#endnote-7) that is the spirit and life, John [6:64]: “The words that I have spoken to you, are spirit and life.” The word is external which is the seed and the sword. The seed certainly in propagating virtues, Luke [8:11]: “The seed is the word of God.” The sword also in cutting away the living. Wherefore the Apostle [Eph. 6:17]: “The sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.”

Again, the word is uncreated in virtue of the Father, the word is inspired in the human breast of the mind. The word is incarnated in the womb of the Virgin. The word is rough in the book of divine law. First the word was above John. Second it was within John. Third it was announced on account of John. Fourth it was made through John.

Again,[[8]](#endnote-8) the word was made flesh through a personal union, John 1[:14]: “The Word was made flesh.” The bread becomes flesh through sacramental conversion, John [6:52]: “The bread that I will give, is my flesh.” Man becomes flesh through a natural comingling, Gen. 2[:24]: “Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife.”

1. Cf. Innocent III, *Sermo* 1 (PL 217:451): Est enim verbum quod corde concipitur, verbum quod ore profertur, verbum quod calamo scribitur.  [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. Innocent III, *Sermo* 1 (PL 217:451): Est enim verbum humanum, et verbum divinum. Verbum humanum transit prolatum; verbum divinum permanet natum. De illo dicit poeta:  
     
   Et semel emissum volat irrevocabile verbum. **[Col.0451B] (HORAT., Ep. I, XVIII, 71.)** [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Horace, *Epistula* 1.71 (LCL 194:374-375): et semel emissum volat irrevocabile verbum.

   and the word once let slip flies beyond recall. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Cf. Innocent III, *Sermo* 1 (PL 217:452): De verbo prolato secundum nativitatem humanam ex matre loquitur Isaias **(cap. IX)**: «Verbum misit Dominus in Jacob, et cecidit in Israel.» [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Cf. Innocent III, *Sermo* 1 (PL 217:452): De verbo scripto secundum nativitatem gratuitam in mente Lucas **(cap. III)**testatur: «Factum Domini super Joannem Zachariae filium in deserto.» [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Cf. Innocent III, *Sermo* 1 (PL 217:452): Verbum supernum, Deus et **[Col.0452B]**caro; internum, spiritus et vita; verbum externum, semen et gladius. Verbum Deus secundum aeternitatem, quoniam in principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum. Verbum caro secundum humanitatem, quia Verbum caro factum est et habitavit in nobis. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Cf. Innocent III, *Sermo* 1 (PL 217:452): Verbum spiritus, intelligentibus; verbum vita, credentibus; unde: «Verba quae locutus sum vobis, spiritus et vita sunt **(Joan. VI)**.» Verbum semen in propagandis virtutibus; unde: «Semen est verbum Dei **(Luc. VIII)**.» Verbum gladius, in vitiis amputandis; unde: «Et gladius spiritus, quod est verbum Dei **(Ephes. VI)**.» [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Cf. Innocent III, *Sermo* 1 (PL 217:452): Verbum fit caro per unionem, panis fit caro per conversionem, homo fit caro per commistionem; per unionem personalem, per conversionem sacramentalem, per commistionem carnalem. De primo dicitur: Verbum caro factum est, et habitavit in nobis; de secundo legitur: «Panis quem ego dabo, caro mea est pro mundi vita **(Joan. VI);**» de tertio vero scribitur: «Propter quod relinquet homo patrem et matrem, et adhaerebit uxori suae: et erunt duo in carne una **(Gen. II)**.» [↑](#endnote-ref-8)