

## Finding *Renewal* in the Love of God

### Unit 2: Discovering Renewal in the Testimony of the Word

#### Unit Introduction

In 1959 Phil Knight ran track for the University of Oregon under the direction of Coach Bill Bowerman. In his career, Bowerman would coach 31 Olympic athletes, 51 All-Americans, 12 American record holders, 24 NCAA champions, and 10 men who ran the mile in less than four minutes. During his time at Oregon—24 years—his teams posted winning seasons every year, except one. They won four national titles and finished in the top 10 sixteen times. In 1964, Knight and Bowerman shook hands, threw \$500 in the pot, and began an athletic footwear distribution company, Blue Ribbon Sports.

Surely it was Bowerman's passion for excellence which drove him in his obsession to design custom-made running shoes. He was so determined to create the perfect shoe that he ruined his wife's waffle iron in 1971 while attempting to create a lightweight "waffle" sole that would offer better traction.<sup>1</sup> Knight's contribution to the company that year was hiring a young advertising student to design a company logo that could be sewn onto a shoe. Knight paid Carolyn Davidson \$35 for the "whoosh," her rendition of the wing of the Greek Goddess of Victory, Nike.<sup>2</sup> The design communicates so well that Nike's name is no longer required; the "whoosh" says it all—all over the world.



Jesus, called by John the **logos**—literally the "Word" of God—plays a similar role in representing the LORD. He is God's message to the world—the exact, tangible representation of God Himself—the manifestation of the Father, in the flesh, the One who walked among us. God had spoken other "words" as testimonies of Himself. In Genesis, God literally speaks the world into creation as it becomes a testimony of His "eternal power and divine nature." In Israel, the treatise we know as the Ten Commandments was known as merely the "Ten Words." Thus, the "law," became known as His word—and eventually the entirety of inspired scripture. Prophets were said to speak the "word," too. However, nothing was able to communicate God's message in a way that redeemed life, though God was both persistent and hungry for the harvest. The Old Testament tells of a God who seeks unity with His creation over and over again. More than 100 times God speaks, declaring that He would soon accomplish yet another amazing feat "**so that** they will know that I am the LORD." But they did not know. In His tenacity and vision, He had yet one more plan; if then they failed to know Him, there was nothing more to be done: He sent Jesus, His **logos**. To "see" Jesus would be to know God.

<sup>1</sup> "Memories-Nike Waffle Trainer" 13 July 2007 <<http://sneakers.pair.com/l/waffle-8.jpg>>

<sup>2</sup> "Bill Bowerman" Sept. 2006 <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill\\_Bowerman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_Bowerman)>